

# Living Healthy Georgia – Seniors Taking Charge

December 2009 Newsletter

## Holiday Health Package

By Lauren Atwell, BSFCS

Your holiday healthy eating package has arrived! This holiday healthy eating package is designed to show you how to eat healthy during the holidays without spending extra time and while still eating your favorite holiday treats in moderation.

Sharing meals with family and friends around the holidays is an important and enjoyable way to spend time with loved ones and can be a healthy time as well. It all starts with the foods that are offered. You should make or eat particular items, but add in some healthy ones as well. For example, pair turkey and dressing with healthy and fresh steamed vegetables. Pair that piece of red velvet cake with a cold glass of fat-free skim milk. There are even ways to modify recipes that will help them nourish your body while keeping those comforting aromas and flavors. Whenever you can combine happiness, comfort, and

being healthy, you feel your best. There is no better way to spend the holidays or start the new year. Here are a few tricks to eating healthy over the holidays.

### Adopt a ‘this or that’ attitude.

When you are presented with all those yummy desserts and mouth-watering dishes, think about the foods you absolutely must have. With those foods in mind, avoid eating the other treats that might tempt you, keeping in mind that you are saving room for your favorites. Also, space out the unhealthy foods you really want to eat or serve over the holidays. The holiday spirit lasts over a month, so relax – you have plenty of time. Also, when it comes to serving foods, adopting a ‘this or that’ attitude is healthy for the whole family!

**Holiday activities** often involve preparing tasty holiday goodies, but

Department of Foods and Nutrition, The University of Georgia, GA 30602  
Division of Aging Services, Georgia Department of Human Resources, Atlanta, GA 30303

# Live Healthy Georgia – Seniors Taking Charge!

there are many other fun and spirit-filled activities to take part in as well. The more of these activities you do with your family and friends, the less time you will have to think about not eating those gingerbread cookies on the kitchen counter. Good examples are to read stories to grandchildren, nieces or nephews, make ornaments, go cut down a tree, decorate the house and ask for help, go on shopping trips with your family, make gifts or food for other people, go caroling with neighbors, volunteer to ring bells at a local grocery store to raise money for those in need, or listen to holiday music around the fireplace. The possibilities are endless!

**Don't forget physical activity.** Being active can help burn off extra calories you are getting from those holiday treats. Being physically active over the holidays can be easy and fun! Holiday activities, like those mentioned earlier, naturally make us more active. Walking briskly through department stores, decorating and cleaning the house to prepare for company, vigorously cooking dinner to make sure everything is ready on time...all of these things are part of your physical activity. If you are still not getting enough activity, try

staying an extra 30 minutes at a store to walk the perimeter or playing holiday carols and dancing while you clean the house. Also, the reasons for cooking and running around, such as inviting guests over or buying gifts for loved ones, make these everyday activities a lot more enjoyable!

**Recipe substitutions** do not have to compromise the taste and aroma of your



favorite foods. It just takes a little knowledge of how to substitute

certain ingredients. See the substitution list below for examples.

Try **substituting fat** in your favorite baked recipes with one of the following:

- Nonfat yogurt or buttermilk
- Mashed pumpkin, squashes, or sweet potatoes
- Reduced-fat margarine or light butter

# Live Healthy Georgia – Seniors Taking Charge!

When substituting fat, here are some cooking tips to help your dishes keep those yummy tastes and aromas:

**Avoid over-baking to keep baked goods moist.** Cook using slightly shorter times and lower temperatures than the standard in the recipe. Adjust if needed.

**Adjust amount of fat substitute if product is still too dry.** Replace  $\frac{1}{2}$  the fat with a fat substitute, mix up the batter, and add a bit more substitute if the batter seems dry.

**Store fat-free goods** in plastic wrap in airtight containers and separated by sheets of waxed paper. Refrigerate after the first 24 hours unless recipe states otherwise.

Also, try **substituting refined flours for whole-grain flours** to help lower cholesterol and boost the nutrient content of your holiday meals.

Types of wheat flours:

*Barley flour* → slightly sweet and adds a cake-like texture

*Oat flour* → mild, sweet flavor; Retains moisture

*Brown rice flour* → mild, sweet flavor and adds a crisp, crunchy texture

*Cornmeal* → Sweet flavor and adds a crunchy texture; Make sure to buy “unbolted” whole grain cornmeal

*Oat bran* → sweet, mild flavor; Retains moisture; Choose softer, more finely ground types

*Wheat bran* → adds fiber and texture to muffins; choose unprocessed

*White whole wheat flour* → sweeter and lighter tasting than regular whole wheat

*Whole wheat pastry flour* → produces a lighter, softer-textured baked product than regular whole wheat; Use when making muffins, quick breads, cakes and cookies

*Whole wheat flour*

**Cooking tip:** Over-mixing batters is not a concern if using all whole grain flour in a recipe, since whole grain flours have more fiber than refined flours.



# Live Healthy Georgia – Seniors Taking Charge!

## Poppy Seed Muffins

*Yield: 10 muffins*

- 1 cup whole wheat flour
- ½ cup oat flour
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 3-4 tsp poppy seeds
- 1 tsp baking soda
- ¾ cup plain nonfat yogurt
- 2 egg whites
- 1 tsp vanilla or almond extract
- ¼ cup chopped almonds (optional)

1. Combine flours, sugar, poppy seeds & baking soda. Stir to mix well. Add yogurt, egg whites & vanilla or almond extract. Stir just until dry ingredients are moistened. Fold in almonds if desired
2. Coat muffin cups with nonstick cooking spray, & fill ¾ full with batter. Bake at 350°F for 14-16 minutes or just until a wooden toothpick inserted in the center of a muffin comes out clean.
3. Remove muffin tin from oven, & allow it to sit for 5 minutes before removing muffins. Serve warm or at room temperature.

## *Nutritional Facts (per muffin)*

<i>Calories</i>	106
<i>Fat</i>	0.9 g
<i>Protein</i>	4.4 g
<i>Carbohydrates</i>	20 g
<i>Cholesterol</i>	0 mg
<i>Sodium</i>	107 mg
<i>Fiber</i>	2.2 g
<i>Calcium</i>	54 mg
<i>Potassium</i>	128 mg
<i>Iron</i>	0.8 mg

