

DICKINSON COUNTY DIABETES SUPPORT GROUP

Memorial Health System



Ways to Enjoy the Holiday Season with Type 2 Diabetes

By Maria Gifford with BezyT2D

The holiday season is supposed to be a joyous time spent with family and friends. If you're living with type 2 diabetes, it can feel like a trap with temptation around every corner, like:

- the break room at work filled with holiday goodies
- well-intentioned gifts of sugar-filled treats
- extra meals out where the portions are huge and the drinks are flowing
- shopping trips and eating on the run
- parties with food spreads loaded with high-carb goodness

It's important to recognize that we have choices over the holidays. We can choose to abandon our eating principles and blood sugar control and indulge in every eating opportunity, or we can be strategic and develop a plan to enjoy the holidays without missing out on social events and family time.

Here are some tips that help me turn the holidays from stressful to enjoyable.

Scan the offerings

When you're at a party and approach the food line, step back and scan the table before grabbing your plate. Try to divide the dishes into categories: must-haves, want-to-tries, and "eh, no thanks."

Make sure the must-haves are items you don't normally have access to during other times of the year. I call them "the holiday exclusives." Maybe it's your grandmother's stuffing or homemade cranberry sauce. For me, it's the sweet potato casserole.

Foods like rolls, macaroni and cheese, and mashed potatoes that are available year-round are a "no thanks" in my book.

Scan the table, make your list, and plate your portions mindfully.

Contribute to the food spread

If you're worried about going overboard, contribute your own dish to the food spread.

It's OK to ask the host or hostess what will be offered so you can plan ahead. Bringing your own dish to share ensures you can fill your plate with a healthy, nutritious option and then add your must-haves and want-to-try foods to round out your plate.

A festive salad, a veggie plate with dip, or a fruit platter are great options.

Freeze, toss, or give away

Holiday cookies, chocolates, and other baked goods are popular gifts.

There's no need to refuse these gestures. Allow yourself to enjoy and have a small portion. Then, decide what's next!

Diabetes Support Group meets the first Tuesday of every month.

There will be no Support Group in December.

Wishing all of you peace, good will, and happiness through the holiday season!

Holidays Continued....

You can freeze the goodies in individual servings or half servings, can give them away, or toss them. I promise you, no one is going to ask you where they went.

Focus on people, not food

It's tempting to make holiday parties and gatherings all about the food.

If you're fighting temptations this season, try prioritizing the people over the food. Strike up a conversation with the cousin you haven't seen in a while, help the hostess clean up or serve, or play a game with the kids at the party.

Avoid lingering in the room where the food spread is and move the conversation somewhere else.

Don't feel guilty

Don't be so hard on yourself: Treating yourself over the holidays does not make you a bad person or mean that you don't care about your type 2 diabetes management. It makes you a human who enjoys delicious food. Don't dwell, shame yourself, or feel guilty about enjoying these once-a-year treats. When you do this, you don't allow yourself to savor the indulgence, so why bother eating it in the first place?

When you make a choice to treat, embrace your choice, enjoy the moment, and move on guilt-free.

The bottom line

The holiday season can be overwhelming, but with a little planning, you'll be able to manage the temptations and treat yourself mindfully while enjoying time with the people you love.

December's Featured Recipe: *Gingerbread Tea Cake*

Ingredients:

- 2 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 ½ teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves
- ½ cup canola oil
- ¼ cup granulated sugar or sugar substitute blend equivalent to 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 ¼ cups cold water
- ⅔ cup full-flavor molasses
- ½ cup refrigerated or frozen egg product, thawed, or 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- Confectioners' sugar for dusting
- Fresh raspberries for garnish

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Lightly coat a 13x9x2-inch baking pan with nonstick cooking spray; set aside. In a medium bowl, stir together flour, baking powder, ginger, cinnamon, baking soda, salt and cloves; set aside.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together oil and sugar until combined. Add the cold water, molasses and eggs; whisk until combined. Add reserved flour mixture all at once to water mixture, whisking just until smooth. Pour into prepared pan.
3. Bake for 40 to 45 minutes or until a wooden toothpick inserted near center comes out clean. Cool completely on a wire rack. Sift confectioners' sugar over the top and garnish with raspberries, if desired.

Nutrition facts per serving: 83 calories, 1.2 g protein, 12.5 g carbohydrates, 0.3 g fiber, 4.9 g sugars, 0.2 g saturated fat.

Source: eatingwell.com



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