Soups, Sips and Tips for Staying Warm

Stay toasty this winter without the added calories or the added weight that so often accompany the festivities. Use these tips to help you stay warm and healthy!

Comfort Food

As the weather gets colder, we tend to reach for warm comfort foods. Besides reminding us of home, they often provide extra calories, fat, and added sugars. Keep your dishes warm but mix it up and make some changes to lighten up your recipes. Try using rice or potatoes to thicken creamy dishes instead of cheese or cream, and add in extra fruits and vegetables whenever possible.

Soups

There is nothing as cozy as sipping a steaming bowl of warm soup during the winter. A hearty soup made with a variety of vegetables, lean meats, or beans can be the main dish for any meal. Add whole grain crackers or bread to the side or perhaps fruit for dessert and you have a well balanced nutritious meal. Soups are easy to make in large batches and are inexpensive to prepare. For best safety and quality, plan to eat refrigerated soup within 3-4 days or freeze it. Avoid letting soups sit at room temperature for more than two hours and always reheat to 165°F.

December is National Pear Month!

First brought to the United States by early colonists in the 1700’s pears now have a whole month dedicated to celebrating their crisp and delicious flavor! Pears are easy to incorporate in your diet and a “pear-fect” way to fill MyPlate recommendations for making half your plate fruits and vegetables. With 24% of the recommended daily value of fiber and 10% for vitamin C, pears are always a smart choice.

Pears are versatile and available year-round, making them a great addition to any meal! They can be eaten with savory dishes such as on sandwiches, in casseroles and salads or enjoyed on the sweeter side for dessert like in our recipe of the month, Pear Crumble!
Health Benefits of Tea

Drinking a steaming hot cup of cocoa or a flavored latté during the frigid winter months can be just the thing to get you warmed up, but can also be a source of hidden calories. Choose your beverages wisely and be careful of added sugars and high calories. A nice hot cup of tea can keep you warm while being low in calories and providing many added health benefits.

Tea & Heart Health

The strongest evidence for tea’s benefits is on the side of heart health, attributed to the antioxidant properties in tea. Flavonoids in black and green tea prevent oxidation of LDL cholesterol, reduce blood clotting and improve widening of blood vessels in the heart. Studies have shown decreases in heart attacks, lower cholesterol, and significant decreases in blood pressure related to black tea intake specifically.

Tea & Cancer

Research on this relationship is less compelling. It has been suggested that antioxidant compounds, specifically catechins, can prevent cancer. However, a recent review has stated that with the exception of colorectal cancer, studies related to tea consumption and cancer are extremely limited.

Tea & Teeth

Researchers in Japan reported that at least one cup of green tea per day was associated with significantly decreased odds for tooth loss. Tea is usually brewed with fluoridated water and the tea plant can naturally accumulate fluoride from soil, likely providing its anti-cariogenic effect. Be cautious of added sugars as these may promote cavities and counteract the benefits of consuming tea!

Stay Physically Active!

1. Start a new tradition! Make a plan to go sledding with family and friends, go ice skating, or take the family for a stroll after dinner to look at the holiday light displays.

2. Plan ahead. Write down your workouts and when you plan to do them everyday to help you stay accountable.

3. Skip the online holiday shopping and head to the stores. Park far away from the entrance, use stairs instead of escalators and make extra trips back to the car to drop off bags.

4. Move more! Get up every hour to walk or stretch.
Parsnip and Apple Soup

This delightful soup will keep you feeling warm without the added fat and calories and is a creative way to add fruits to a hearty dish!!

Ingredients

2 large apples, peeled and chopped
1/2 medium yellow onion
2 large parsnips, peeled, and sliced into 1-inch pieces
1 32 ounce box of low sodium chicken broth
1/2 cup unsweetened applesauce
4 tablespoons light sour cream, if desired
4 small sprigs parsley, if desired
Dash of cinnamon, if desired

Directions

1. Boil apples, onion, and parsnips in chicken broth for 30 minutes or until tender.
2. When the apples and parsnips are fully cooked, remove from heat and add applesauce.
3. Using food processor or immersion blender, puree all of the ingredients together until soup is desired consistency.
4. Ladle into bowls and garnish with 1 tablespoon of sour cream, parsley, and dash of cinnamon if desired.

Prep time: 15 minutes         Cook time: 40 minutes
Serving Size: about 1 1/2 cups Number of Servings: 4
Tip: Add sweet potatoes or carrots to the recipe to increase the flavor and boost the nutrient content!

Reader Q & A

Q: How can I avoid gaining weight between now and January 1?

A: First, avoid the holiday mentality that “anything goes”. Decide to eat and drink mindfully this month by slowing down, choosing small portions, and enjoying every bite and sip you take. Also remind yourself there will be more treats and beverages tomorrow, and drink lots of water. These tips should help you eat and drink less.

Second, stay active. Sedentary time (office work, movie marathons, sitting while visiting) does nothing for your metabolism or your waistline. Switch to walking meetings, stand while talking on the phone, and do jumping jacks during commercials. Invite your visitors to play ping pong or shoot some hoops if the weather is nice. And don’t skip your regular exercise sessions.
Fall 2014
Check out our nutrition coaching, customized cooking classes, and individualized nutrition presentations at www.nutritioncenter.colostate.edu

Spring 2015
Plan ahead; classes fill up fast
★ Dining With Diabetes returns with 4 weekly classes that combine nutrition information and social support with meal planning and cooking skills practice. Dinner is included each week in addition to a program manual and pedometer. This program is especially helpful for anyone with pre-diabetes or type 2 diabetes.

Thursdays: January 29th and February 5th, 12th, and 19th from 5:30 - 7:30 pm
Cost: $100 for complete series ($60 CSU employees and students)

★ Healthy You returns with 6 weekly classes that include weight loss, mindful eating and nutrition information. Participants receive program manual, pedometer, weekly snacks and prizes, and social support.

Wednesdays: March 25th and April 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th from 6 - 7:30 pm
Cost: $100 for complete series ($60 CSU employees and students)

Sign up online or call soon to reserve your spot!
www.nutritioncenter.colostate.edu or (970) 491-8615