



MAKE PLANS FOR A HEALTHY FAMILY REUNION... AND A HEALTHY LIFE

There is nothing harder for people with diabetes than making healthy food selections at big family gatherings such as family reunions and summer parties. Whether you are a person with diabetes or a family member or friend, you can have a happy, healthy gathering if you know what to eat and how to prepare the right foods. And that doesn't mean giving up wonderful "soul food." Not at all. By making the right food choices for yourself and your family when cooking and eating traditional dishes, you can have a festive family reunion and a healthy, happy life.

This guide will help you and your family eat right and lower your risk for certain diseases—at family gatherings and throughout the year. It is not a substitute for a meal plan designed just for you by a dietitian. If you don't have your own special meal plan, ask your doctor or nurse for a referral to a dietitian or diabetes educator. They will guide you in correct portion sizes and help you plan how to select a variety of foods each day, including many of those listed on these tip sheets.

Remember that all the foods you eat should fit into your meal plan. Use this guide to help you start and stay on the road to good health. The tips that follow show you how to enjoy foods that are lower in fat, cholesterol, sugar, and sodium and how to include foods that are higher in fiber, taste great, and promote good health.

Here's to your healthy family reunion!

Lower Your Risks for Disease

Fat is vital for the body to function, but many African Americans eat more than is needed. Being overweight increases your risk for diabetes, heart disease, and some cancers. The location of body fat also is an important factor in health risks for adults. Excess fat in the abdomen (stomach area) is a greater health risk than excess fat in the hips and thighs. Smoking and too much alcohol increase abdominal fat and the risk for diseases related to obesity.

Diets low in fat and high in fiber help to control weight and may reduce these risks. Losing excess weight, if you are overweight, improves diabetes control, lowers high blood cholesterol and high blood pressure—all major risk factors for heart disease. Cutting back on sweet sugary foods, soft drinks, and refined starchy foods helps lower blood glucose and makes diabetes easier to manage. Cutting back on fat, especially saturated fat, and cholesterol is very important for lowering blood cholesterol levels. Cutting back on salt and sodium can help lower high blood pressure to reduce the risk of stroke.

THE RIGHT START -- TIPS FOR FOOD SELECTION

To play baseball, you've got to have a bat and a ball. To cook healthy, tasty, high fiber, low fat dishes for your loved ones – with or without diabetes – you have to start with the right foods. Here are some healthy food choices that will help you cut back on saturated fat, cholesterol, refined starches, and sugar.

Meats and Poultry

Ways to reduce fat intake include choosing:

- Lean meats with all visible fat cut off instead of high fat meat. Leaner cuts of meat include round, rump, sirloin, chuck, loin, leg roasts, lean, and extra lean ground meat. Canadian bacon and shank of ham are lean but higher in salt than fresh pork.
- Poultry with skin removed.
- Skinless chicken thighs instead of neck bone.
- Turkey thighs instead of ham hocks or fatback.
- Turkey bacon, lean ham, or Canadian bacon instead of regular pork bacon.
- Ground skinless turkey breast instead of pork sausage.
- Ground boneless turkey breast instead of ground beef and pork.

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Tenderizing Meats

Sometimes, less tender cuts of meat like round or rump need marinating. To add flavor and tenderize, try this oil-free marinade. Makes enough for 2 lbs. of beef or pork:

MARINADE RECIPE

from Chef Johnny Rivers



1 cup ketchup	1/2 cup water
1/4 cup vinegar	2 tbs. dry onion soup mix
1 tbs. mustard	1 tbs. brown sugar
1 tsp. chili powder	2 tbs. Worcestershire sauce (optional)

Combine marinade ingredients and heat to boiling. Cool and store in refrigerator until ready to use. Place the meat in a plastic bag set in a deep bowl; pour the marinade into the bag and tie bag closed. Marinate 1 to 2 hours at room temperature or overnight in the refrigerator. Turn bag occasionally to distribute the marinade. Do not baste with the marinade while the meat is cooking. Throw away all leftover marinade.

To lower the salt, use:

- Low sodium tomato sauce instead of ketchup.
- One cube of low sodium broth and one teaspoon each of onion and garlic powder instead of dry onion soup mix.

