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Seasonal trimming ideas for the season

The vision of sugar plums can be a worry more than a pleasant anticipation this holiday season for those trying to maintain a healthy lifestyle. All that great food, much of it high in fat and calories, can have an effect on the waistline for even the most health-conscious individuals.

Dietitians of Canada and the Canadian Diabetes Association have teamed up to bring you their top ten tips for healthy holiday living.

1. Use the Nutrition Facts table on packaged food products to compare the nutrients in similar foods and make lower fat, lower calorie choices. Most packaged foods in grocery retail stores must carry a standardized Nutrition Facts table providing consumers with a core list of nutrients. Visit www.healthyeatingisinstore.ca to find fact sheets and Frequently Asked Questions that will help make you a wise consumer when it

comes to label reading.

2. Keep your eye on portion sizes – it's often not what but how much you eat that can make the difference. Use Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide as a guide to serving sizes.
3. Make health and road safety a priority when serving holiday beverages. Lower fat egg-nogs, "virgin" Caesars, sparkling water and cranberry juice spritzers without the alcohol are great choices in keeping with the season.
4. Use fresh zucchini or cucumber spears, broccoli flowerets, carrot curls or endive with a low fat dip or spread such as hummus, yogurt or fresh salsa, rather than chips and cream-laden dips.
5. Serve crispy pita triangles, flatbread and homemade melba toast as alternatives to salty, high-fat snack crackers.
6. When it comes to holiday entertaining check out the delicious recipes, chosen with health in mind, in

Dietitians of Canada's cookbook "Simply Great Food" or the "Complete Canadian Diabetes Cookbook" from the Canadian Diabetes Association.

7. A beautiful array of exotic fresh fruits is a wonderful way to end a meal – pineapple, kiwi, mango, pomegranate, mandarin oranges and grapes are a feast for the eyes and taste buds.
8. Make physical activity part of the holiday fun to provide a balance to eating. Plan a cross-country ski afternoon or a hike combined with potluck with friends.
9. Give a gift of health that will last the whole year – an exercise ball is great for stretching; an exercise book or video with an exercise mat; golf lessons for the duffer on your list; some light weights for strength training; pedometer for someone who enjoys walking.
10. Track your eating and activity level over the holiday season to help you stay on track. Dietitians of Canada EATracker at

www.dietitians.ca/eat-racker is a convenient and easy to use tool. Or use the Recipe Analyzer at www.dietitians.ca/public/content/eat_well_live_well/english/recipeanalyzer/recipeanalyzer.asp to help modify your favourite recipes with lower fat, lower sodium and lower sugar options.

Make these healthy living tips part of your routine the whole year – not just for the holidays. Small changes over time will make the greatest impact on your health.

Dietitians of Canada represents almost 6,000 dietitians across Canada and is committed to advancing the health and well-being of consumers through food and nutrition.

The Canadian Diabetes Association works in communities across the country to promote the health of Canadians and eliminate diabetes.

To learn more, visit diabetes.ca or call 1-800-226-8464.

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