

December

Entertain Your Way to Health

Perhaps you've been working on eating healthier and want healthy choices for that yearly holiday party. This 2016 holiday season, bring some dazzle to your holiday parties with healthier snack platters, tasting plates and side dishes. Your Hy-Vee dietitians are here to help with wellness tips and healthier-for-you recipes to wow the crowd.

- Use small snack-style plates. This will decrease how much people will try to fit on their plate and help reduce return trips back to the party foods.
- Create low(er)-calorie beverages by using flavored sparkling waters with fresh juices, whole fruit and fresh herbs.
- Create your menus with a "bite-size" theme.
- Make your crowd work for their food: Serve in-shell pistachios, one of the lowest-fat, lowest calorie snack nuts.
- Use small serving utensils.
- Limit the number of desserts served to only a few, and serve in small pieces.
- Display fresh cut veggies as the centerpiece by using various sized bowls, cups and platters with varying heights and depths to make people think they taste as good as they look.



One of the latest trends has been food pairings, which means pairing two or three different foods together that bring out unique, delicious flavors you may not experience by eating each food by itself. Your Hy-Vee dietitian has the best pairing ideas from Wonderful Pistachios® for you to relish these enchanting flavors, including our Hy-Vee dietitian pick of the month:

- Pistachios + mandarin oranges + goat cheese
- Pistachios + fresh blueberries + white cheddar cheese
- Pistachios + fresh pomegranate arils + brie cheese
- Pistachios + apricots and dates + mozzarella and blue cheese
- Pistachios + Asian Sesame Sticks + Wasabi peas
- Pistachios + Gala apple wedges drizzled with honey or lavender honey + aged Gouda
- Pistachios + Manchego cheese + Peppadew peppers
- Pistachios + mini chocolate chip cookies + fresh strawberries

Finger food appetizers are also a hit at any gathering. Try this recipe for Apricot-Pistachio Cream Cheese Spread at your next get-together or simply for breakfast or brunch paired with a whole-grain bagel or baguettes.

Apricot-Pistachio Cream Cheese Spread

Serves 24 (1 tablespoon each).

All you need:

- 1 (8 oz) pkg Hy-Vee reduced-fat cream cheese, at room temperature
- 1/2 cup chopped Hy-Vee dried apricots
- 1/2 cup chopped unsalted pistachios
- 1 tbsp Hy-Vee honey

All you do:

1. Stir cream cheese, apricots, pistachios and honey in a bowl until well combined.



Make Ahead Tip: Cover and refrigerate for up to 3 days.

Serving Tip: Serve with fresh bakery baguettes that have been sliced and slightly toasted in oven.

Nutrition Facts per serving: 43 calories, 3g fat, 1g saturated fat, 5mg cholesterol, 45mg sodium, 4g carbohydrate, 0g fiber, 3g sugar, 1g protein.

Source: adapted from EatingWell, Inc.

Crack into Happiness & Health for the Holidays

The holiday season is upon us! Spending time with family and friends probably puts a big smile on your face, and what better snack to have around than the “happy nut.” In China, pistachios are known as the “happy nut” because of their resemblance to a smiley face. What makes pistachios a great snack for everyone? Pistachios are a nutrient-dense food that have many different nutrients and health benefits including:

- **Protein.** Protein is essential in the body as a building block for bones, muscles, cartilage, skin and blood. It is also needed to make different enzymes, hormones and vitamins. Another great reason to add protein in your diet is to help combat hunger. Protein aids in helping you feel fuller longer. This will also help to maintain a healthy weight or even promote weight loss. Protein needs vary from person to person.
- **Fiber.** Fiber helps with regular bowel movements and maintains a healthy digestive system. It also aids in lowering cholesterol levels and helps to control blood sugar levels. In general, the recommended amount of fiber ranges from 25 to 35 grams each day.
- **Heart-Healthy Fats.** These fats are great for helping to lower bad cholesterol while increasing good cholesterol at the same time. In the past, low-fat diets have been popular, but recent studies have shown they may not be the healthiest choice. Incorporating healthy fats into your diet is a great choice for your overall health! Also, pistachios are one of the lowest-fat nut choices.
- **Copper.** This is a less talked about mineral but important for the formation of red blood cells and bone health. One serving of pistachios contains a whopping 20% of our daily need.
- **Manganese.** Another mineral that is not talked about often, manganese is important for bone health and development and crucial for cell function. Pistachios contain 20% of your daily need of manganese, as well.
- **Vitamin B6.** Vitamin B6 is essential for carbohydrate and protein metabolism, formation of antibodies and red blood cells, and nerve function. Pistachios contain 20% of your daily need for vitamin B6.



