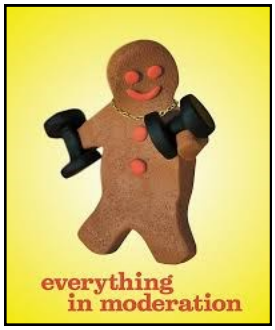
Volume 4, Issue 12 December 2014

LiveWell Vermont

STATE EMPLOYEES WELLNESS PROGRAM

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES: BENEFITS & WELLNESS

6 Simple Tips to Prevent Holiday Weight Gain



Keep a Proactive Food Journal
Most people journal as they go or at the end of their day. Instead, try keeping a proactive food journal. Start your day by writing down exactly what you *plan* to eat, and then check it off as you go. Do your best to plan your "treats" as well. If you plan it, you'll feel better about your choice! The old adage is that if you fail to plan you are planning to fail.

Eat when you're hungry
Do you tend to "save" all your calories until the big event? It is likely that when you arrived at the festive occasion, you were so famished that you devoured everything in sight. This year, try to eat small meals beforehand so that you feel satiated and are less likely to overindulge on sweets or stuffing.

Eat your fat first
Fat helps you to feel full while also stimulating your metabolism. So "snacking" on your portion of these foods first, before helping yourself to all of the starchy sides and desserts, may help keep your cravings and total food intake in check. Try olives or unsalted nuts for satiating starters.

Go for a walk
A brisk walk after your meal has significant benefits. First, it will prevent you from going for seconds or overindulging in dessert upon your return. Second, while supporting your digestion and metabolism, the physical activity will help to lower your blood sugar levels and insulin (i.e. the fat-storing hormone).

Be selective
You don't have to overdue it at buffets and family gatherings. Peruse the offerings first. Be thinking to yourself, "What looks too good to pass up and what can I live without?" Focus on what you'll truly enjoy, not how much you can squeeze on your plate.

HOLIDAY FINANCIAL HEALTH

Stress-free Spending & Giving

When we think about staying healthy during the holidays, we tend to think about eating well, exercising more and spending extra time with our loved ones. One area we tend to over look is financial health. If we neglect staying healthy financially, it probably means a little extra stress.

Use cash when buying gifts, decorations and food. This way you can enjoy the holidays without dreading the January credit card bill.

Plan ahead for the holiday season. Save money throughout the year and know what your holiday allowance is.

Scale back on your gift-giving and try to give something meaningful that is less expensive.

Do a family gift instead of giving a gift to everyone in the family. This saves money and increases the quality of the gift.

Do a family charity event. Instead of hosting a big holiday dinner, serve dinner to the homeless or deliver food baskets. This can increase family time and also save money.

The joy of the holiday season is all about connecting with loved ones and creating new happy memories. For many people, receiving the gift of your time is more precious than any material present.

To learn more about how to manage your money, check out Financial Literacy.

Pear, Prosciutto & Hazelnut Stuffing

Try this flavorful, yet healthy stuffing as a side at your upcoming Holiday meal.

Makes: 12—2/3 C servings

Ingredients

3 tsp extra-virgin olive oil, divided
4 ounces prosciutto, thinly sliced, cut into ribbons
2 C onion, chopped
2 C diced fennel bulb
1/4 C minced shallot
2 tsp each of minced fresh sage & thyme
1 tsp minced fresh rosemary
8 C stale multi-grain baguette, cut into 1/2-in cubes
2 Bosc pears, ripe but firm, chopped
1/3 C chopped flat-leaf parsley
1/3 C chopped hazelnuts, toasted
1 14-oz can reduced-sodium chicken broth
1/4 tsp salt
Freshly ground pepper, to taste

Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Coat a 9 x 13-inch baking dish with cooking spray.
2. Heat 1 tsp oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add prosciutto; cook, stirring until crispy, about 5 minutes. Drain on a paper towel.
3. Wipe out the pan and heat the remaining 2 tsp oil over medium-high heat. Add onion, fennel and shallot and cook, stirring until softened and beginning to brown, 6-8 minutes. Add sage, thyme and rosemary and cook, stirring for 1 minute more. Transfer everything to a large bowl and gently stir in bread, pears, parsley, hazelnuts and the prosciutto. Add broth; toss to combine. Season with salt and pepper. Spoon the stuffing into the prepared baking dish; cover with foil.
4. Bake for 40 minutes; remove the foil and bake until the top is beginning to crisp, 25-30 minutes more.

Tips & Notes

- Prepare steps 1-3 and refrigerate up to 1 day.
- If you don't have stale baguette, spread it on a baking sheet at 250°F until crisped and dry, about 15 minutes.
- Toast chopped nuts & seeds in a small, dry skillet over medium-low heat, stirring constantly, until lightly browned, 2 to 4 minutes.

Nutrition per serving:
176 calories; 5 g fat; 29 g carbohydrates; 9 g protein; 6 g fiber; 489 mg sodium.

SHARE YOUR SUCCESS STORY!

How have you improved your health and wellness in 2014?

Live**Well** Vermont is looking for employees who have made positive changes in 2014!

Have you quit smoking, lost weight, decreased stress or improved any other aspect of your wellness?

We want to recognize your achievement and share your success to inspire others.

SHARE YOUR STORY HERE!

WE NEED YOU!

VOLUNTEER AS A 2015 WELLNESS AMBASSADOR

AMBASSADOR'S ROLE

- Communicate wellness activities with coworkers
- Assist wellness team with a coordination of on site activities
- Role model healthy behaviors
- Support a healthy worksite environment
- Participate in Wellness Programs
- Motivate employees to participate in wellness activities

AMBASSADOR REWARDS

- First to know about wellness programming
- Receive a ambassador wellness kit
- Special ambassador drawings
- Honorary framed certificate
- Quarterly wellness lunch and learns

REGISTER HERE!