

Helpline



Helpline 2014 Holiday Edition Newsletter

Can you believe that the end of the year is fast approaching? Fall is here with all of it's glory, bringing cooler weather, and preparation for the holiday season.

The holiday season which begins with Thanksgiving and continues through New Years, seems to get longer and longer each year. A sure sign is when you see Christmas decorations in department stores before Halloween.

This time of year can be very stressful, if you let it. However, if you focus on the things that are most important to you and your family, the holidays can be a time of enjoyment. Remember, with a little planning and creativity, you can make this holiday season a healthy and happy one.



Plan Holiday Shopping

We all know that times are tough. Tight budgets require that we carefully plan holiday shopping. It is time when we need to be careful about how much and what to buy. Make sure that you maximize every dollar, in order to get the most and best gifts for everyone on your holiday list.



With some careful planning and shopping you can still purchase the right gift for the right people while spending less money. The following ideas will help trim gift-giving expenses.

- Start a holiday checklist to save time and be more efficient when purchasing gifts. Save money by keeping track of your list.
- Make a list of people you need to buy a gift for with gift ideas and price estimates. Next total the amount you plan to spend. Make changes, if this figure is more than you can afford.
- List several alternatives for each name on your list, then look for sales in the price range you can afford. Most important - stick to your plan.

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The Family & Consumer Science Program and the 4-H Youth Development Program has a New Home!!

Amelia Earhart Park
 401 East 65th Street
 Hialeah, FL 33013
 Phone: 305-769-4050
 Fax: 305-769-4052

- Check local newspaper ads and store circulars for gifts you are considering.

Determine which stores are running specials and shop where the prices are lowest. Keep in mind that during November and December, prices are normally reduced including children's clothing, men's clothing, party goods, and appliances such as toasters, stereos and televisions.

- Don't rush into a purchase because of an advertised claim of a low price. Know what the regular price of the item is before buying an on-sale item. Often one store's sale price is another's regular price.
- Shop different types of stores to compare prices. Look at discount stores, catalog showrooms, factory outlets, department stores, as well as online.
- Take advantage of online shipping by looking for discounted, or free shipping offers. Save money on gas.
- Consider pooling your money together to buy a gift for someone—get your siblings, friends and family members together to purchase nice, useful gifts they'll remember.
- Be sure to keep receipts of credit purchases and total expenditures at regular intervals to make sure you stay within the limits of your holiday spending plan. Also check and keep all receipts. IF mistakes occur you will need the receipt to correct errors.

Holiday Food Safety Tips



Entertaining is a full time job during the holidays. Cooks across the country are making plans for holiday feasts that include all of your families favorite recipes.

Food safety can be a special challenge during the holiday when poultry, stuffing, and buffets pose additional risks, particularly for most of the people on our holiday guest list. This list includes people who are vulnerable to foodborne illness—elderly, young children, pregnant women, or anyone with a compromised immune system.

To make sure your holiday meal is not only delicious but is as safe as possible, follow these food safety tips:

- Wash hands thoroughly and often—before and after food preparation.
- Thoroughly wash cutting boards and utensil before and after contact with raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs.
- Rinse fruits and vegetables under cool running water and use a produce brush to remove surface dirt.
- Use a food thermometer to make sure meat, poultry, and fish are cooked to a safe internal temperatures.
- Bring sauces, soups, and gravies to a rolling boil when reheating.
- Cook eggs until the yolk and white are firm. When making your own eggnog or other recipes calling for raw eggs, use pasteurized shell eggs, liquid or frozen pasteurized egg products, or powdered egg whites.
- Don't eat uncooked cookie dough, which may contain raw eggs.
- Serve only pasteurized apple cider.
- Thaw the turkey in the refrigerator, not on the countertop; room temperatures promote bacteria growth. Allow one day of frosting for each five pounds of turkey weight.
- Cook the stuffing separate from the turkey. Stuffing put in an uncooked turkey is susceptible to bacteria growth. If you refuse to break with tradition, use a food thermometer to make sure the bird's internal temperature reaches at least 165 degrees.
- Slice the leftover turkey before refrigerating. Whole turkeys do not store safely in the refrigerator.



- Carefully store leftovers. To speed up the cooling process, put leftovers into shallow covered containers and keep refrigerator temperature at 40 degrees or below. Perishable foods left at room temperature for more than two hours are susceptible to bacterial growth.
- Be careful with holiday buffets. Serving dishes should be kept small and replenished often, directly from the stove or refrigerator. Place cold dishes on a bed of ice.
- Hot foods should be held at 140°F or warmer.
- Foods should not sit at room temperature on the buffet table for more than two hours. Keep track of how long foods have been on buffet table and discard any that have been there two hours or more.
- Reheat leftovers to 165° degrees.
- Left overs should be used within three to four days, unless frozen.

