



## NEWS RELEASE

### ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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## Make wise food and physical activity choices during the holidays

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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During the holiday season it seems that those who want to battle the holiday bulge are ambushed from every direction by delectable goodies. The holiday parties and food feasts lead to edible temptations that result in weight gain. Among the serious health problems caused by excess weight are cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and several cancers.

Many people gain five to 10 pounds during the season. Miriam Gaines, director of the Nutrition and Physical Activity Unit of the Alabama Department of Public Health, offers these suggestions to help make wiser choices for healthier cooking, eating and lifestyles in the holiday season.

"To avoid those extra pounds, consider the types of food you are eating and also the amount you consume," Ms. Gaines said. "Eat only one serving and skip grazing at the buffet table. The hustle, bustle and stress of the holidays can often distract people from their exercise routines"

Include physical activity in daily living such as taking the stairs rather than the elevator or escalator, and parking as far as possible from the building entrance. Another idea is to take a family walk before and after a holiday meal. This also helps in getting a better night's sleep.

Hosts and hostesses should remember to offer a wide variety of food choices, such as vegetable platters with low-fat dip, low-fat chips and crackers, and healthy remakes of traditional holiday favorites. The following recipes are examples.

### MOCK GIBLET GRAVY

2 cups canned, ready-to-serve chicken broth, divided

1/4 cup all-purpose flour

1/4 cup diced turkey breast

Place 1/4 cup broth and flour in a medium saucepan. Stir with a wire whisk until smooth. Add the remaining broth gradually and stir until smooth. Cook on medium heat, stirring constantly, until thickened. Add turkey and cook 1 additional minute.

YIELD: 1 3/4 cups  
SERVING SIZE: 2 Tablespoons  
DIABETIC EXCHANGE: Free

### **SOUTHERN CORNBREAD**

1 cup yellow cornmeal  
1 cup flour  
4 teaspoon baking powder  
3/4 teaspoon salt substitute  
1 egg, slightly beaten  
1 cup skim milk

Sift dry ingredients together. Add egg and milk; mix well. Pour into 12- x 8-inch pan which has been sprayed with a nonstick vegetable spray. Bake at 425 degrees F. for 25 minutes.

YIELD: 12 squares  
DIABETIC EXCHANGES: 1 bread

### **SOUTHERN CORNBREAD DRESSING**

1 cup chopped onion  
1 cup chopped celery  
2 (14 1/2 ounce) cans ready-to-serve chicken broth, divided  
3 cups crumbled Southern cornbread  
2 slices white bread, cubed  
1 egg white, stirred  
1/8 teaspoon black pepper  
1/2 teaspoon poultry seasoning  
1/8 teaspoon sage  
Vegetable cooking spray

Saute onion and celery in 2 tablespoons broth until tender. Combine remaining broth, cornbread, bread cubes, egg white, pepper, poultry seasoning and sage in a large bowl. Stir in onion and celery. Mix well. Pour into 8-inch square pan coated with cooking spray. Bake at 400 degrees F. for 40-45 minutes or until golden brown.

YIELD; 6 portions  
SERVING SIZE: 1 portion  
DIABETIC EXCHANGE: 2 breads

### **SWEET POTATO PIE**

3 tablespoons reduced-fat margarine, softened  
1/4 cup packed light brown sugar  
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
1/4 teaspoon ground ginger  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1/8 teaspoon ground allspice  
1 large egg yolk  
2 cups mashed cooked sweet potatoes  
1 cup evaporated milk  
3 large egg whites  
1 9-inch unbaked pie shell

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. In a large bowl, beat together margarine, brown sugar, cinnamon, ginger, salt, allspice and egg yolk. Whisk in sweet potatoes and evaporated milk. In a medium bowl, beat egg whites until stiff. Fold into sweet potato mixture. Pour

into unbaked pie shell. Bake 40-45 minutes, until tester inserted into center comes out clean. Cool on rack until ready to serve.

YIELD: 10 servings

SERVING SIZE: 1/10 of pie

DIABETIC EXCHANGE: 2 bread, 1 fat

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