

Healthy Holiday Eating

Healthy eating during the holidays may seem impossible but with a little preparation it can be done. At holiday gatherings start with fresh fruit and vegetables. Drink plenty of water throughout the day. Don't wait until the big meal to eat. Start the day with a hearty breakfast including whole grains, fruit and a low-fat dairy food.

Five healthy changes most people can make are:

1. Eat more fruits and veggies.
2. Eat less fat, by avoiding fried foods and adding less fat to food.
3. Use moderation when choosing the amount of food to eat.
4. Drink more water and limit other beverages.
5. Keep physically active, it will increase your immune system and reduce your health risks.

Involving children in the kitchen with planning and preparing can have an extra special meaning during the holidays. Spending the time together can build family bonds and traditions they will remember into adulthood.

Your children's ages will determine how much they can help in the kitchen. Start with hand washing, encouraging children to wash for 20 seconds. Singing the alphabet song while washing their hands can help



them know how long to wash. Let children help with the measuring, pouring and stirring. While you're working together, talk about healthy food choices. Let them help with the planning of meals and snacks.

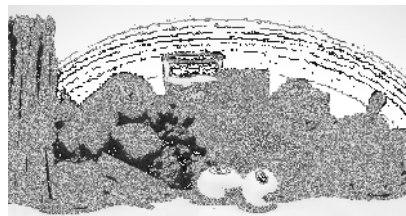
Everyone loves milk and cookies, but here are some other ideas to offer guests and Santa:

- Fruit and cheese
- Graham crackers and peanut butter
- String cheese and tortilla
- Nuts, dried fruit and whole-grain cereal
- Slice of pumpkin bread
- Baked tortilla chips and bean dip
- Yogurt and granola
- Fresh vegetables and low-fat dip
- Pita bread and hummus
- Air-popped popcorn

Holiday Food Safety

The holidays mean a lot of cooking in busy kitchens, so food safety is very important. Follow these tips to keep your family healthy:

- Clean hands, food-contact surfaces, and raw foods like fruits and vegetables.
- Separate raw, cooked, and ready-to-eat foods while shopping for, preparing or storing foods.



- Defrost foods properly. Defrost meat in the refrigerator overnight.
- When hosting potlucks, remind guests to keep cold dishes cold and hot dishes hot.
- When baking cookies, cakes or brownies that include eggs, fight the temptation to taste the raw dough or batter.
- Always use a meat thermometer to check that meat is cooked through. Cook turkey to at least 180 degrees and ham to at least 160 degrees.

- Remember to reheat leftovers to 165 degrees and bring gravy to a boil before serving to kill microorganisms.
- Remove turkey from the bone and store it separately from the stuffing and gravy.
- Refrigerate or freeze leftovers within two hours of cooking the food to avoid growth of harmful bacteria.
- Eat leftover turkey within three to four days; eat stuffing and gravy within one to two days.
- When in doubt, throw it out!

Special thanks to Jennifer Barr for her help with this article!

The Berrien County Health Department has five locations to serve you:

Benton Harbor		Niles		Three Oaks
769 Pipestone	M-139 Office	School Based	1205 N. Front St.	21 N. Elm
P.O. Box 706	2106 S. M-139	870 Colfax Ave	684-2800	756-2008
926-7121	927-5623	925-4500		

Or visit us on the web at www.berriencohlthdept.org

Berrien County Health

Department:
Preventing Disease,
Prolonging Life and
Protecting the
Health of the
Community.



Step Up to a Healthier You!

December is Stepping Up to A Healthier You month. This month, the health department will bring you information about topics to keep you healthy during the hectic holiday season, including: Stress Management, Winter Safety, Healthy Eating for Christmas, and Alcohol Awareness. For questions about any of these topics, please call the health department at **926-7121**.

Homemade Granola:

10 c. old fashioned or quick oats
2 c. wheat germ
1c. wheat bran (found in the natural food aisle of your grocery store)
1 c. chopped nuts
1 c. coconut
3/4 c. brown sugar
1 c. canola oil
1 c. hot water
2 t. salt
1 T. vanilla
Mix first 5 ingredients in large bowl. Set aside. Wisk the next 5 ingredients together, then stir into dry mixture. Spread evenly in 2- 9X13 inch baking dishes. Bake overnight, 10-12 hours on 170 degrees. Allow 2 hours to cool, then store in air tight bag. Serve with fresh, dried, or canned fruit, milk or yogurt.

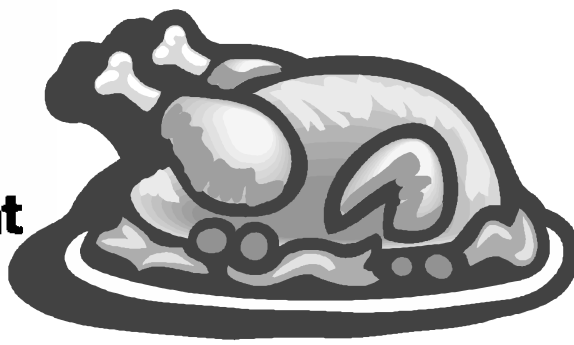
Happy Holidays
from the
Health Department!



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