

Practice Healthy Holiday Eating

Submitted by the Wellness Committee Nutrition Subcommittee

The holidays are stressful times for everyone. Busy schedules only add to the stress and can create difficulties maintaining your healthy routine of nutritious foods and regular physical activity. Moderation and balance are the keys to success when dealing with food and physical activity. Holiday foods are a part of special memories and times with friends and families. This year, place your focus on the visiting and not the food. Remember: Planning is the key to success.

Be practical

This season is usually the time we gain those “holiday pounds.” Try to plan ways to have lower calorie meals on days when you will be sampling holiday goodies. This can help you maintain your weight.

Keep moving!

The more we move, the more calories we burn. Think about taking the stairs, walking the aisles of the mall, bowling, hiking, dancing or other activities that you enjoy. Parking your car farther away from the office or the mall entrance can also add more steps to your day. On celebration days, plan to be more physically active.

Maintain sleep patterns

Research has shown that when we do not get enough sleep, we eat more. The holiday rush may impact our sleep patterns, increasing the urge to eat.

Hunger cues

When you are hungry, it can be very difficult to avoid high calorie foods. Hunger may also encourage you to eat larger amounts of these foods than normal. So the idea to skip a meal on celebration days may also lead to overeating. To take the edge off hunger, eat a small, lower calorie snack such as fruit or a whole grain bagel or raw vegetables before you go to your celebration. This will decrease your feelings of hunger and you will not be tempted to rush straight to the food when you arrive. Also, once you arrive, have sparkling water with a twist of lemon, lime or orange as your beverage. This type of drink provides no calories versus the high calories from punch, eggnog, mixed drinks or soft drinks.

Buffet eating

Keep your portions small and select more of the lower calorie foods. These would include raw vegetables with little or no dip, boiled shrimp or scallops with cocktail sauce, or lemon and fresh fruit. Use a smaller plate so you are not as tempted to overeat. Try to make only one trip through the buffet line.



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Sit-down dinner

Make your first helping small. If your hostess encourages seconds, then again make the portions small. This will help ensure that your total consumption is about the same as a normal portion.

Do not set yourself up for failure with an “all or nothing” attitude. Remember to include the special foods on your plate, but just small tastes of a variety of foods. Adopting this strategy may also help prevent any guilt you may have concerning your holiday eating.

If you have a day in which you are not able to maintain your healthy habits, just try to do better the next day. Feelings of guilt can also sabotage your overall plans. Give yourself a break. Have a healthy, enjoyable holiday!

Grant Helps Kentucky Families

A \$1.2 million federal grant will help Kentucky’s adoptive families get even more support.

On Dec. 12, the University of Louisville announced it has received a \$1.2 million grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Children’s Bureau to strengthen adoptive families.

Associate Professor Bibhuti Sar heads the Kent School of Social Work team coordinating the five-year grant. The grant will provide post-adoptive services designed to support marital relationships to give families a better chance at success and reduce adoption disruption. About 810 families will be served by the grant.

The Cabinet, many universities and several adoption support groups are partners in providing the grant’s services.

Holiday Stress Management Lunch ‘n’ Learn

Holidays are a wonderful time to spend quality time with family and friends, attend parties, shop and enjoy lots of delicious food and fellowship with others.

However, holidays also can be stressful times for some people dealing with the loss of loved ones, troubled relationships, financial worries, health concerns and other anxieties and fears.

To help CHFS employees cope with holiday stress, the wellness committee will host a holiday stress management Lunch ‘n’ Learn workshop on Wednesday, Dec. 20, in the CHR Building cafeteria conference room from noon to 1 p.m. Please join us as we discuss what triggers our holiday blues and how to battle these stressors.

Partnership Recognizes DCBS Consultant

The Kentucky Partnership for Families and Children (KPFC) has presented Dr. Allen J. Brenzel, a pediatrician, pediatric psychiatrist, adult psychiatrist and consultant to the Department for Community Based Services, the Betty Triplett Award.

The award is given in honor of Triplett, who worked for DCBS from 1964 until her retirement in 1994, serving in a variety of capacities including social worker, district manager, Central Office administrative supervisor, and eventually assistant director. She was instrumental in the implementation of family-based services in the department and worked to better serve families, while protecting children and vulnerable adults.

Brenzel works at the University of Kentucky's Comprehensive Assessment and Training Service (CATS) clinic, which he helped start in 1999. He is also a professor at UK and part-time consultant to DCBS. Brenzel partners with DCBS to make appropriate placements for children, many of whom suffer from Reactive Attachment Disorder (RAD). Brenzel is passionate about ensuring that placement decisions allow children to grow in the least restrictive, most nurturing environment available. He considers all opinions from everyone involved in making recommendations for a child's future, and makes sure the child's needs are the priority.

KPFC is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving services for children with emotional, behavioral and/or mental health disabilities and their families. Learn more about the organization online at <http://www.kypartnership.net>.

