

'Eat smart' tips help diabetics

By C.L. Rugenstein
special writer

Can people with diabetes "eat smart" during the holidays and still enjoy themselves?

"Yes," said Patricia Grulewski, registered dietician at Macomb Hospital Center. "The most important goal for diabetes management is maintaining as normal or near-normal blood-sugar level as possible," she said. She offered some tips on how to do this.

Surprisingly, consistency in timing of meals ranks first, especially for those dependent on insulin. "Eating meals at a regularly scheduled time is important because it prevents swings in blood sugar levels," Grulewski said. Some adjustment may be necessary to accommodate holiday party schedules.

For instance, "If a party supper is set for 8 p.m., and you usually eat at 6, you may have to have your evening snack at 6 p.m. and supper at 8 p.m." (Diabetics have usually had meals a day: breakfast, lunch, supper and a snack.) If unsure about switching times, or about anything during the holidays, "Check with your doctor or dietician," Grulewski said.

Tip two is obvious: Avoid refined carbohydrates — pies, cakes or candied yams — because they cause blood sugar to soar. If, however, resistance crumbles when confronted by pumpkin pie, "Make sure you take a small piece and eat it with the meal." Blood sugar will not rise as rapidly as if the pie were eaten alone.

(AN INCIDENTAL baking tip for diabetics and friends who will host them is to reduce the amount of sugar that recipes call for and add extra vanilla to enhance sweetness.)

Tip three is to eat less fat: a good tip for everyone, as heart disease is reputedly the number one killer of Americans but especially of overweight and obese diabetics.

Eating less fat means avoiding the obvious again: fried foods, gravies, and limiting the use of butter or

margarine. And for salads, "Use a vinegar-based salad dressing instead of oil." Dillard, available commercially at Meijer's and bulk food stores, is a good example.

Fats can be further reduced by "cooking up" recipes. When whole milk, cream or sour cream are called for, substitute skim milk, low-fat yogurt or low-fat cottage cheese. Cottage cheese pureed in a blender with a little lemon juice makes an excellent dip, Grulewski said.

Diabetics usually have a food plan individually tailored by a doctor or dietician to meet their calorie needs, so tip four is: eat a balanced diet. Choose foods from each of the four (or in the case of the diabetic exchange list, six) food groups: meat, vegetables, fruit, milk, starch and fat.

"Portion control is very important — don't overeat. You want to have an equal distribution of calories spread over your four meals." The body can handle the food better that way, especially for those on insulin.

Forethought and planning can make the holidays a time of joy and celebration for those with diabetes who eat smart. And with that in mind Grulewski included a recipe for dietician-approved holiday cookies.

ANGEL MACAROONS
(Yield: 60, Serving size: 2)
1 16-oz. one-step angel food cake
1/2 cup sugar-free strawberry flavored pop
2 tsp. vanilla or almond extract
2 cups unsweetened, shredded coconut
1/2 cup chopped walnuts

Cover baking sheet with aluminum foil. In large mixing bowl beat the cake mix together with the carbonated beverage and vanilla on low speed for 1/2 minute, then medium speed for 1 minute, scraping sides of bowl. Fold in coconut and nuts. Drop by teaspoonful onto foil-lined baking sheet, 2 inches apart. Bake at 350° for 10-12 minutes. Slide foil onto cooling rack. Cool. Store in airtight containers.

Brussels sprouts, squash enhance gourmet dinner

A gourmet menu for Christmas dinner is offered in the December issue of Gourmet, the Magazine of Good Living.

BUTTERNUT SQUASH WITH GINGER BUTTER
4 large butternut squash, halved lengthwise and the seeds and strings discarded
2 teaspoons minced peeled gingerroot
3 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into pieces and softened

Scoop balls (they will not be completely round) from the butternut squash with a large melon-ball cutter, in a saucpan of boiling salted water simmer them for 5 minutes, or until they are just tender, and drain them. In a heated bowl

toast the squash with the gingerroot, the butter and salt and pepper to taste. Serves 8.

BRUSSELS SPROUTS WITH LEMON BUTTER

2 1/2 pounds (about 2 1/2 pint) Brussels sprouts, trimmed and an X cut into the base of each sprout
3 tsp. unsalted butter, cut into pieces and softened
2 tsp. freshly grated lemon rind
1 tsp. fresh lemon juice

In a steamer set over boiling water steam the Brussels sprouts covered, for 7 to 8 minutes, or until they are just tender, transfer them to a heated bowl, and toss them with the butter, the rind, the lemon juice and salt and pepper to taste. Serves 8.

