

December

Building Healthy Schools & Communities



Celebrate Healthy Holidays!

For many families, the holiday season means lots of parties filled with friends, family and of course, food! But you don't have to go without your favorite foods this holiday season. By following a few tips on holiday eating, you and your family can enjoy special foods while keeping a balanced and healthy diet.

- Offer to bring a low-calorie dish to holiday parties. Your host might appreciate it, and you'll know that at least one healthy item will be on hand.
- Think about your drink! Limit high-sugar drinks. Be sure to drink lots of water and limit soda and other high-sugar beverages.
- Avoid fast food. The holiday season can keep you on the go with little time to prepare meals. Fast food may be handy, but often is high in fat. Prepare and freeze quick, healthy meals ahead of time to stay out of the fast food trap.
- Watch your portions. To avoid overeating, choose smaller portions of the foods you want to try. And don't park yourself in front of the buffet at a party. Mingle! If you stand by the buffet, you'll eat more than you would if it was across the room.
- Include physical activity into your festivities. Take nice brisk walks with friends and family around the neighborhood to see the holiday decorations, or turn on the radio and dance to your favorite holiday music.

For more healthy holiday tips, visit <http://family.samhsa.gov/be/holidayeat.aspx>



Keep Moving This Winter. Just because it's cold outside doesn't mean you and your family need to stop being active. For good health, children should be active for at least 1 hour every day. Here are a few tips to get your family moving this winter.

- ✓ Discover indoor facilities like ice rinks, bowling alleys, and indoor pools.
- ✓ Take it outside when it snows. Bundle up and head outside to build a snowman, throw snowballs, go sledding, or ice skate.
- ✓ Head to the mall. Take the family for a brisk walk around the mall for some "power" window shopping
- ✓ Visit the library. Libraries are a great resource for free children's fitness videos and books.
- ✓ Keep it clean. Recruit family members to help with the house cleaning. Have younger kids pick up toys, while older kids can help vacuum, sort laundry or scrub the bathroom.

Resource: Coulee Region Childhood Obesity Coalition, Fall 2009 Newsletter.

<http://www.childhoodobesitycoalition.org/>

Building Healthy Schools. Many schools celebrate the holidays with fun activities and parties. Work with your child's school this holiday season to ensure that classroom parties offer healthy options. Choose healthy foods when planning a party - include fruits, vegetables, whole-grain and low-fat dairy foods. Limit high-fat and high-sugar options. And don't forget to include fun games and activities that get students and teachers up and moving!