Living Well

Step Away From the Scale

By Kris Hayslett

People tend to pay more attention to weight and size versus their body's overall health. The scale is a tool for weight loss and management, but it is not the best tool. In the past, the main measurement that determined your health was your weight in relation to your height. That is still used today to calculate your body mass index (BMI).

The BMI is a chart that determines whether you are at a healthy weight or at risk for obesity. The chart classifies individuals from a desirable range up to grade three obesity (morbid obesity). In addition to the body mass index, the chart focuses on your total body composition, which is your ratio of lean body mass (muscle, bones, organs and internal fluids) to fat mass. In some cases, people can appear thin and healthy, but when their body composition is taken they carry a high percentage of body fat which puts them at a higher risk for health problems. The goal is to decrease the fat mass and increase the lean body mass.

Risks for high levels of body fat include:

- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Some forms of cancer
- Low back pain
- Other musculoskeletal problems (back, hip, knee, ankle or foot problems)

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Scale weight can vary for both men and women depending on what time of the day you step on the scale. Also, different scales will give you different readings depending on their calibration. In many cases, people weigh themselves at home and then go to the doctor's office and the reading is different. Which one do you believe? Most people tend to say they weigh less than more. Other reasons for a weight variance are clothing, shoes and gender (women's weight can fluctuate due to their monthly cycle).

Body composition is an important term to understand in weight maintenance or weight loss. Crash dieting or low calorie diets can cause a decrease in lean body mass or muscle, which actually plays a role in metabolism. The more muscle a person has, the more metabolically active he or she is at rest and during exercise. As result of crash dieting, people are losing lean body mass, which is not good for the body.

Dieting, one of the necessary components for weight loss, can shed pounds, but without physical activity the success rate of keeping it off decreases.

Physical activity is the other main component, but it alone does not lead to weight loss. Take a moment and think about all the people you know and those who exercise regularly. Are all of them healthy at their recommended weight? Not all fitness participants are at a healthy weight. This could mean that they are exercising, but not necessarily watching what they eat.

The best way to monitor your progress is by analyzing how you feel and how your clothes feel. Follow this plan of action:

- Make a commitment to getting healthy and stick with it.
- Set realistic goals – Weight loss should be on average 1 to 2 pounds per week. Don't compare yourself to pictures in magazines. The average American model is 5-feet 11-inches tall and weighs 117 pounds. Most of these fashion models are thinner than 98 percent of American women.
- Be patient – there are no “quick fixes.”
- Keep a fitness and nutrition journal to track your progress.
- Don't diet. Eat healthy. Watch portion sizes and identify your poor eating habits.
- Focus on quality and quantity.
- Ask family and friends to help you with your challenge.

Body composition machines are available at most stores if you are interested in purchasing one. Be careful not to shift your habit of stepping on the scale to testing your body composition. The test should be done to give you a base to start from and then again after consistent cardiovascular and resistance training along with a healthy diet. It should be used to track your progress. However, the cheapest way to track your progress is to go by how you feel and how your clothes fit. Focus on your overall health, not just your appearance.

Focus Health Tip of the Week

Make Holiday Parties Safe, Fun

Submitted by Anne Parr, R.N.

Parties are a staple of the holiday season, it's true. But keeping a watchful eye on food and drink may help you have a merrier holiday season.

Finger foods may be appealing at holiday parties, but watch out for food left out for long periods of time, particularly seafood and foods containing mayonnaise. These foods are far more likely to cause food poisoning.

If you're visiting friends for a party, go easy on homemade punches and cocktails. It is difficult to judge how much alcohol may be included and it can increase during the course of an evening. Your alcohol blood level could be over the legal driving limit and you may not even realize it, posing a potentially dangerous situation.

Drinking is more prevalent during the holidays than any other time of year. Here are some facts about drunk driving:

- Impaired driving kills more than 17,000 people each year.
- About 275,000 people are hurt and 1.5 million are arrested.

If you are hosting a holiday party, or attending one, here are some tips to protect yourself and others:

- Encourage conversation instead of drinking.
- Don't have an open bar.
- Pace yourself - a drink an hour is a good guide.
- Push non-salty snacks.
- Offer non-alcoholic drinks.
- Men: Rethink your third drink. Women: Rethink your second drink if driving.
- If you are going to drink, have a designated driver or call a taxi.

Employee Enrichment

By Anya Armes Weber

Employee Enrichment is a weekly feature for CHFS staff. These tips for making work better focus on team building, customer service and personal development.

If the holidays are adding pressure to your daily work stress, take a breather. Deep breathing is something you can quietly do at your desk or on your commute.

This technique, recommended by the Kentucky Employee Assistance Program, helps you to calm down by transferring your attention from whatever is bothering you to your body and breathing. Rely on this method when you are frazzled.

1. Inhale slowly through your nose for four counts.
2. Next, hold your breath for four counts.
3. Finally, slowly exhale through your mouth for four counts. Your abdomen will flatten as the air is released.

Taking this brief timeout should make you feel a bit more relaxed.