

# Family and Consumer Sciences “Connections” in Nolan County

TEXAS A&M  
AGRI LIFE  
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## Holiday Stress: Eating Healthy

Holidays such as Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year’s bring to mind thoughts of family, friends, fun and food. However, each year, millions of Americans struggle to maintain their waistlines during the holidays while surrounded by tempting holiday treats.



### Holiday parties

By following the healthy tips below, you will be on your way to enjoying all your holiday parties, while also staying in control of your eating. For example:

- Do not leave the house on an empty stomach – it promotes overeating.
- Avoid standing near the food table, a sure-fire way to overindulge.
- Make socializing your top priority; conversation will keep you occupied and away from the food.
- Limit your drinking; alcohol increases hunger and lowers willpower.
- Offer a low-calorie alternative; for example, if you have volunteered to bring a dessert, bring fruit rather than a cheesecake.
- Listen to your stomach; reduce your portion sizes and stop eating when you feel satisfied rather than stuffed.

### Cooking and baking

If you are the one hosting, use that to your advantage – it puts you in control of what will be served. For example, substitute high-fat or calorie-laden ingredients with more healthy choices, such as using an egg substitute rather than a whole egg. There can also be a downfall when it comes to hosting: the temptation to sample the food while you are preparing it. To help you resist the urge to snack while cooking:

- Keep your mouth occupied with a piece of sugar-free gum or sip tea to reduce your urge to sample while you cook.
- Prepare foods on a full stomach. You will not be as tempted to taste what you are making.

### Cocktails and beverages

Before you reach for the eggnog, remember that some mixed drinks may have as many calories as a dessert. It’s okay to indulge in some holiday spirits, but keep the following suggestions in mind:

- Pace yourself; drink water or seltzer between drinks. The more you drink, the more the temptation to snack increases.
- Try ice water with lemon or non-caffeinated soft drinks.
- Consume mixed drinks with diet soda, club soda or tonic when possible.

<http://sites.allegheeny.edu/wellness/healthy-eating-tips/>

### Enjoy the holidays...

Don’t abandon health habits or feel pressured to eat and drink more than usual just because of the holidays. Make sure you get plenty of sleep, exercise, and plan your meals ahead of time; you will make it through the holidays feeling satisfied and in control.



# Plan for Health In The Year Ahead



*Give a gift that supports good health in the year ahead (or give suggestions if friends and family are asking for ideas for you). Here are great ideas for giving wellness for the holidays:*

Dumbbell or weight set	Pedometer or wireless activity monitor	Gift card from produce markets
Exercise or walking music CD	Personal trainer gift certificate	Gift card from sporting goods store
Fitness ball with training DVD	Treadmill	Healthy cookbook
Fitness center membership	Other home exercise equipment	Indoor or outdoor bicycle
Fruit-of-the-month club membership	Subscription to health magazines	In-home walking DVD set
Heart rate monitor	Subscription to healthy cooking magazines	Resistance bands set

## Planning a Healthy Holiday Season

### Plan your self-care routine

- Plan some “me-time” in your daily calendar. Maintaining your foundation of healthy habits is especially important over the next few weeks. Don’t look at these basic self-care habits as optional.
- Eat well and don’t skip the “good for you” stuff. Limit your caffeine, sugar, fat and alcohol, while indulging in lean protein, fruits, veggies and whole grains. Don’t forego the “good stuff” to indulge in the “all-the-extra-stuff.” Consider planning your menus and make things ahead to store in the freezer.
- Be active. Whether you do it all at once or in small increments, make physical activity part of your daily calendar. Doing less is better than doing nothing at all.
- Get enough sleep. Adequate sleep will help you maintain your weight, your emotional wellness and your health. If you have a difficult time getting to sleep, limit your caffeine intake after lunch and give yourself some down-time to relax before bedtime.

### Plan your time

- Create a master calendar of events and activities that you want to do this holiday season.
- Organize your time by ranking items as high, moderate and low priority. Focus first on the high priority items. Review your low priority items and remove them from your list, if possible. Reschedule commitments and appointments that can wait until after the holidays.
- Work to maintain your personal and time boundaries. Learn when to say “no,” if necessary. Don’t overextend your holiday commitments.
- Share household responsibilities with your family. Trying to be everything to everyone causes burnout.

### Plan your finances

- Create a financial budget for gifts, travel and activities...then stick to it.
- Communicate your plan to your family and friends.
- Start a holiday savings account for next year.
- Examine your current expenses to see what is absolutely necessary.
- Look for creative gift ideas that your friends and family will appreciate and value that don’t cost you anything, like an exchange-a-favor gift. For example, trade off babysitting duties with other families. Volunteer to do household chores for elderly family members, single friends or overworked couples. Offer your skills (like cooking, cleaning, construction work, trade labor, etc.) to a friend or family member.

### Plan for simplicity

- Shop for gifts online or by mail.
- Plan for holiday parties at a local restaurant, or organize a potluck dinner instead of doing all the food preparation.
- Take advantage of pre-cut produce and ready-prepared foods whenever possible.
- Remember that saying “no” is an option.
- Free yourself from technology for at least one hour each day (i.e. computers, pagers, cell phones, wireless handheld devices, pda’s, etc.)

