

Wise Notes for Consumers

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Eat, Drink and Be Merry: Festive Foods Can Fit in Diabetic Menu Plans

Special occasions are made more special by the foods served. Don't let diabetes keep you from enjoying these festive occasions. Healthy eating can be part of party menus too. To enjoy special-occasion meals while keeping your blood glucose levels in check, keep these practical tips in mind:

Use the Plate Method of portion control. When you're filling your plate, use this method to help you balance the kinds and amounts of the foods you eat. To use the Plate Method, first mentally divide a 9-inch plate into two halves. On one half of the plate, place two or more servings of nonstarchy vegetables, such as asparagus, broccoli, green beans, lettuce, and tomatoes. Then divide the other half of the plate into two quarters. In one quarter of the plate, place a serving of starchy vegetables such as potatoes, corn or bread, pasta or rice. In the other space, add a 3-ounce serving of protein, such as meat, chicken or fish. The Plate Method not only helps you estimate the right amount of food to eat, but it also allows for a variety of healthful foods. A good example and activity using the plate method for meal planning can be found on the American Diabetes Association website at www.diabetes.org/.

This homemade cranberry pecan sauce from the Texas A&M AgriLife Dinner Tonight website is an easy and flavorful twist on a staple holiday dish. If you want to avoid using canned cranberry sauce, or just try something new, here is a recipe that will make a great contribution to a holiday meal.

Homemade Cranberry Pecan Sauce

1 cup water
1 cup artificial sucralose (for example, Splenda®)
1 16-ounce bag cranberries fresh or frozen
1 cup apple chopped
1 cup pecans chopped
1/2 cup golden raisins
1/2 orange juiced
1 teaspoon orange zest
1/2 lemon juiced
1 teaspoon lemon zest
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 teaspoon nutmeg ground

Combine water and artificial sucralose in a large sauce pan and bring contents to a boil. Add cranberries and return to a rolling boil. Once boiling, lower the heat in order for the liquid to simmer. Then add the remaining ingredients. Cook for an additional 10 to 15 minutes. Remove the sauce pan from the heat and let it cool. Serve with turkey or your favorite holiday meal! Cover tightly with plastic wrap until serving. Makes 10 servings.

Nutrients per 1/8 cup serving: Calories: 140; sodium: 0 mg; carbohydrates: 18 grams; Dietary Fiber: 4 grams; protein: 2 grams; fat: 8 grams; sugars 8 grams

For more information on cooking with diabetes, call the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service at 940/627-3341.

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