Healthful Holiday Appetizers
From sit-down holiday dinners to impromptu parties,
food is everywhere this month. Here are some tips for enjoying the festivities and the food — on the light side.

Appetizers are easy to overeat. Keep in mind that small bites of baked brie, pigs-in-a-blanket or bacon-wrapped scallops have 50 to 100 calories per piece. Six little bites can add up to 300 to 600 calories. Instead, just eat two of the higher-calorie options.

Stick with shrimp in cocktail sauce (15 calories per shrimp) or raw vegetable sticks. Skip deep-fried or cheese-covered bites. Opt for vegetables or fruit as main ingredients.

From traditional spinach dip to hummus, dips add calories, fat and sodium to your evening’s meal. Enjoy your appetizers, but dip sparingly. A few teaspoons of dip and a few drops of a salty condiment are all you need.

Beverage calories count too. Try alternating calorie-filled beverages with sparkling water (0 calories). Several glasses of regular soft drinks and party punch can add up to hundreds of extra calories.

Quick Bruschetta for Two
¼ cup quartered cherry tomatoes
2 tablespoons 2% milk shredded mozzarella cheese
1 tablespoon chopped fresh basil
2 teaspoons shredded Parmesan cheese
2 teaspoons lite Zesty Italian dressing
2 thin slices French bread (¼-inch thick each), toasted

Combine first 5 ingredients. Spoon over toast slices just before serving.

Nutritional Information: Serving size: 1 serving equals: 60 calories, 2g total fat, 1g saturated fat, 5g cholesterol, 200mg sodium, 5g carbohydrate, 4g protein

Fruit Pizza
For the cookie crust:
1 large egg white
¼ cup vegetable oil
¼ cup brown sugar, firmly packed
½ cup all-purpose flour
¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
¼ teaspoon baking soda
1 cup uncooked quick-cooking oatmeal
Cooking spray
For the topping:
3 ounces fat-free cream cheese, softened
½ (6-ounce) container non-fat vanilla yogurt
Fruit for topping the pizza

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Use a medium mixing bowl to beat egg white until foamy. Add oil and sugar. Beat until smooth. Use a small bowl to stir together the flour, cinnamon, and baking soda. Add to sugar mixture. Stir in oatmeal. Line a baking sheet with aluminum foil and spray with cooking spray. Spread the dough in a 9-inch circle. Bake about 12 minutes. Crust will begin to puff but does not look done. Remove from oven and let cool about 20 minutes. The crust continues to cook while cooling. Use a small bowl to stir together the cream cheese and yogurt until smooth. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate until cool. Transfer the crust to a serving plate. Spread the cream cheese mixture over the crust. Arrange fruit on top. Outside In; grapes, kiwi, mandarin oranges or peaches, strawberries. Cut into wedges and serve, or refrigerate up to 2 hours, covered and uncut.
Nutritional Information: Servings per Container 8, Serving size: 1 Wedge serving equals: 190 calories, 8g total fat, 1g saturated fat, 0mg Cholesterol, 130mg sodium, 2g Dietary Fiber, 14g Sugars, 26g carbohydrate, 5g protein

Is Snacking Okay?
Yes, it’s a good idea to have healthy snacks between meals. Three meals and one or two snacks each day is a healthy way for adults to eat. Snacks are an easy way to help you never be too hungry or too full.

Some of us like to snack all day long which can add up to a lot of extra calories. It’s better to have only one snack between breakfast and lunch, and only one snack between lunch and dinner.

Snacks are small amounts of food. The average snack is 100 to 150 calories. Eating a small snack can give you energy and help prevent overeating at meals.

Thanksgiving Blessings Mix
2 cups bugles
2 cups pretzels
1 cup raisins
1 cup candy corn
1 cup peanuts
1 cup M&M’s
Chocolate Kisses
Mix all but kisses and put into bags. Put the kiss on top of each bag or use as a place setting at the table or make it with your kids and they can give everyone a bag when they walk into your home. Attach this note to the bags:

Bugles – shape like horn of plenty, a symbol of our nation’s abundance.

Pretzels – arms folded in prayer, a freedom sought by those who founded our country.

Candy Corn – the sacrifices of the pilgrims first winter. Food was so scarce that settlers survived on just a few kernels of corn.

Peanuts – promise of a future harvest, one we will reap only if seeds are planted and tended with diligence.

Raisins – harvest gifts from our bountiful land.
M&M’s – memories of those who came before us to lead us into a blessed future.

Hershey’s Kiss – the love of family and friends that sweetens our lives.

6 Places Germs Love
At home or work, in cars, coffee shops, airplanes, gyms and other public places, we pick up most germs from the objects we touch and share.

While no surface is ever germ-free, here are some common places that need frequent disinfecting:

1. Kitchen sinks and drain plugs are breeding grounds for bacteria from leftover food.
2. Toilets – be sure to close the lid before flushing (especially airplane toilets).
3. Office desks may harbor 400 times more germs than the average toilet seat, so clean with disinfecting wipes weekly.
4. Remote controls should be wiped down daily.
6. Bathtubs, showers and drains are also breeding grounds for bacteria, especially staphylococcus bacteria. Clean and disinfect them often.

To help guard against infection, always wash your hands before preparing or eating food, and after using the bathroom, handling garbage, blowing your nose or changing a diaper.

Wash your hands and fingernails for 20 seconds with warm water and lots of soapy lather. Thoroughly rinse and dry. And keep your hands away from your mouth, nose and eyes.

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