Tips for Getting Ready for the New Tax Season



Tax time is typically something most people dread to think about. However dreadful, if you fall within IRS guidelines for filing an income tax return, you must comply.

Since the end of the year is fast approaching, start organizing all your tax documents now!!

Below are some tips that should make it easier for you to prepare for filing your income tax return, while saving time and money.

Get Organized

Collecting your receipts and other relevant financial information for tax preparation is a time consuming activity.

First thing is store all your documents in a filing system. If you don't have a filing system for your tax records, start one. It can be as simple as saving re-

ceipts in a shoebox, an accordion file folder, or more complex like creating folders or spreadsheets.

Second, divide your receipts in categories. You may wish to separate them into "income" and "expenses." Note that "income" includes gambling winnings and interest earned on bank accounts and investments. For "expenses," be sure to include all receipts and written records of charitable contributions, and uncompensated travel. Also include gas mileage and meals if applicable.

If you are a business owner, keep your business money separate from your personal money for easy-record keeping.

Planning



Taxes can affect your personal finances, and if not done correctly can haunt you for an entire year. Mark a day on your calendar when you plan to get your taxes done.

Don't procrastinate. Make sure you have enough time to check your math and other calculations before filing.

Outsource or Do It Yourself

Each year the task of preparing and filing your taxes get easier. Why? Because these are several online and software based programs that are available to assist you. A visit to any general merchandise store will allow you to view all of the software that is available.

However, if you want a professional to prepare your taxes, you will still need to make the effort to gather and organize your tax documents.

If you fall below a certain income level, there are public assistances organizations that will assist you in preparing your income tax. In fact the IRS has a program in which assistance is given to persons who need help with filing their income tax return. Visit IRS.gov for more information.

Happy Filing!!

Healthy Holiday Eating Guide



Know Your Numbers

In order to maintain a healthy weight, we need to balance the amount of food we eat with the amount of energy we burn. But we don't all need the same amount. Many factors, including age, gender and physical activity levels, affect how many calories we should consume each day. Visit heart.org/explorer to get a personalized recommendation from the American Heart Association for you and your family or just www.choosemyplate.gov the USDA food guidance system.

The table below shows the suggested number of servings from each food group based on a daily intake of 1,600 or 2,000 calories. If you need fewer calories than shown, decrease the number of servings. If you need more, increase the servings.

Food Type	1,600 Calories	2,000 Calories	Examples of One Serving
Grains At least half of your servings should be whole-grain.	6 servings per day	6-8 servings per day	1 slice bread 1 oz. dry cereal (check nutrition label for cup measurements of different products) ½ cup cooked rice, pasta, or cereal (about the size of a baseball)
Vegetables Eat a variety of colors and types	3-4 servings per day	4-5 servings per day	1 cup raw leafy vegetables (about the size of a small fist) ½ cup cut-up raw or cooked vegetables ½ cup vegetable juice
Fruits Eat a variety of colors and types	4 servings per day	4-5 servings per day	1 medium fruit (about the size of a baseball) ¼ cup dried fruit ½ cup fresh, frozen, or canned fruit ½ cup fruit juice
Fat-free or low-fat dairy products	2-3 servings per day	2-3 servings per day	1 cup fat-free or low-fat milk 1 cup fat-free or low-fat yogurt 1 fat-free or low-fat cheese (about the size of 4 stacked dice)
Lean meats, poultry and seafood	3-6 oz. (cooked) per day	Less than 6 oz. per day	3 oz. cooked meat (about the size of a deck of cards) 3 oz. grilled fish (about the size of a checkbook)
Fats and oils Use liquid vegetable oils and soft margarine most often	2 servings per day	2-3 servings per day	1 tsp. soft margarine 1 tsp. olive oil 1 Tbsp. regular or 2 Tbsp. low-fat salad dressing
Nuts, seeds and legumes	3-4 servings per week	4-5 servings per week	1 oz. nuts 2 Tbsp. or ½ oz. seeds ½ cup dry beans or peas
Sweets and added sugars	0 servings per week	5 or fewer servings per week	1 Tbsp. sugar 1 Tbsp. jelly or jam ½ cup sorbet and ices 1 cup lemonade

It is also very important to limit the amount of sodium in your diet. The American Heart Association recommends consuming less than 1,500 milligrams of sodium per day, which is about two-thirds of a teaspoon of table salt. The average American consumes about 3,400 milligrams of sodium a day – more than twice the recommendation. See our tips later in this guide on how you can reduce sodium in your favorite holiday meals or visit heart.org/sodium.