## Decoration: Fire Safety Tips

### Trees

- When purchasing an artificial tree, look for a "Fire Resistant" label.
- If you have a metallic tree, never use electric lights on it. You could be electrocuted.
- When purchasing a live tree, check for freshness. Make sure the needles are soft and are not falling off. Hard, brittle needles are signs of a dry tree, which can easily catch fire.
- Live trees need water, and lots of it. Cut about one inch off the bottom of the trunk before putting the tree in the stand. Add water and check the tree daily.
- Do not block your exit door with your tree.

**Remove live trees from your home as soon as possible. Most Christmas tree fires occur on or after New Year's Day.**

### Lights

- Check each light set for damaged sockets or wires. Discard light sets and extension cords that are worn or cracked.
- Use UL approved light sets. Follow the manufacturer recommendations concerning the maximum number of light sets that can be connected together.
- Replace burnt out bulbs with bulbs of the same wattage as indicated on the tag attached to the light set.
- Turn off all lights before you go to bed or leave the home.
- Use only light sets and extension cords marked "For Outdoor Use" outside your home.
- Fasten outdoor lights securely with insulated clips or hooks. Use circuits protected by ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs).

<http://www.weathersafety.ohio.gov/WinterFireSafetyTips.aspx>

## Safe Holiday Cooking

### Safe Thawing

There are three safe ways to thaw food: in the refrigerator, in cold water, and in the microwave oven. Store frozen turkeys in the freezer until time to thaw. While frozen, a turkey is safe indefinitely. However, if the turkey is allowed to thaw at a temperature above 40 °F, any harmful bacteria that may have been present before freezing can begin to multiply again unless proper thawing methods are used.

- When thawing a turkey in the refrigerator, plan ahead. Place the turkey on a platter and place in the refrigerator. For every 5 pounds of turkey, allow approximately 24 hours of thawing in a refrigerator set at 40 °F.
- For thawing in cold water, allow about 30 minutes per pound. Be sure the turkey is in leak-proof packaging and submerge it in cold tap water. Change the water every 30 minutes until the turkey thaws.
- When thawing in the microwave, follow the manufacturer's instructions. For both defrosting in cold water and in the microwave, cook the turkey immediately after thawing because conditions were not temperature controlled.

### Handling Precooked Dinners and Leftovers

Some cooks forego home-cooking a turkey altogether and choose to purchase precooked dinners. There are also basic safety measures for the safe handling of these holiday meals. If the dinners are to be picked up hot, keep the food hot. Harmful bacteria multiply fastest in the "danger zone" between 40 and 140 °F.

- Set the oven temperature high enough to keep the internal temperature of the turkey and side dishes at 140 °F or above.
- Eat the food within 2 hours of pickup.
- When picking up cold turkey dinners, refrigerate them as soon as possible, always within 2 hours. Serve the meal within 1 to 2 days. Turkey may be eaten cold, but reheating a whole turkey is not recommended. To reheat, slice breast meat (legs and wings may be left whole), and heat turkey pieces and side dishes thoroughly to 165 °F.
- Perishable foods should not be left out of the refrigerator or oven for more than 2 hours. Refrigerate or freeze all leftovers promptly in shallow containers. It is safe to refreeze leftover turkey and trimmings even if they were previously frozen.

<http://www.fsis.usda.gov/>



# Turkey Tacos and Cranberry Salsa



### Turkey Taco Ingredients:

- 8 corn tortillas
- 1 pound extra lean ground turkey
- 1 cup low fat Monterey Jack Cheese blend
- 2 cups lettuce sliced thin
- 1 bunch cilantro for garnish

### Cranberry Salsa Ingredients:

- 15 oz. whole berry cranberry sauce
- 1/2 apple seeded
- 1 jalapeno seeded
- 1 tsp sugar
- 2 tbsp. ginger chopped and peeled
- 2 tbsp. cilantro
- 1 tbsp. lemon juice

### Cranberry Salsa Instructions

1. In a food processor add the cranberry sauce, apple, jalapeño, sugar, ginger, cilantro, and lemon juice. Blend well. Place in bowl for assembly.

### Taco Instructions:

1. Brown the ground turkey in a skillet. Place in bowl for assembly.
2. Shred lettuce. Place in bowl for assembly.
3. Place cheese in a bowl for assembly.

### Assemble the Tacos:

1. On a corn tortilla place the turkey, then lettuce, then cranberry salsa, then cheese.

Servings: 8

**\*\*This recipe is great especially for leftover turkey!  
Puts a different twist on a Holiday meal!**

Recipe from <http://dinnertonight.tamu.edu>

### Nutrition Facts

#### (per serving)

Calories 273  
Total Fat: 6g  
Sodium: 128mg  
Total Carbohydrate: 35g  
Sugars: 19g  
Protein : 20g



## Nolan County News

Dear Nolan County,

It has been a privilege and blessing to serve as your Family & Consumer Sciences County Extension Agent. You are very special and a wonderful group of people! Thank you so much for being part of the Extension program and caring for your County! I will be transferring to Johnson County. May you be blessed and take care! Labeth :)

### December

- 5th TEEA Meeting @ 2:00
- 5th Christmas Parade
- 12th Nolan County 4-H Club Meeting
- 13th Nolan County Quilting Club @ 4:30 Annex  
The quilting meeting might be in the Concession Stand area like in November depending if the floors are completed.
- 25th **Jesus' Birthday! Merry Christmas Everyone!!**

**Family & Consumer Sciences  
"Connections" is provided by :**

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