

Transcript Season 3 Episode 9: Tis the Season: Eating Healthy and Safe!

Podcast Opener:

(Music playing.) Tackle your “Adulting” To Do list with the Grown Up U: Facts for Success podcast. Keep listening as we celebrate Season 3 with podcasts to help steer you in the right direction by providing useful advice for living an independent and satisfying life as a young adult. *(Music ends.)*

Podcast Script:

Julie Goings: It seems the holidays last from Thanksgiving until New Year’s Day. With parties and big family gatherings, it’s easy to forget about healthy eating. It can also easily empty your wallet. And increase your waistline!! With a few simple changes, you can enjoy those tasty holiday meals without feeling guilty about their effect on your health or on your bank account.

The holidays are a time in which many of us overeat. One easy way to keep your serving sizes in check is by using a salad plate for your meal. You put less food on a smaller plate, but it still looks like you have a lot. You can get a serving of all of the tasty foods you want to eat without stuffing yourself. Pay attention to how your stomach feels and stop eating when you no longer feel hungry.

Parties and holiday meals are often a time of too much food with nibbles and hidden calories and not enough activity. Just a slice of the cake batter is 75 calories! Try planning some fun activity into your next get together. Here are some ideas you and the children can enjoy: take a nature hike or scavenger hunt, go skating, play catch, go for a bike ride, or play charades or toss around a football!

Try these tips for keeping holiday meals healthy: roast the turkey with the skin on but remove the skin before eating; skim the fat from the drippings before making gravy; try using whole wheat bread to make dressing, and add fruits and vegetables, like celery, onion, cranberries and apricots. Try serving more whole grain foods. You can substitute whole wheat flour for ½ the white flour in recipes. Use fat-free or low-fat milk when making gravies & soups. And of course, season foods with herbs & spices instead of salt or butter. Also, remember to bake, boil and broil rather than fry. If the weather is nice, you might even grill a few things.

I know the family recipe for some dishes is almost sacred, but you can always fill in with some healthier, low-calorie options that can be quite delicious. My mother thought broccoli had to be drowned in a heavy cheese sauce, but my children are just as happy with a low-calorie broccoli

salad. Our family has switched to turkey breast, rather than a whole turkey, as the dark meat has a lot more fat and calories.

If you just have to watch the big football game on TV, challenge everyone to walk around the block or play basketball during commercial breaks and half-time. Remember to celebrate and focus on what the holidays are really about – spending time with family and friends. Find creative ways to get your family to do active things together that do not revolve around eating.

One other consideration for enjoying holiday foods is to keep meals safe to eat. Preparing food ahead of time saves stress but cooking too far ahead can lower the quality and safety of the food. If meat is frozen, you will want to plan time for safe thawing in your refrigerator. Allow 24 hours for every 5 pounds. Thaw meat on a plate on the lower shelf of the fridge to prevent juices from dripping onto other foods. Pies that contain milk and eggs need to be refrigerated and should not be allowed to stay at room temperature for more than 2 hours. This includes pumpkin and pecan as well as cream pies.

Nonperishable foods such as cakes and cookies can be prepared a few days in advance and still taste good, or they can be frozen for longer storage. Prepare perishable foods no more than a day before the meal unless you plan to freeze what you make. Making a plan for how to keep cold foods cold and hot foods hot when a party will last longer than 2 hours can cut down on the risk of foodborne illness. This should also be a consideration when planning to eat leftovers or make something from what you have left.

Keep in mind anyone that might have food allergies or sensitivities. Be honest about the food. If someone asks if you use peanut oil, tell them! This could be life-threatening!! Allergic reactions are real. And someone who is sensitive to a food could have their holiday ruined with a flare-up. This might seem like an “inconvenience”, but we absolutely must pay attention to these details. Hoping you have a Happy Holidays!

Podcast Closer:

(Music begins.) For more information about this or any Grown Up U podcast or to learn more about Grown Up U educational opportunities, visit our website at uaex.uada.edu/grown-up/. Be sure and follow us on Facebook and Instagram @UADAgrownuppodcast.

The Grown Up U podcast series is brought to you through the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution. Contact your local county extension office for programs available in your area.

(Music ends.)

The University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture offers all its Extension and Research programs to all eligible persons without regard to race, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, disability, marital or veteran status, genetic information, or any other legally protected status, and is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.