Fish

Fish is fairly low in calories, low in saturated fat and total fat, and a good source of protein, vitamins, and minerals. Any firm fleshed fish is delicious. Low-priced fish, like grouper, catfish, or monkfish, is easy on the pocketbook. Instead of frying, make a catfish stew or bake fish in the oven or microwave.

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Fiber

Fiber is found in the stems, seeds, leaves, and fruits of plants. Fiber slows the digestion of starches to glucose, keeping the blood sugar more stable. Because fiber can't completely be digested, it adds bulk and helps to move food waste out of the body more quickly. Fiber is found only in plant foods such as:

- Whole grain products including breads from whole wheat, rye, bran, oat, and cornflour or cornmeal, pastas, whole-grain or bran cereals, brown rice.
- Vegetables such as broccoli, brussel sprouts, cabbage, carrots, green beans and peas, lentils, dried beans and peas, sweet potato, turnip, and all forms of greens, cooked or raw, and other vegetables.
- Fruits such as apples, bananas, berries, cantaloupes, kiwi, oranges, peaches, grapes, pears, watermelon and other melons, and dried fruits such as raisins and apricots.
- Nuts and seeds (these also contain fat and protein).

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Fats

Use small amounts of liquid oils such as olive, canola, vegetable, or corn oil instead of lard, butter, or other fats that are hard at room temperature. Use small amounts of margarine with a liquid oil listed as the first ingredient on the label.

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Dairy

Low fat milk products make little difference to the taste, but a big difference to your health, so use:

- Nonfat or 1 percent dry or evaporated milk instead of whole milk.
- Low fat or part skim milk cheeses instead of whole milk cheeses.
- Evaporated skim milk instead of cream.
- Low fat or nonfat cottage cheese and plain yogurt instead of cream cheese.

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Desserts

Fresh or unsweetened frozen fruits make the healthiest desserts. For a healthy dessert, mix chopped fresh fruit with the removed pulp of halved oranges. Spoon the mixture into the orange cups. Sprinkle with artificial sweetener if desired. Serve with 1 or 2 tablespoons of nonfat vanilla yogurt.

Eating only small amounts of high fat sugary foods can help you lose weight, keep your blood sugar and blood fats under control, and lower your blood pressure. Sugary foods have lots of calories and not much nutrition. Some are also high in fat and cholesterol—like cakes, pies, and cookies. Instead, try a serving of fat-free ice cream or yogurt, a sugar-free popsicle, or sugar-free hot cocoa mix. To eat an occasional small portion of sugary food:

- Split and share a small dessert.
 - Select a small or child-size serving of low fat ice cream or frozen yogurt.
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COOKING RIGHT -- TIPS FOR HEALTHY COOKING

Now that you've got the right foods for your feast, let's look at the kitchen. Put away that deep fat fryer and replace it with a steamer or non-stick skillet. Use non-stick vegetable sprays to coat the skillet. Instead of frying and basting with fat, or cooking with fatty sauces and gravies, treat your meats and vegetables to:

- Broiling, steaming, roasting/baking
- Microwaving and grilling
- Braising and stewing
- Boiling and simmering
- Stir-frying with a little bit of vegetable oil (no more than 1-2 tablespoons of oil for 4 servings).

Seasonings

Instead of salt, try these fresh, tasty flavorings:

- Add fresh green pepper and basil to your greens.
- When cooking black-eyed peas, add Spanish onion and crushed black pepper.
- Add garlic and lemon juice to broccoli.
- Use low sodium broth instead of regular broth.
- Use low sodium canned tomatoes and chili sauce.
- Try combinations of different herbs with all your meals.

HOT `N SPICY SEASONING

from Chef Johnny Rivers

Use a little of this tasty seasoning when cooking fish and other lean meats.

1/4 cup paprika
 2 tbs. dried oregano, crushed
 2 tsp. chili powder
 1 tsp. garlic powder
 1 tsp. black pepper
 1/2 tsp. red (cayenne) pepper
 1/2 tsp. dry mustard



Mix together all ingredients.
 Store in airtight container.
 Makes about 1/3 cup.

CHANGING THE LINEUP -- TIPS FOR CUTTING DOWN ON FATS

You don't have to stop serving or enjoying your favorite foods to have a healthy family feast. Here are a number of ways to lower the fat in foods you love to eat.

