



Give the Perfect Gift for the Holidays – Healthy Meals

There are many ways to lower the fat content and make traditional foods healthier without changing the entire recipe. The following are healthier alternatives:

- Use skim milk or evaporated skim milk to make mashed potatoes (no one will know the difference).
- Instead of butter or brown sugar, use small amounts of pineapple juice or apple juice to drizzle into sweet potatoes.
- Serve turkey, chicken and roasts in their own juices instead of fat-laden gravies (or prepare gravies without fat).
- Make pies without the crust. You will be saving a whopping 17 grams of fat!
- Prepare a limited number of desserts. You probably don't need to prepare six kinds of pie, even if it is tradition. Pumpkin or sweet potato is the healthiest flavor of pie.
- For appetizers, serve raw vegetables with interesting dips instead of high-fat nuts and cheeses. It is easy to overindulge in nuts and cheeses, and you need a lot to feel satisfied.

Holiday Challenges

The holidays are supposed to be a time of joy, celebration, and fellowship with loved ones. With Thanksgiving coming to an end, and Hanukkah, Christmas, and New Years fast approaching, this time of year can be tough for people who have experienced the loss of a loved one, financial setbacks, life changing medical diagnoses, etc. Chronic health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, high blood pressure, and cancer don't take holidays.

The American Cancer Society (ACS) wants you to know there is someone to talk to 24 hours a day, seven days a week – even on holidays. Call 1-800-227-2345 anytime, day or night, to speak with one of their cancer information specialists to get answers to your questions and find out about available services. Although the holidays are a time when people get together with friends and family to relax and reflect, we can save lives and create a world with less cancer and more birthdays by helping people stay well and get well, by finding cures and by fighting back.

Live Better LA Clinics

The second year of Live Better LA kicked off **September 1st** and clinics are being scheduled from **December 2015 through August 2016**. All participants who earned the premium discount for 2016 will need to complete a wellness checkup and Personal Health Assessment (PHA) to earn the discount again in 2017. Below is a list of clinics scheduled throughout the state. You have until **August 31, 2016** to complete your online PHA www.bcbsla.com/MYPHA and get your preventive health checkup in order to be eligible for the 2017 wellness credit!

To sign up for one of these clinics, or find a date and location that works best for you, visit www.timeconfirm.com/ogb or call 1-877-841-3058.

Live Better Louisiana Clinics	
Date	Location
12/07/2015	Baton Rouge-LA Public Broadcasting (7733 Perkins Road)
01/09/2016	Baton Rouge-Renaissance Hotel (7000 Bluebonnet Blvd.)
01/15/2016	Covington-Holiday Inn (45 Louis Prima Dr.) Lake Charles-Hampton Inn (3175 Holly Hill Rd.) West Monroe-Holiday Inn Express (603 Constitution Dr.)
01/16/2016	Metairie-Holiday Inn (2261 N. Causeway Blvd.)
01/23/2016	Metairie-Holiday Inn (2261 N. Causeway Blvd.)
01/25/2016	Lafayette-ULL Student Union (620 McKinley St.)
01/26/2016	Lafayette-ULL Student Union (620 McKinley St.)
01/27/2016	Lafayette-ULL Student Union (620 McKinley St.)
01/28/2016	Lafayette-ULL Student Union (620 McKinley St.)
01/29/2016	LA Retirement Systems Building (8401 United Plaza Blvd., 4 th floor)
03/14/2016	LA Retirement Systems Building (8401 United Plaza Blvd., 4 th floor)
04/09/2016	Metairie-Holiday Inn (2261 N. Causeway Blvd.) Shreveport-Hilton Shreveport (104 Market St.)
04/15/2016	Baton Rouge-Renaissance Hotel (7000 Bluebonnet Blvd.) West Monroe-Holiday Inn Express (603 Constitution Dr.)
04/16/2016	Baton Rouge-Renaissance Hotel (7000 Bluebonnet Blvd.) Covington-Holiday Inn (45 Louis Prima Dr.) Lake Charles-Hampton Inn (3175 Holly Hill Rd.)
04/23/2016	Metairie-Holiday Inn (2261 N. Causeway Blvd.)

Holiday Safety

Prevent Blindness America, the nation’s oldest eye health and safety organization, has declared December as **Safe Toys and Gifts Awareness Month**. The group encourages everyone to make conscientious purchasing decisions based on what is best for each individual child using the following suggestions:

- ❖ Make recommendations to family and friends about gifts that you feel are appropriate for your child. Inspect these gifts before allowing your child to play with them.
- ❖ Inspect all toys before purchasing. Make sure they are appropriate for your child’s age and developmental level.
- ❖ For younger children, avoid play sets with small magnets and make sure batteries are secured within the toy. If magnets or batteries are swallowed, serious injuries and/or death can occur.
- ❖ Gifts of sports equipment should always be accompanied by protective gear (such as a basketball along with eye goggles or a face guard with a new batting helmet for baseball or softball).
- ❖ Any toy that is labeled “supervision required” must always be used in the presence of an adult. Keep toys meant for older children away from younger ones.
- ❖ Always save the warranties and directions for every toy. If possible, include a gift receipt. Repair or throw away damaged toys.
- ❖ Avoid toys that shoot or include parts that fly off.

- ❖ Inspect toys for sturdiness. Your child's toys should be durable, with no sharp edges or points. The toys should also withstand impact. Dispose of plastic wrapping material immediately on toys as they may have sharp edges.
- ❖ Don't give toys with small parts to young children. Young kids tend to put things in their mouths, increasing the risk of choking. If the part of a toy can fit in a toilet paper roll, the toy is not appropriate for children under the age of 3.

To see if a toy has been recalled for any reason, visit the [Consumer Product Safety Commission](#) website. You can also sign up for safety recall alerts by email while you're there. So let's be safe and take a minute to inspect the toys on the little one's wish lists and avoid unnecessary injuries. Happy Holidays!

Healthy Holiday Cooking

Keep the holidays light and healthy with a table full of classic but healthy holiday recipes. The following delicious recipe is sure to delight everyone:

Roasted Corn Bread and Bacon Stuffing

Ingredients

- 2 strips center-cut bacon, chopped
- ½ cup fresh corn kernels (1 ear yellow corn)
- ¼ cup chopped onion
- ¼ cup chopped celery
- 1/3 cup water
- 2 corn bread muffins (1/2 of an 8x8 pan of cornbread)
- ½ cup breadcrumbs
- 2 teaspoons chopped fresh sage
- 2 teaspoons chopped fresh thyme
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- ¼ cup fat-free, low-sodium chicken broth
- Cooking spray

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Cook bacon in a large saucepan over medium heat until crisp. Remove bacon from pan, reserving 1 teaspoon drippings in pan; crumble bacon and set aside. Add corn, chopped onion, and celery; cook 2 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in water, and bring to a boil. Cover, reduce heat, and simmer 5 minutes.
3. Crumble the corn bread into a large bowl, and stir in the breadcrumbs. Add corn mixture, sage, thyme, black pepper, salt, and bacon; stir to combine. Add broth; stir gently to coat. Place mixture in a 1 quart baking dish coated with cooking spray. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes.

Makes 4 (2/3 cup) servings

For more information, visit us at www.bcbsla.com/ogb

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