Remember to Stay Physically Active!



The holiday season is about family and food – and all too often, adding a few extra pounds to our waistlines. Being physically active throughout the entire

year is important to maintaining a healthy weight. The American Heart Association recommends that children (up to age 18) get at least 60-minutes-a-day and adults get at least 150-minutes-per-week of moderately vigorous physical activity. Keep your family physically active in all seasons.

- **Ice skate or roller skate.** This is a great workout for your legs and heart. You'll also help strengthen your core, which is engaged when trying to keep you balanced.

- **Go for an afternoon or evening walk, jog or run – and bring the dog!**

As long as you're dressed adequately, any time of day can be enjoyable weather for taking a stroll or a jog. Winter days are shorter, so start early enough to finish before it gets dark.

- **Visit the local community center for a game of indoor basketball with friends and family.** This is also a great way to entertain out-of-town guests. Grab a basketball, some jump ropes or volleyball for a couple hours of fun physical activity!

Eating With the Family

Sodium

- **Limit your sodium.** Did you know that many of your favorite holiday dishes may be packed with sodium? Breads and rolls, poultry, and canned soups are three common foods that can add sodium to your diet. When shopping for ingredients to prepare your holiday meal, compare the labels to find lower sodium varieties.

- **Savor the flavor.** Use herbs and spices, like rosemary and cloves, to flavor dishes instead of salt or butter.

- **Go fresh.** Choose fresh fruits and vegetables to use in your dishes. If using canned products, rinse with water in a colander before cooking and serving.

Turkey

- **Outsmart the bird.** Reach for the lighter pieces of meat; they have fewer calories and less fat than the darker ones. Another way to cut calories is to take off the skin.

- **Keep portions in check.** A serving size of meat is 3 oz., about the size of a deck of cards. So, be conscious of how much you put on your plate, and pass on that second helping. If you're also having another meat, like ham or lamb, take smaller portions of each.

- **Watch out for the gravy train.** Turkey usually comes with gravy, which can add excess fat, calories and sodium. Limit gravy to a tablespoon, and keep it off other items, like the dressing.

Dressing

- **Call it what it is.** Dressing is intended to be a complement to your meal, not an entrée. To keep calories and excess fat in check, aim for ¼ cup (or about half a scoop with a serving spoon).

- **Judge it by its cover.** If the dressing is filled with fatty meats like sausage and pork, looks greasy or buttery, and is made with white bread or sweet rolls, it may be best to pass. Better options would be dressings that have whole grain or cornbread, lean meat (or no meat), nuts (like almonds or walnuts), and lots of veggies and fruits.

Casseroles

- **What's in it?** Holiday casseroles can be filled with fat, sugar or sodium. Your best bet is to limit yourself to a small spoonful of casserole and fill the rest of your plate with a serving of lean protein along with roasted or sautéed veggies and tossed salad instead.



Desserts

• **Treat yourself right.** The best way to enjoy an occasional sweet without losing control is by sampling a selection or two, rather than having full servings. For example, have one bite of pie, half a full serving. For example, have one bite of pie, half a cookie or one small square of fudge. Find a friend or family member who will stick to the sampling rule with you.

Making Traditions Healthy

Smart substitutions for your favorite holiday meals



Baking

- Instead of butter, substitute equal parts cinnamon-flavored, no sugar added applesauce.
- Use a lower-calorie sugar substitute.
- Substitute low-fat or skim milk instead of whole or heavy cream.
- Instead of using only white flour, use half white and half whole-wheat flour.
- Instead of adding chocolate chips or candies, use dried fruit, like cranberries or cherries.
- Use extracts like vanilla, almond and peppermint to add flavor, instead of sugar or butter.

Cooking

- Use vegetable oils such as olive oil instead of butter.
- Use whole-grain breads and pastas instead of white.
- Bake, grill or steam vegetables instead of frying.
- Instead of whole milk or heavy cream, substitute low-fat or fat-free/skim milk.
- Compare labels of your holiday ingredients, choose those with lower sodium.

Beverages

- Instead of alcohol in mixed drinks, use club soda.
- Mix 100-percent juice with water or use freshly squeezed juice, like lime instead of adding sugar to mixed drinks.
- Instead of using heavy cream or whole milk in dairy-based drinks, use low-fat or skim milk.
- Use spices and fruit, like cinnamon, cloves and cranberries instead of using sugar to sweeten cider.

Recipes:

Crunchy Chicken with Oven-Roasted Broccoli

4 servings

Ingredients

Crunchy Chicken

2 1/2-to-3-pound whole chicken

NOTE: you can save time by using boneless, skinless chicken breast halves but using the whole chicken and quartering and skinning yourself can save some money. But be sure you don't mind eating off of bones if you use the whole chicken.

