OFA Nutrition News - November 2026

DUTCHESS NEW YORK COUNTY
OFFICE FOR THE AGING

Lead Us Not Into Holiday Overeating Temptation

We all have had that one friend, neighbor, or relative in our extended family who says these fateful words every holiday season:

"I'm just gonna put out a few snacks"

Next thing you know, there's so much food on the table that it's sagging in the middle. And it all... looks...*amazing.*

It's certainly challenging to stick to good nutritional principles when everywhere we turn there are tempting and tasty options - with a calorie count more suitable for an NFL lineman than an average older adult.

OFA's Nutrition Services division is familiar with the challenge. We serve hundreds of meals every weekday to homebound older adults in our Home Delivered Meals program, and do our best to be sure that our offerings reflect the bounty of the season, while at the same time sticking to sound nutritional principles.

How can we make traditional holiday meals nutritious yet still satisfying without overindulging? We're here to tell you it *is* possible to thread that needed, and we've provided proof in the form of a couple of healthy recipes on the back page of this newsletter.

Food Swaps Are Your Friend

When preparing your holiday menu, make fruits and vegetables the star dishes for more whole, plant-based foods that are rich in fiber and micro-nutrients.

A List of Instead-Ofs

Sweet potatoes instead of white potatoes.

Acorn squash or butternut squash.

Turnip greens or collard greens.

Whole grains like quinoa.

Lentils or dried beans.

When baking or cooking recipes with fats and sugar, try these swaps: plant-based margarine for butter; and applesauce or pureed bananas for heavy cream.

Skip "Saving Calories"

"I'll just skip a meal here and there, so it won't be a big deal if I overdo it on Thanksgiving."

Ever tell yourself that?

It doesn't work. You'll only go into the big day over-hungry, which leads to overeating. Instead, plan smaller meals around the big one. Have a glass of water before the big dinner to manage fullness and keep a lid on blood sugar.

A Strategy for Back-to-Back Parties

Know what meals you'll eat, when, and where.

Decide where you want to spend your "energy." Will you focus on the main course at one meal and the sides at another?

Fill your plate with the healthier options first—vegetables, fruits, and heart-healthy stuff.

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Dutchess County Office for the Aging • 114 Delafield St., Poughkeepsie NY 12601
845-486-2555 • toll free 866-486-2555 • dutchessny.gov/aging

Todd N. Tancredi
Director, Office for the Aging

Nimesh Bhargava, MS, RD, CDN
Nutrition Services Coordinator

Sue Serino
County Executive

Recipe: Autumn Sausage, Veggie, and Apple Dinner

Servings: 4

Ingredients:

12-16 ounces sausage, cut into 1/3” thick pieces
1 pound sweet potatoes, peeled and chopped into 3/4” cubes
2 apples, cut into 1” chunks
1 pound Brussels sprouts, trimmed and halved
Half an onion, chopped into chunks
3 cloves garlic, peeled and minced
1/4 cup olive oil
1 teaspoon each: rosemary, sage, thyme
Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 400°F and get out a large sheet pan. Line pan with nonstick foil for easier cleanup.
2. Add sausage, sweet potatoes, apples, Brussels sprouts, and onion to the pan.
3. Mince garlic and sprinkle over the veggies and apples.
4. Drizzle everything with olive oil, sprinkle with thyme, sage and rosemary, then season with salt and pepper to taste, and toss to coat.
5. Roast for 15 minutes then remove and toss. Return to oven and continue to roast until veggies and apples are tender, about 15 more minutes.
6. Make sure sausage is cooked thoroughly.

Source: Cornell Cooperative Extension, Seneca County