It can be tricky to track your portions with foods that are packaged with more than one serving. With pistachios, here is a good rule of thumb to track your portions: One serving is about one ounce, which is ½ cup for in-shell pistachios and ¼ cup shelled (no shells). For some who need a physical number, about one ounce equals roughly around 49 pistachios worth 160 calories.

Let's crack into happiness and health for the holidays with pistachios!

Try this easy, delicious recipe:

Spiced Pistachios

Serves 24 (2 tablespoons each)

All you need:

2 tbsp Hy-Vee orange juice

2 tbsp Chinese five-spice powder

1 1/4 tsp kosher salt

2 cups unsalted pistachios



All you do:

1. Preheat oven to 250 degrees.
2. Whisk orange juice, five-spice powder and salt in a large bowl. Add pistachios; toss to coat. Place on a large rimmed baking sheet; spread in an even layer.
3. Bake, stirring every 15 minutes, until dry, about 45 minutes. Let cool completely. Store in an airtight container.

Make Ahead Tip: Store in an airtight container for up to 3 weeks.

Cut Down on Dishes: A rimmed baking sheet is great for everything from roasting to catching accidental drips and spills. For effortless cleanup and to keep your baking sheets in tip-top shape, line them with a layer of foil before each use.

Nutrition Facts per serving: 91 calories, 7g fat, 1g saturated fat, 0mg cholesterol, 88mg sodium, 5g carbohydrate, 2g fiber, 3g protein. Source: adapted from EatingWell, Inc.

Twist on Veggies

Spiralizing is a new way to eat healthy. It's making "noodles" out of any and every vegetable, from zucchini to beets to carrots. It's a simple process to transform produce into long, thin noodles or wide, curly pasta-like ribbons that would be challenging to duplicate by hand.

How do you do it? With a spiralizer, a small kitchen utensil that easily makes noodles and ribbons out of peeled vegetables and fruits. The results can be used in a wide range of recipes from homemade onion rings to veggie noodle salads.



Who would have thought zucchini noodles could taste so good? Spiralizing is a way to eat more nutritiously, but still enjoy Italian, Thai, Chinese, Indian, Greek, Cuban or American flavors. Spiralizing can be used not only to re-create noodle and rice dishes but also to make everyday meals more interesting, writes Ali Maffucci, author of "Inspiralize Everything". "And when you spiralize, you'll impress yourself and friends with what comes out of your kitchen," she says.

For a vegetable or fruit to qualify as spiralizable, and for best results, the vegetable or fruit must be:

1. without a tough pit or an interior with large, tough seeds
2. at least 1 ½ inches in diameter and at least 2 inches in length
3. not be soft or juicy inside – starting with firm, fresh produce is key

The texture of carrots, jicamas, parsnips, beets and potatoes makes them perfect for spiralizing, but you can also use seedless cucumbers, zucchini and summer squash, apples and firm pears. Eggplant doesn't work so well because of its spongy flesh.

To spiralize veggies, slice off the ends of the vegetable so it is flat and even. If the outer skin is inedible, peel it before spiralizing. If your produce exceeds 6 inches in length, halve it. Before tossing noodles with a sauce, pat them dry with paper towels so your sauce maintains its thick consistency. When cooking noodles, simmer or stir-fry them so veggies remain crisp-tender and hold their shape.

Most veggies can be spiralized in bulk and stored in the refrigerator for up to three days. To keep parsnips and potatoes from turning brown, cover them with water and add a squeeze of lemon before storing.

What do you do with spirialized veggies or fruits? Use them in a salad, in place of regular pasta, in soups or stews, pasta salads, casseroles or baked dishes. Spiralized noodles can also be enjoyed in the form of a bun, which can be used as the base for sandwiches, as burger buns, as miniature pizzas or simply on their own.

Mankato Hy-Vee HealthLetter: April Graff, MS, RD, LD & Holly Ellison, RD, LD

Sweet Potato Carbonara with Kale

Serves 4 (about 1 3/4 cups each).

All you need:

- 2 pounds sweet potatoes (about 2 large), peeled
- 3 Hy-Vee large eggs, beaten
- 1 cup Hy-Vee grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp ground pepper, plus more for serving
- 1 tbsp Hy-Vee Select extra-virgin olive oil
- 3 strips center-cut bacon, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 8 cups chopped kale



All you do:

1. Put a large pot of water on to boil.
2. Using a spiral vegetable slicer or a julienne or regular vegetable peeler, cut sweet potatoes lengthwise into long, thin strands. You should have about 12 cups of sweet potato "noodles."
3. Add the noodles to the boiling water and cook, very gently, stirring once or twice, until just starting to soften but not completely tender, 1 1/2 to 2 minutes. Reserve 1/4 cup of the cooking water, then drain. Return the noodles to the pot, off the heat. Add the reserved water, eggs, Parmesan, salt and pepper; gently toss with tongs until evenly coated.
4. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add bacon and cook, stirring often, until crisp. Add garlic and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add kale and cook, stirring, until wilted, about 2 minutes. Add the kale mixture to the noodles and gently toss to combine. Serve topped with a generous grinding of pepper.