2 Tbsps. Dijon mustard

2 cups Cheerios, crushed

1/4 teaspoon each salt and black pepper

Oven-Roasted Broccoli

1 pound fresh broccoli crowns, rinsed and trimmed

1 1/2 tsp. minced garlic or 2 tsp. minced from jar

2 tsp. low-sodium soy sauce

1 tsp. extra-virgin olive oil

1/4 tsp. black pepper



3 Tbsps. chopped unsalted- unoiled-nuts (almonds, pecans or walnuts suggested – whatever is on sale will work). Remove from oven and toss into broccoli mixture.

Directions

Crunchy Chicken

1. Heat oven to 400 degrees. Rinse chicken and pat dry. Remove giblets and neck and discard. Quarter chicken and remove and discard skin.
2. In a medium bowl, toss the chicken and mustard to coat. (If you're using chicken breasts, just rinse and pat dry.)
3. In a large bowl, mix the crushed cereal, and 1/4 teaspoon each salt and pepper. Coat the chicken with the cereal mixture and bake on a baking sheet until golden and cooked through, 45 to 50 minutes.

Directions

Oven-Roasted Broccoli

1. Heat oven to 400 degrees. (or can use same oven as chicken). Rinse broccoli, trim stalks into 1/8 inch-thick chunks and cut florets into bit sized pieces. Place in a mixing bowl and toss with soy sauce, oil, pepper, and garlic.
2. Sprinkle the chopped nuts evenly in to a 9x13-inch casserole dish. Place in the oven 3-4 minutes until lightly toasted. Remove from oven and toss into broccoli mixture.
3. Transfer broccoli mixture to casserole dish and roast 10-12 minutes until broccoli is tender. Serve warm.

CRUNCH CHICKEN WITH OVEN-ROASTED BROCCOLI

Per serving:

Calories 299; Total Fat 9.0 g; Saturated Fat 1.5 g; Trans Fat 0.0 g; Polyunsaturated Fat 2.0 g; Monounsaturated Fat 4.0 g; Cholesterol 94 mg; Sodium 590 mg; Carbohydrates 21 g; Dietary Fiber 5 g; Total Sugars 4g; Protein; 36g Dietary Exchanges: 1 starch, 1 vegetable, 4 lean meat

Snack Mix

10 servings (1/2 cup each)

Ingredients

- 2 cups Cheerios®, or whole grain cereal
- 1 cup old-fashioned oats
- ½ cup almonds, unsalted
- ½ cup walnuts, unsalted
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp. ground nutmeg
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 Tbsp. water
- ½ cup raisins, no sugar added
- ½ cup dried cranberries, no sugar added



Directions

1. Preheat oven to 325 degrees.
2. Mix Cheerios, oats, almonds, walnuts, cinnamon, and nutmeg together in a large bowl. Stir water and vanilla extract into the oat mixture; spread onto a baking sheet.
3. Bake in preheated oven, stirring every 15 minutes, until golden brown and crunchy, about 30 minutes; transfer to a bowl. Stir raisins and cranberries.

4. Store in airtight container.

SNACK MIX

Per serving

Calories 149; Total Fat 7.0 g; Saturated Fat 0.5 g; Trans Fat 0.0 g; Polyunsaturated Fat 3.5 g; Monounsaturated Fat; 2.5 g; Cholesterol 0 mg; Sodium 33 mg; Carbohydrates 20 g; Dietary Fiber 4 g; Total Sugars 6 g; Protein 4 g; Dietary Exchanges: 1 starch, 1/2 fruit, 1 fat

Source: American Heart Association and USDA



Jeremy Smith joins the Extension team as the newest 4-H Agent, working alongside Cassandra Weston. Jeremy is from a small town in Georgia called Molena. He grew up on a small animal farm of about 20 acres raising rabbits, goats, chickens, llamas, pigs, emus and sheep. In addition, he is an outdoorsman and enjoys fishing, hiking, kayaking and shooting sports. Jeremy has a strong background in youth development programs with 14 years of experience in rural, urban, and military settings.



His true passion lies in Character Education, where one of his goals is to assist young people with making the adjustments needed to become brilliant and respectful young professionals. Jeremy embraces the 4-H objective that kids learn by doing, so he enjoys creating opportunities for young people to branch out to discover and share their talents.

Jeremy comes from Mercer University where he worked as the ESOL Program Coordinator.

He is a graduate from Mercer University holding a Master's degree in Divinity. He also served in the military as a US Naval Officer. Jeremy is very excited about the opportunities offered by UF/4-H and is happy to join Extension.