




Healthy Food Choices for Ageing Elders during Festive Season

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What are some of the things we can do as caregivers for our loved ones to enjoy eating while staying healthy during this festive season?

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Start with wise portion control



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1. Avoid going to a feast with an empty stomach

Go for a high fibre fruit or snack an hour or two before the big meal to avoid overindulging.

2. Survey the food you want before loading the plate

“Eyeball” the food available, this will help you to decide what should go into your plate! Leave no regrets as you only put what you really want onto your plate.

3. Have more of the healthier food preparation

Go for foods that are steamed, stir-fried, air-fried or grilled. Limit the intake of food that are preserved (e.g turkey or fried food) as they contribute to higher blood pressure and increase cholesterol respectively. This is especially of importance if one has multiple medical conditions that requires them to be on a restricted diet.

4. Sequence matters – start with veggies!

Fill your tummy with vegetables first, e.g broccoli, cauliflower, pumpkin or carrot - all of which that contain

Start with wise portion control



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5. Say yes to low calorie drinks

Go for unsweetened drinks and plain water. You can add flavours to plain water with mint or lemon if you like gassy drinks.

6. Eat slowly, savour your food

Pace yourself, do not rush into eating. This will allow time for your tummy to fill (and feel) the fullness and thus prevent overeating.

7. Be ready to say 'no' OR just say 'later'!

It might be difficult to decline food offered during a social event. If you are worried about appearing impolite, you can always say 'later'.

Still cannot resist?

1. 'Compensate' or balance out your meal

Try eating less for one of the meals on the day of feasting AND / OR make an attempt to exercise regularly (or more) during the festive season. The choice will depend on your health condition and preferences.

2. Ask yourself, "What really matters during festive season?"

What does festive season means to you? Is it to eat? Or to gather and catch-up with people? Or maybe you have been eating healthily most of the time, then is this a time to pamper yourself? Ultimately, the control lies with you during the period of celebration.

More tips on Healthy Food Choices

- ✓ Go for the healthy snacks like nuts and seeds which contain good source of dietary fibre and plant protein that can make them feel fuller. Limit to 1 handful a day, and choose those that are unsalted and with no sugar coating.
- ✓ When buying new year goodies, go for the bakeries that offer low sugar or wholegrain versions. It will be excellent if you can bake the goodies yourself as you can control sugar content and use wholegrain flour instead.
- ✓ If you are the host, look for caterers that use healthier ingredients such as wholegrain, healthier cooking oil and less deep fried items in their menus.



Healthy Recipes for Pot-luck Chicken & Leek Pie (Serves 6)

Ingredients for Pie Filling

- 2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 large leeks (white and light green parts only) , well washed and thinly sliced
- 1 cups carrots, thinly sliced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 tablespoons wholemeal flour
- 2 teaspoons chopped fresh sage, or teaspoon dried sage
- 2 cups reduced sodium chicken broth
- 2 cups diced cooked chicken
- 1 cups frozen peas
- 1 teaspoon of salt
- Freshly ground pepper to taste



Chicken & Leek Pie

Ingredients for Mashed Potatoes

- 1 kg potatoes, peeled and cut into chunks
- 1 cup of low fat milk
- 1 teaspoon salt
- Freshly ground pepper to taste
- 1 egg lightly beaten
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin oil

Method

- Preheat oven to 200C. Heat 2 teaspoons of extra virgin oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add leeks and carrots and saute for about 7 minutes. Add garlic and continue to saute for another 1 minute.
- Add flour and sage to the vegetables. Stir continuously for about 2 minutes or until the flour starts to turn light brown.
- Make a thick sauce by gradually adding chicken broth to the flour and vegetable mixture. Keep stirring for 5 minutes or until the sauce thickens.

Chicken & Leek Pie

- Add chicken and peas, as well as salt and pepper to taste. Transfer the mixture to a deep 23cm pie pan or baking dish and set aside.
- Cook potatoes over medium heat in a large saucepan of water for 10 minutes or until tender. Once the potatoes are soft enough for mashing, transfer the potatoes into a colander and drain well.
- Mash the potatoes. Add small amounts of low-fat milk at intervals to make a smooth puree. Stir in an egg and 1 tablespoon of olive oil then season with salt and pepper.
- Spread the mashed potatoes on top of the pie filling mixture in the pie pan or baking dish. With the back of a spoon, make decorative swirls. Set the dish on a baking sheet and bake for 25 to 30 minutes or until the potatoes and filling are heated through and the top is golden brown.

Healthy Recipes for Pot-luck Chocolate Almond Pudding (Serves 4)

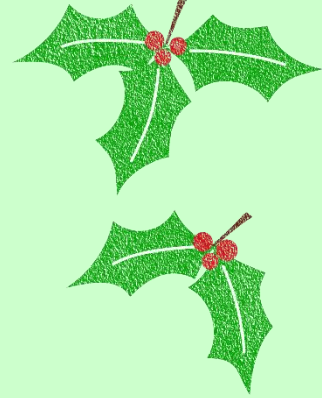
Ingredients:

- 50 g unsweetened dark chocolate
- 1 slice of wholemeal bread
- 2 tablespoon low-fat milk
- 50 g unsalted trans-fat free margarine
- 50 g ground almonds
- 60 g sugar
- 3 egg yolks and 3 egg white

Chocolate Almond Pudding

Method

- Melt the chocolate. Cut the crust off the bread. Finely crumble the bread and mix together with milk until it is well-combined.
- Grease cupcake moulds or heatproof cups (150ml) with some margarine.
- Beat the remaining margarine and 30g of sugar until the texture becomes light and fluffy then gradually stir in the egg yolks. Next, add the chocolate, bread crumbs mixture and almonds.
- Whisk the egg white with 30g of sugar and fold into the mixture.
- Fill the moulds or heatproof cups with the pudding mixture until they are full and cover well with heatproof foil. Steam for 30 minutes.
- When the pudding is ready, carefully turn them out onto the plates and serve with low fat whipped cream.



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