



HEALTHY CHOICES FOR HEALTHY FAMILIES

TOPIC

CELEBRATE THE HEALTHY WAY!

Eating healthy and being physically active can be a fun part of parties and events.

- **Make healthy habits part of your celebrations.** Although food and beverages are a part of many events, they do not have to be the center of the occasion. Focus on activities that get people moving and allow people to enjoy each other's company.
- **Make foods look festive.** Add vegetables and fruit with bright colors to liven up dishes. Cut veggies and fruit in fun shapes that relate to the occasion. For example, place a green grape on a toothpick and top with a slice of banana and a strawberry to look like a Santa hat.
- **Offer thirst quenchers that please.** Add chopped fruit to water to add flavor and color.
- **Let MyPlate be your guide.** Offer whole-grain crackers, serve a bean dip with veggies, make fruit kabobs, use whole grain pasta for pasta



salads and add lots of veggies, or try substitutions like using Greek yogurt instead of mayonnaise.

Source: <https://choosemyplate-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/tenttips/DGTipsheet20MakeCelebrations.pdf>

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This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program — SNAP.



FOOD FACTS

SWEET POTATOES

Did you know sweet potatoes can be used in place of almost anything that potatoes are used for? They have a sweeter taste than regular potatoes. For best quality select round, firm potatoes without any bruises. Clean potatoes with warm water and scrub with a vegetable brush or peel the skin before preparing. Keep sweet potatoes in a dry, dark, cool place. They usually last up to 3-4 weeks. Refrigeration will cause the core to harden and make the vegetable bitter. Sweet potatoes are a great source of vitamins A and C as well as fiber, potassium and some B vitamins. Use these tips to prepare sweet potatoes for your family at home!



Source: <https://snaped.fns.usda.gov/seasonal-produce-guide/cauliflower>

PARENT'S POW-WOW

COLD WEATHER FUN

Sometimes it takes a little creativity to get moving in the winter. Use these tips to get moving even during the colder months.

- Add activity to story time. Either act out the story or choose a word that is repeated often, such as the main character's name, and stand every time it is mentioned.
- Tune into fun times. Have kids jump around to music and then freeze every time you pause the music.
- Don't forget the classic games such as hide and go seek, charades, and follow the leader.
- Head outdoors. Look around to see how nature changes in the winter. What animals do you see in the spring that you don't see in the winter? How do the plants look this time of year?

Source: https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/Nibbles_Newsletter_37.pdf

BASIC BUDGET BITES

TRASH TO TREASURE

Surprisingly, you can use parts of vegetables you usually toss away. Read these tips to see how:

- **Stalks:** Broccoli stalks are sweet and delicious. Chop and add them in with the heads, or grate them into a slaw. Stripped kale stems can be sliced, then cooked until tender with olive oil, garlic and a splash of water.
- **Leaves:** Any healthy-looking broccoli or cauliflower leaves can be chopped and used along with the florets. Celery leaves from inside the bunch are a great go-to herb; chop them to flavor a cooked dish or salad or to garnish soup.
- **Stems:** When you're using soft herbs such as cilantro and parsley, the stems can be chopped and added right to your dish.
- **Seeds:** You can roast and eat the seeds of any winter squash, not just pumpkins. Simply clean and dry them, then toss with a bit of oil and salt on a baking sheet. Roast in a 300-degree F oven until crisp and golden, about 25 minutes, stirring halfway through.
- **Zest:** Take a minute to wash and grate the zest of limes, lemons or oranges and shake up with olive oil and vinegar for a tasty salad dressing.
- **Tops:** Clean, healthy beet, turnip, or radish greens can be cooked like spinach — with or without their chopped roots — in a little olive oil with garlic and a splash of water.

Source: Chop Chop Magazine



COOKING WITH KIDS

OVEN BAKED SWEET POTATO FRIES

- **3 medium sweet potatoes**
- **3 tablespoons olive oil**
- **Salt and pepper**

1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees F.
2. Wash and peel sweet potatoes. Cut into ¼-inch slices/sticks.
3. In a large bowl, toss slices in olive oil until coated. Sprinkle with salt and pepper if desired.
4. Spread in a single layer on a baking sheet.
5. Bake until tender and golden brown (about 20 minutes), turning occasionally to brown evenly.

Number of servings: 6

Serving size: 1/6th of recipe

Nutrition Facts per serving: 116 calories; 7g total fat; 1g saturated fat; 0g trans fat; 0mg cholesterol; 36mg sodium; 13g carbohydrate; 2g fiber; 3g total sugars; 0g added sugars; 1g protein; 20mg calcium; 1mg iron; 219mg potassium.

Source: What's Cooking? USDA Mixing Bowl



RECIPE

STUFF IT! SWEET POTATOES

- **6 medium sweet potatoes**
- **¼ cup softened butter**
- **1 tablespoon orange zest**
- **2 tablespoons maple syrup**
- **½ teaspoon vanilla extract**
- **½ teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- **¼ cup chopped toasted almonds or pecans**

1. Wash and dry sweet potatoes. Bake at 425 degrees F for 40 minutes or until tender.
2. Once baked and slightly cooled, carefully cut a lengthwise slice on the top of each sweet potato.
3. Scoop out insides of sweet potato into a large bowl.

4. Mash sweet potato insides with the butter, orange zest, maple syrup, vanilla extract and cinnamon.
5. Spoon potato mixture back into sweet potato skins. Top with toasted almonds or pecans.

Number of servings: 6

Serving size: 1 sweet potato

Nutrition Facts per serving: 220 calories; 11g total fat; 5g saturated fat; 0g trans fat; 20mg cholesterol; 45mg sodium; 30g carbohydrate; 5g fiber; 12g total sugars; 4g added sugars; 4g protein; 0% Daily Value vitamin D; 6% Daily Value calcium; 6% Daily Value iron; 15% Daily Value potassium.

Source: Adapted from http://extension.usu.edu/files/publications/publication/FN_FoodSense_2011-04pr.pdf

LOCAL EVENTS

SMART TIPS

SAY NO TO FOOD WASTE

One of the best ways to save money on your groceries is to avoid food waste. Use these tips to gain the most of your groceries.

• **As simple as a spatula:** It may sound obvious, but get the most out of your jars by scraping the insides with a spatula. An even easier tip is to use the jar to make something special. For example, pour olive oil and vinegar in an almost-empty jam jar, screw the lid on and shake to make a delicious salad dressing.

- **Be aware:** Eat foods that are going to go bad before fresher foods.
- **Keep track:** Start logging what foods you throw away. It can help with grocery shopping in the future.
- **Plan ahead:** Take note before you go grocery shopping of how many meals you plan to make at home.

Source: <https://www.epa.gov/recycle/reducing-wasted-food-home>



If you are interested in nutrition classes, contact your extension office.