- Make a salad dressing with equal parts water and vinegar and half as much oil. Add more mustard and herbs to make up for less intense flavor.
- Use plain, nonfat yogurt blended with nonfat cottage cheese instead of mayonnaise for pasta or vegetable salad dressings.
- Use mustard and nonfat yogurt instead of regular mayonnaise in sandwiches.
- Instead of sour cream, blend 1 cup lowfat cottage cheese with 1 tablespoon skim milk and 2 tablespoons lemon juice, or use plain nonfat or low fat yogurt or reduced fat sour cream.
- Skim fat from soups and stews before serving.
- Use nonstick spray, stock, or a little canola oil to sauté meats and vegetables.
- When baking muffins, quick biscuits or breads, use no more than 2 tablespoons of oil for each cup of whole grain flour.
- Use 3 egg whites and 1 yolk instead of 2 whole eggs, or 2 egg whites instead of 1 whole egg.
- When a recipe calls for butter, lard, or shortening, choose margarine with liquid vegetable oil as the first ingredient listed on the label. Diet margarine should not be used in baking.
- Instead of home fries in butter, layer sliced unpeeled potatoes with some onion slices in a cast iron skillet coated with nonstick spray. Brush tops lightly with vegetable oil. Sprinkle with paprika and freshly cracked pepper. Roast the potatoes in the skillet in a 425 degree oven for 20 to 30 minutes or until potatoes are brown on top.

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EATING THE RIGHT AMOUNT -- TIPS FOR PORTION CONTROL



Using measuring cups, measuring spoons, and a food scale at home can get you in the habit of judging the correct portion sizes for your meals when you are eating out. To help you eat the right amount at your family reunion:

- Select a meat serving about the size and thickness of the palm of your hand.
- Eat slowly and enjoy every bite.
- Limit second helpings to lowfat vegetable dishes.
- Focus on activities other than eating.

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MENU

Use the tip sheets on food selection, cooking methods, and portions to create this tasty menu.

Appetizers/Snacks

Lowfat cheese and crackers
Fresh vegetables
Lowfat dip



Vegetables

Colorful mixed garden salad
Macaroni salad
3-Bean salad
Black-eyed peas (seasoned with turkey)
Steamed corn on the cob
Low fat yogurt dressing
Low fat oil and vinegar dressing

Meats

Lemon-barbecued chicken (with skin removed)
Grilled marinated turkeyburgers
Lean cold cuts such as turkey and leaner roast beef
Grilled marinated pork chops

Breads

Variety of whole grain breads

Desserts

Summertime medley of fruit
Fruit-filled orange cups with yogurt sauce
Watermelon
Fruit ice pops



Drinks

Iced Tea
Lemonade
Water

GET MOVING -- TIPS FOR INCREASING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY*

Physical activity is an important way to use food energy. Most Americans spend much of their working day and leisure time in activities that require little energy. Why not plan to increase your family's activity level at your next family reunion? Along with all the good food, make sure there are lots of opportunities for people of all ages to be physically active.

- Physical activity helps lower blood sugar levels, reduce abdominal fat, and decrease the risk for diabetes, high blood pressure, early heart disease, and certain types of cancer.
- Exercise helps you to feel good, relax, and sleep better.
- Maintaining muscle through regular activity helps to keep older people feeling well and helps to reduce the risk of falls and fractures.
- Try to maintain your body weight by balancing what you eat with physical activity. If you are sedentary, become more active. If you are already very active, try to continue the same level of activity as you get older.
- Stay active by: walking, playing baseball, tennis, and volleyball, swimming, dancing, fishing, and biking.
- Walking is the easiest way to exercise.* You can do it almost anywhere and at any time. Walking is inexpensive – all you need is a pair of supportive shoes.
- Plan activities at your family gathering that everyone can enjoy – scavenger hunts, potato sack races, dancing, and softball.

**Check with your doctor before starting a walking program or other form of exercise.*

This guide was developed by the National Diabetes Education Program. The nutrition information in this guide is adapted from "Down Home Healthy," tips and family recipes from Black American chefs Leah Chase and Johnny Rivers, and published by the National Cancer Institute and the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute of the National Institutes of Health.