

QuickTakes



DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE

And don't let anyone else drink and drive! The holiday season is one of the most dangerous times of the year for alcohol-related accidents and death.

If you and your family or friends are going to a party and may drink, decide in advance who will be the designated driver. Resist the pressure to drink at every social event. Don't feel like you have to drink just because your host offers—it's not rude to choose a non-alcoholic beverage instead.

If you are hosting an event and will be serving alcohol, offer nonalcoholic beverages as well. Make your guests feel as comfortable choosing nonalcoholic beverages as they would choosing alcohol.

Weight Loss vs. Weight Maintenance?

The holiday season is almost here, bringing big meals and little time for exercise. As a result, many adults, especially those that are already overweight, are susceptible to gaining another five pounds. Yet instead of focusing on weight loss, concentrate on weight maintenance for greater success.

To maintain your weight, you don't need to pass on the potatoes and gravy, pie, or anything else that you love during the holidays. Simply aim for moderation and balance. Taking one helping of potatoes instead of two, or taking small portions of your favorites will help. And don't neglect physical activity. Although this is a busy time of year, sneak in exercise whenever you can. Balance a heavy meal with a brisk walk before or afterwards. Get the whole family involved in a walk around the neighborhood or challenge the kids to a dance off before settling in for the evening.

To combat holiday weight gain, here are some additional suggestions:

Be realistic. Don't try to lose weight during the holidays, instead, maintain your weight.

Never skip meals. Eat smaller, lower calorie meals during the day so you can enjoy a few higher calorie items at parties and gatherings.

Eat before the party. Eat a light snack before heading out the door. This will keep you from over-doing it the rest of the night.

Choose lower-calorie foods. To ensure there will be healthy festive foods at your gathering, bring a plate of raw vegetables and low-fat dip or bring fruit kabobs.

Eat slowly. Many times, people eat so fast that their stomachs don't have enough time to register that they are full. Savor each bite and enjoy the taste of the food. Chances are you will eat less.

Don't park yourself in front of the buffet. Mingle! If you stand by the buffet, you'll eat more than you would if it was across the room.

Avoid fast food. The holiday season can keep you on the go with little time to prepare meals. Fast food may be handy, but many choices are high in fat. Prepare and freeze quick, healthy meals ahead of time to stay out of the fast food trap.

Squeeze in exercise. When shopping at a mall, walk a lap or two before starting your gift list.

Make fitness a priority. Put an exercise appointment on your calendar and keep to it as you would any appointment.

Many people use the holidays as an excuse to overeat and forgo healthy behaviors, but the same principals apply during the holidays as do for the rest of the year...enjoy foods in moderation, and pay close attention to portion sizes. Take pleasure in the holidays, and all that comes with them, including the food.

Know the Symptoms of Heart Attack and Stroke

A recent study revealed that more people die from heart attacks on Christmas Day and New Year's Day than any other days of the year. Researchers lay the blame on people's reluctance to disrupt celebrations and seek help.

In addition, people often take a break from healthy habits during the hectic holiday season. Behaviors such as eating well, exercising and getting enough rest should be maintained for good health. Furthermore, maintaining medications, especially high blood pressure pills and blood thinners, is critical.

This holidays season learn the signs of heart attack and stroke. But remember, even if you're not sure it's a heart attack, have it checked out. Minutes matter and fast action can save lives! Don't wait more than five minutes to call 9-1-1.

According to the American Heart Association, calling 9-1-1 is almost always the fastest way to get lifesaving treatment. Emergency medical services (EMS) staff can begin treatment when they arrive — up to an hour sooner than if someone gets to the hospital by car. EMS staff are also trained to revive someone whose heart has stopped. Patients with chest pain who arrive by ambulance usually receive faster treatment at the hospital, too. It is best to call EMS for rapid transport to the emergency room.

If you can't access the emergency medical services (EMS), have someone drive you to the hospital right away. If you're the one having symptoms, don't drive yourself, unless you have absolutely no other option.

Heart attack warning signs include:

- Chest pain or discomfort lasting more than a few minutes (or that goes away and comes back)
- Discomfort in other areas of the upper body, such as pain in one or both arms, back, neck, jaw or stomach
- Shortness of breath, with or without chest discomfort
- Other signs such as nausea, breaking out in a cold sweat or lightheadedness
- Women are more likely than men, however, to experience exhaustion and shortness of breath, indigestion or stomach upset, anxiety, and back or jaw pain

Stroke warning signs include:

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
- Sudden, severe headache with no known cause

Source: American Heart Association

Smashed Red Potatoes with Chives

Takes under 30 minutes
Makes 8-10 servings

A perfect side dish when you expect a crowd — you don't have to peel the potatoes or mash them into a smooth puree.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 pounds small red potatoes, scrubbed and quartered
- ¾ cup low-fat (1% milk), heated to steaming
- 2 tablespoons chopped onion or shallot
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- ¼ cup snipped fresh chives or thinly sliced scallion greens

PREPARATION:

1. Place potatoes in a large pot and cover with cold water. Bring to a boil and cook until soft, about 12 minutes. Drain and transfer to a large shallow bowl.
2. Crush with a potato masher, but do not mash until smooth. Stir in hot milk, onion, garlic, salt and pepper. Add chives, stirring gently to mix. Serve hot.

NUTRITIONAL INFO PER SERVING

- 191 Calories
- 0.3g Fat
- 0g Saturated Fat
- 5.0g Protein
- 43g Carbohydrate
- 4.0g Fiber
- 258mg Sodium

