

Tips for a healthier party

BY SUSAN BURKE MARCH, MS, RD/LD, CDE

If you are an armchair quarterback, sitting around drinking brews and sodas and chowing down on fatty wings, chips and dips will not help you make the cut. Score a nutritional touchdown and serve some healthy snacks while rooting your team on to victory.

Here are some quick tips for healthy football-friendly fare and a chili recipe that's a sure winner:

Always choose baked chips instead of fried. Tortilla chips and potato chips come in different baked flavors and save up to 30 percent of the calories of fried chips. Fat-free or reduced fat does not mean calorie free . . . watch your portion size.

Serve bean dip instead of regular sour cream dip. Only 46 calories per three tablespoons, compared to more than double for full-fat sour cream.

Nuts are nutritious, but they add up quickly. Serve a giant bowl of air-popped popcorn sprayed with butter-flavored cooking spray and sprinkled with dehydrated butter granules . . . I like Butter Buds or Molly McButter. Delicious, with only 60 calories for three cups, only a trace of fat and about 10 grams of sodium. Save 280 calories, 28 grams of fat and 330 milligrams of sodium over the regular microwave popcorn.

Replace fried mozzarella sticks with chicken skewers. They are popular and always great party food. You can buy them already prepared (especially at warehouse

grocers), and save 188 calories, 9 grams of fat, and 546 milligrams of sodium over the same sized portion of fried cheese.

Serve a healthy submarine sandwich. Whole-wheat hero rolls give you that extra-added fiber and nutrition (not to mention taste!) compared to white bread. Layer on turkey breast, lean roast beef or lean ham, shredded lettuce and tomato slices; slice into two-inch portions and serve with sliced onions and pickles.

Keep the calories low by using low fat mayonnaise and naturally low-calorie ketchup and mustard. Fat-free dressings should be offered . . . the new varieties are so good, you will not miss the fat.

Imbibe with caution, because those brews add up!

One regular beer ranges between 150-200 calories; instead serve light beer . . . only about 100 calories per bottle. A 5-ounce glass of wine has about 100 calories, as does one ounce of alcoholic spirits such as vodka, gin or scotch. Serve a variety of diet sodas, flavored club sodas and keep a big cooler with individual bottles of spring water.

Do not forget . . . substituting juice for regular soda is like substituting regular sour cream for mayonnaise . . . you are not going to save calories. An eight-ounce glass of juice, unsweetened, has about 120 calories. Offer club soda with a splash of 100 percent juice and a piece of fresh lemon or lime for a lower calorie-refreshing beverage.

Dips: Any dried dip mix will do, but



instead of regular sour cream, add 1/2 cup of nonfat sour cream, 1/2 cup of nonfat mayonnaise, and 3/4 cup of diced fresh tomatoes, 1/4 cup of chopped green onion, and 1/4 cup of chopped ripe olives, rinsed and drained. Mix and refrigerate for 1/2 hour before serving.

Crudités - everyone like crunchy veggies, especially with a tasty dip. Buy pre-washed and cut-up veggies and you are ready to go . . . zero prep time.

At half time, get up and do 100 jumping jacks!

SUSAN'S WEIGHT-WISE CHILI RECIPE:

INGREDIENTS:

1 lb of 97 percent lean ground beef or turkey or firm tofu, drained
1 onion diced
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 green pepper, seeded and diced

1 tsp olive oil
1 28 ounce can tomato puree (no salt added)
1 ~15 ounce can each kidney beans, white beans, and pinto beans-rinsed and drained
3 small-medium baking potatoes, scrubbed and cubed
2 Tbsp chili powder
1/4 tsp salt
1 tsp cumin
2 cups water

DIRECTIONS:

1. In a large, nonstick saucepan over low-medium high heat, heat olive oil. Add garlic and cook until just softened.
2. Add the onion and pepper and cook 2 more minutes; then add the ground meat or crumble in the tofu: cook about 5 minutes.
3. Drain off fat if using meat; add pureed tomatoes, canned beans, potatoes, seasonings, and water.
4. Reduce heat to low and simmer, covered, for approximately 30 minutes or until potatoes are tender.
5. For thinner chili, add a cup of broth, wine or water.
6. Serve with a tossed salad.

Registered and licensed dietitian Susan Burke March, MS, CDE, is the author of "Making Weight Control Second Nature: Living Thin Naturally," which offers a wealth of practical information, tips and strategies for people who are serious about taking control of their health, fat-free, for life. She may be reached online at www.SusanBurkeMarch.com.

Tailgating tips for the big game



Are you ready for some football? The tailgate party is the ultimate rite of the season and the perfect way to show team spirit. But before you kick off a tailgating bash you need to be properly prepared to host your pigskin party.

Whether you are hosting a tailgate outside the stadium or simply throwing a party at home for the big game, here are a few tips to ensure it will be an event your friends and family remember:

Plan That Menu: It is all about the food, so be sure you have enough for everybody on hand. Do prep work in advance, so you do not waste time and can join in the reveling. Make a list of everything you will need - from burgers and dogs to plates, utensils, cooking gear and cleaning supplies. Fire-up the grill early, so food is ready at least an hour before game time.

Get Your Party Place In Shape: Tailgating or entertaining outdoors? Quickly scrub down the grill, cooking utensils and portable furniture. Entertaining at home? Clean kitchen grease and grime or bathroom mold and mildew before guests arrive. Using a multipurpose cleaner and degreaser like Greased Lightning - which conquers tough grease, grime and stains - can save time, as it is great for both indoor and outdoor chores.

Grab a Choice Spot: Tailgating veterans know to choose a choice spot in the parking lot to secure extra room for their shindig. That last spot in a row means more party space, as does any spot adjacent to a car-free or grassy area. If you are hosting guests inside your home, make sure there are plenty of seats with a great view of the game so everyone can see the action.

Kick Up Condiments: Rough and tumble football fans like some heat, so don't just offer mustard, ketchup and mayo. Spicy peppers and relishes will give your grub an extra boost.

Keep It Dry: Always keep a tarp or tent on hand to protect your food, friends and fun should the weather turn.

Clean Up Your Mess: Leave your spot clean, just like mom always told you. Keep plenty of garbage bags available. A multipurpose cleaner and degreaser like Greased Lightning can help you quickly wipe down just about any surface and also can be used as a laundry pre-treat for those set-in stains that just can't be handled with seconds left in the game. It removes red wine, grass, mud, BBQ sauce and more.

Bottom line, it doesn't matter if you win or lose, it's how you prep for the game.

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