



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Healthy Tips for the Holidays!

Crow Wing County WIC program is excited to celebrate the holidays but wants to remind community member that calories can quickly add up so here are ten ways to keep your weight in check this season: Create menu makeover by changing holiday recipes into healthier ones. Focus on nutrient dense foods, less fat, sodium and added sugar. Start with small changes!

Contribute a well-balanced meal by choosing a variety of whole grains, vegetables, fruit, lean protein and low-fat dairy. Prepare whole-grain crackers with hummus as an appetizer; add unsalted nuts and black beans to a green-leaf salad; include fresh fruit at the dessert table; use low-fat milk instead of heavy cream in your casseroles. Share healthier options during your holiday meal.

Choose lean proteins such as turkey, roast beef, fresh ham, beans, and some types of fish, such as cod or flounder, are lean protein choices. Trim fat when cooking meats. Go easy on the sauces and gravies — they can be high in saturated fat and sodium.

Cheers to good health by quenching your thirst with low-calorie options. Drink water with lemon or lime slices. Offer seltzer water with a splash of 100% fruit juice. It's easy to dismiss the calories in beverages such as eggnog that can have more than 300 calories, and 19 g fat per cup. Be mindful and limit any beverage that contains, whole milk, cream, whipped cream or alcohol (for those 21 and older). Alcohol increases your appetite and diminishes your ability to control what you eat.

Bake healthier using recipes with unsweetened applesauce or mashed ripe bananas instead of butter. Try cutting the amount of sugar listed in recipes in half. Use spices to add flavor such as cinnamon, allspice, or nutmeg instead of salt.

Tweaking sweets for dessert, try baked apples with cinnamon and a sprinkle of sugar instead of apple pie that is packed with fat and sugar. Invite your guests to make their own parfait with colorful sliced fruit and low-fat yogurt.

Focus on fun by laughing, chatting, dancing and enjoying the company of others instead of food. Move socializing away from the buffet or appetizer table to prevent mindless eating. Eat slowly, and check your fullness levels while you're eating. It takes a few minutes for your stomach's "I'm getting full" signal to get to your brain. After finishing your first helping, take a 10-minute break. Make conversation. Drink some water. Then recheck your appetite. You might realize you are full or want only a small portion of seconds. Remember — there are always leftovers!

Make being active part of your holiday tradition. Have fun walking and talking with family and friends after a holiday meal. Give gifts that encourage others to practice healthy habits such as workout equipment, gym memberships, running shoes, and reusable water bottles. Create delicious new meals with your leftovers. Add turkey to soups or salads. Use extra veggies in omelets, sandwiches, or stews. The possibilities are endless!

Proper food and nutrition can make a long-term impact on health. These tips from the Crow Wing County WIC program provide ideas about ways to live a healthier lifestyle and promotes a balanced eating through the holiday season.

Community Services administers more than seventy federal and state benefit and assistance services and programs to residents in Crow Wing County. The Department is dedicated to providing excellent service and efficient management in performing its mission of promoting and protecting the health, well-being and self-sufficiency of all Crow Wing County residents.

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Our Vision: Being Minnesota's favorite place.

Our Mission: Serve well. Deliver value. Drive results.

Our Values: Be responsible. Treat people right. Build a better future.

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