



Nutrition News

Burning Off Holiday Desserts: Can It Be Done?

Autumn is definitely the season of abundance, with good-for-you apples and pumpkins in starring roles. But what about when those foods show up as pumpkin spice lattes and apple-cider doughnuts?

Delicious, yes. But nutritious ... not so much. As temperatures drop and the holidays approach, we tend to go for comfort foods.

The combination of sugar, salt and fat in these foods really lights up our taste buds, causing cravings and making it harder to control our portions. In the long run, this can lead to health issues like obesity, high blood sugar, elevated cholesterol, diabetes and heart disease.

Moderation: the key to health and longevity

An occasional indulgence within a generally healthy diet is no problem. Surrounded by temptation, though, the average person can gain up to 10 pounds between Halloween and New Year's Day - with Valentine's candy still to come.

A walk after dinner, while good for you, isn't enough to burn off a typical piece of cheesecake. There aren't enough hours in the day to exercise away more than a handful of overindulgent eating choices. That's why 80 percent to 90 percent of weight management is about food, and only 10 percent to 20 percent about exercise.

In the next column over, and on the following page, is a short list of fall and holiday favorites, including their nutrition profiles and the amount of time it would take a 180-pound person to burn the calories they deliver.

Samuel Adams OctoberFest beer

- Nutrition: 190 calories per 12-ounce bottle (some stouts and IPAs have 250-300 calories).
- To burn 190 calories: One hour and 10 minutes walking, 20 minutes swimming, or 35 minutes biking.

Cheesecake Factory pumpkin cheesecake

- Nutrition: 1,060 calories (yikes!) per serving; 79 g fat (49 g saturated); 61 g sugars; 520 mg sodium.
- To burn 1,060 calories: Six and a half hours walking, four and a half hours of housework, or a little over three hours biking.

Coffee Mate Pumpkin Spice liquid creamer

- Nutrition: 35 calories per tablespoon; 1.5 g fat; 5 g added sugars; 5 mg sodium.
- To burn 35 calories: 10 minutes walking

One Dunkin' Apple Cider doughnut

- Nutrition: 360 calories; 23 g fat (11 g saturated); 14 g added sugars; 370 mg sodium.
- To burn 360 calories: One hour and five minutes yard work, or an hour and 50 minutes hatha yoga and/or stretching.

Starbucks Pumpkin Spice Latte

- Nutrition: 380 calories in a 16-ounce "Grande" size; 14 g fat (8 g saturated); 50 g sugars; 240 mg sodium.
- To burn 380 calories: One hour and 10 minutes tai chi, or 95 minutes weight training.

Spiced Apple Cider (Alpine brand)

- Nutrition: 90 calories per 8-ounce serving; 22 g sugars; 30 mg sodium.
- To burn 90 calories: nine minutes climbing stairs.

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Burning Off Holiday Desserts (continued)

Trader Joe's Pumpkin Bread and Muffin Mix

- Nutrition: 150 calories per serving (¼ cup of the mix); 0.5 g fat; 18 g sugars; 290 mg sodium.
- To burn 150 calories: 44 minutes walking or 15 minutes swimming.

Snickers candy bar — regular size

- Nutrition: 250 calories per serving (1.86 oz bar); 12 g fat (4.5 saturated); 27 g sugars (25 g added sugars); 120 mg sodium.
- To burn 250 calories: 65 minutes housework or 20 minutes jumping rope.

Snickers Fun Size bars

- Nutrition: 80 calories per serving (17 g bar); 4 g fat (1.5 g saturated); 9 g sugars (8 g added sugars); 40 mg sodium.
- To burn 80 calories: 20 minutes dancing or 10 minutes moderate rowing (machine).

Kit Kat miniatures

- Nutrition: 170 calories per serving (four pieces/34 g); 9 g fat (6 g saturated); 17 g sugars (15 g added sugars); 25 g sodium.
- To burn 170 calories: 20 minutes jumping rope or half an hour golf - but you'd better be walking the course, carrying your own clubs.

One regular size candy cane

- Nutrition: 50 calories; 9g sugar
- To burn 50 calories: 18 minutes cleaning, or five minutes of running.

Bûche De Noël (Yule Log cake), 3.5 ounce slice

- Nutrition: 261 calories; 19g sugar; 17g fat
- To burn 261 calories: 30 minutes low-impact step aerobics (155-pound person)

Egg nog (Ronnybrook), 4 oz., non-alcoholic

- Nutrition: 170 calories; 20g sugar; 8g fat (4g saturated); 75mg sodium
- To burn 170 calories: 34 minutes line dancing

Strategies for guilt-free indulgences

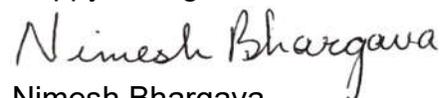
Below are some simple strategies to help you enjoy your fall favorites without compromising your health:

- *Think moderation, not deprivation:* Set healthy boundaries, such as allowing yourself one or two indulgences a week, depending on your nutrition goals.
- *Cook less food:* Scale back when cooking for gatherings. Given the likelihood of smaller gatherings due to the pandemic, you may already be working on this. For example, instead of several desserts, make a single, special one. Bonus: Cooking smaller amounts saves money and reduces food waste.
- *Eat mindfully:* When cooking or socializing, we tend to reach for a taste of this and a bite of that without thinking. Instead, try to be present while eating and savor every bite.
- *Enjoy regular meals:* Fad diets and skipping meals to save calories can backfire, leaving you ravenous by mealtime. That makes choosing healthy options and controlling portions more difficult.
- *Experiment:* Re-create your holiday favorites at home, swapping ingredients to boost nutrition. Choose low-fat milk instead of whole, blend whole-grain and white flours, and trim sugar and salt.
- *Speak up:* When ordering a latte, for example, buy a 12-ounce tall instead of a 16-ounce grande, make it skinny with skim milk, or ask them to use half as much sweet syrup as is usual.

And finally...

- Enlist an expert: A registered dietitian can help you enjoy the holidays without losing sight of your personal health goals. Luckily, you're already reading a newsletter written by one! Contact OFA to find out more.

Happy eating!



Nimesh Bhargava
OFA Nutrition Services Coordinator