Nutrition Facts per serving: 431 calories, 16g fat, 6g saturated fat, 163mg cholesterol, 718mg sodium, 54g carbohydrates, 8g fiber, 13g sugars, 23g protein.

Source: adapted from EatingWell, Inc.

Stay on Track with Healthy Holiday Goals

The holiday season is here, which means family, friends, presents, traditions and - of course - food. Eating healthy can be a challenge when the aroma of Grandma's cookies is in the air. The average American gains weight over the holidays, but this does not have to be the case for you with a few helpful hints.

Going into the holidays and into the New Year, it is good to start thinking about goals. Try setting a target goal weight and/or exercise or nutrition goal. Increase your chances of accomplishing that goal by writing it down or even creating a vision board to motivate you through the holidays. Another motivator may be to find a friend or family member to help keep you accountable in your healthy ways.

Before attending a holiday gathering, ask the host if you can bring a healthy offering such as a relish dish or appetizer. Having healthy snack foods for guests to munch on is key to keeping calorie intakes at a minimum. Snacks containing both fiber and protein are excellent in curbing hunger and may help you reduce calories. Beans and nuts are both great choices. A tasty option to consider is a healthy bean dip like hummus; see the recipe below for a fun variation. Another idea is putting out a dish of shelled pistachios, this month's dietitian pick. They



contain heart-healthy fat and are a fun holiday snack while you are waiting for the meal. Make a festive sweet pairing with pistachios, strawberries and dark chocolate. Pistachios also pair great with a combination of cheese and dried fruit.

When it comes to the main course, survey the offerings and make a decision about what you should have and what you could do without. When dishing up, remember to follow the MyPlate illustration in order to portion accordingly and eat from all of the five food groups. Another thing to be mindful of is that it takes 15 minutes for your stomach to signal your brain that you are full. When you have your food, start a conversation with someone to slow down your eating.



We often want to try all of the desserts. Instead, try picking one dessert. Studies show that people who deprive themselves of certain foods often do not do as well when trying to manage their weight. So do not feel bad about eating dessert as long as you keep it well portioned.

After your holiday meal, invite others to be active. This activity will take your mind off the leftovers. Plus, it will make you feel better about yourself knowing that you took extra steps toward a healthier you!

Happy Holidays from Hy-Vee!

Hummus-Stuffed Mini Bells

Serves 4 (2 peppers each).

All you need:

- 1/2 cup hummus
- 1 tbsp chopped Kalamata olives
- 8 mini bell peppers, cored

All you do:

1. Combine hummus and olives. Stuff each pepper with about 1 tablespoon of the hummus.

Make-Ahead Tip: Cover and refrigerate for up to 1 day.

Nutrition Facts per serving: 74 calories, 4g fat, 1g saturated fat, 0mg cholesterol, 150mg sodium, 8g carbohydrate, 3g fiber, 2g sugars, 3g protein.

Daily values: 36% vitamin A, 121% vitamin C, 6% iron.

Source: adapted from EatingWell, Inc.





dietitian's pick

PISTACHIOS

FIVE REASONS TO CHOOSE PISTACHIOS

1. One serving of pistachios equals 49 nuts (more per serving than any other nut!).
2. 90% of the fat in pistachios is from good, unsaturated fats, making them a great heart-healthy option.
3. Pistachios are a good source of protein that are shelf stable and easy to take for on-the-go snacking.
4. Per serving, pistachios contain more than 10% of the Daily Value of dietary fiber and essential vitamins and minerals such as B6, thiamin, copper and phosphorus.
5. Pistachios are versatile! You can use them in main or side dishes, trail mixes, toppings or by themselves.



SPICED PISTACHIOS

Serves 24 (2 tablespoons each)

ALL YOU NEED:

- 2 tbsp Hy-Vee orange juice
- 2 tbsp Chinese five-spice powder
- 1 1/4 tsp kosher salt
- 2 cups unsalted pistachios

ALL YOU DO:

1. Preheat oven to 250 degrees.
2. Whisk orange juice, five-spice powder and salt in a large bowl. Add pistachios; toss to coat. Place on a large rimmed baking sheet; spread in an even layer.
3. Bake, stirring every 15 minutes, until dry, about 45 minutes. Let cool completely. Store in an airtight container.

Nutrition Facts per serving: 91 calories, 7g fat, 1g saturated fat, 0mg cholesterol, 88mg sodium, 5g carbohydrate, 2g fiber, 3g protein. Daily values: 6% iron.
Source: adapted from EatingWell, Inc.