

Walk **NEBRASKA**

CUTTING COSTS AND CALORIES DURING THE HOLIDAYS

The holidays are a special time for family and friends to get together. For most of these gatherings, food plays a part in the festivities. The cost of the food as well as the calories can add up. Plan ahead to reduce surprises.

When YOU are making the food, keep these tips in mind:

- Consider making less food. While it is nice to have the diversity of flavors and food choices, does there need to be three meat choices or three or four desserts?
- The meat will usually be the most expensive item. Check sale ads for your local grocery store. Stock up if the meat (or any other food) you plan to serve is on sale. Refrigerate or freeze as necessary.
- For desserts, have at least one healthy alternative. This could be fruit or pudding, made special with a dollop of non-dairy whipped topping.
- If serving not-so-healthy (but yummy) desserts, offer small portions. Sometimes, just two or three bites of cheesecake are enough to satisfy the sweet tooth. If a large portion is served, people have a tendency to eat the entire portion.
- Have plenty of vegetables. Serve raw vegetables for guests to munch on while waiting for the meal. Include a variety of vegetables as part the meal.
- Offer whole grain breads and rolls to increase fiber intake. If making stuffing, use whole grains.
- The cost of beverages can add up quickly. Consider serving water as the beverage with the meal. Not only is water the healthiest choice, if using tap water, it is the cheapest. Serve other beverages before or after the meal.

When YOU are a guest, remember:

- Drink lots of water. Not only does water keep you hydrated, it helps give a full feeling, reducing the temptation to overeat. The calories in most other beverages add up quickly. In many cases, the calories are just empty and provide no nutritional value.
- Choose small portions of the food offered. Enjoy each and every bite. Seconds can be okay, just make sure you are still hungry.
- Focus on the vegetables and whole grains when choosing foods.
- When selecting dessert, opt for a small portion.
- Stand or sit away from the buffet table or other table of food to reduce the risk of reaching for food.

Whether you are a guest or host, consider adding physical activity to your holiday gatherings. Go for a walk or play games outside to get moving.

Know how. Know now.



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