Get in the soup-making habit



Lois Thieleke

home economist Cooperative Extension Service

Back in the days of wood or coal kitchen stoves, a soup or stockpot seemed to be part of the picture.

Soup making was a habit. The stockpot was always simmering and ready for a handful of onions, beans or leftovers. Nowadays, with our fast-paced lives, soup comes in a can or a box. Great-tasting soup does not have to take much time to make for lunch, dinner or even breakfast.

You can make two kinds of soup from scratch: soup on purpose or soup by circumstance. Soup on purpose is when you deliberately assemble or buy the ingredients. Soup by circumstance or happenstance is a collection of bits and pieces from the refrigerator or freezer (leftovers).

Most leftover meat and vegetable tidbits will only keep in the refrigerator for a couple of days, so don't wait too long to make the soup or you'll need to freeze these bits and pieces.

The best soup is still made from homemade stock. If you have made stock from a chicken carcass or beef bone and cannot use it immediately, freeze it. Stock is quite perishable so don't keep it in the refrigerator for more than two days. Fish and vegetable stock are important for meatless soup making.

Homemade stock can be used to dilute condensed soups and add some additional nutritional value to them. A key to a good stock is to start the cooking in cold water. This helps to draw out the juices in the bones. Another key is to maintain a low steady heat for a flavorful stock.

DON'T HESITATE to use good canned stock or broth, bouillon gran-

ules or cubes in place of homemade stock. With the addition of fresh ingredients the family will think the soup has simmered all day. Use a blender to minimize cooking times of raw vegetables or cut vegetables into small, even-size pieces for fast cooking. A pressure cooker can be used to speed up the cooking of meat or scraps.

Always remove the fat from soup before serving. Nothing is worse than grease floating on the top of the bowl of soup. Chill the soup, the fat will rise to the top and solidify when you cool it. The solid fat can be easily removed with a spoon.

Floating a paper towel on the top of the soup will also absorb fat. Or put an ice cube in a thin cheesecloth and swirl back and forth, the fat will collect on the cloth. Roll up a few sheets of paper toweling, dip in the soup. When fat collects, snip off the end and repeat.

Soup comes under several different titles, such as broth, consommé, cream, chowder, bisque or fruit soup. However, entailing the name, it's soup. For a cream soup, do not boil after adding the milk product or you'll ruin it. Heat just to the boiling point or cook in double boilers.

To make soup creamy, use cream, half and half, sour cream, yogurt or milk. Use parsley lavishly, but dried herbs discreetly in soups. Add herbs at the end of the cooking time for more flavor. If the soup is too spicy, simmer three to four medium potato pieces in it. Then discard potato. Found a handful of spinach or celery leaves or parsley and add to the soup before serving for a fine green color.

A nice, rich soup is made by the addition of browned onions or meat or browned onion skins. Tomato skins also will lend flavor and color to a soup. To enhance the flavor of soup, add a little red or white wine or dry sherry. Beer can add an interesting touch to bean cabbage or vegetable soup. After these additions do not boil the soup.

Be creative with the soup thickening. Noodles, pasta, dumplings, cereal (oatmeal is especially good), rice, raw potato or dry crustless bread are just a few suggestions. Egg yolks are also used as a thickener. However, remember that you add the egg yolks just before serving.

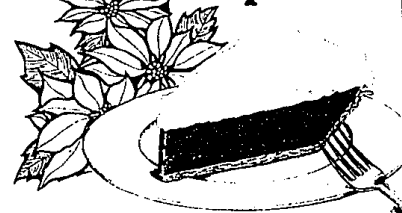
Garnish the soup attractively for serving in a large tureen, mugs, compote dishes or even small casseroles. Have all soup garnishes at room temperature. A thin slice of lemon or orange is the most popular

garnish for a clear or thick soup. Other garnish ideas are floating small cheese or meat balls, pieces of herbs, a sour-cream dollop with herbs, bean sprouts, grated raw carrots hard-boiled egg slices, nuts or croutons.

AN INTERESTING idea for cream of tomato soup is to float some popped popcorn or puffed cereal on the top. Popcorn will be a real treat for a noon lunch for the kids. Whatever the garnish it should be put on just before the soup is served in order to be its freshest and look attractive.

Whether you are making soup all day or using a quicker method, soup can be a nutritional low-cost meal. Astound your friends and family with soup sensations from your kitchen.

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