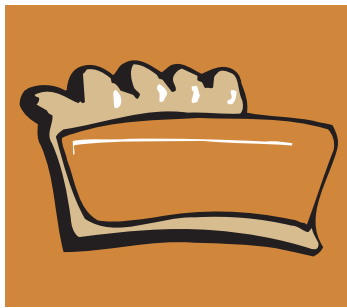


Halloween



Thanksgiving



CHRISTMAS



New Year's



SUPER BOWL

# Eating healthy & fun at the holidays

BY PAMELA BUTLER  
BLUE RIDGE HEALTHCARE

**MORGANTON** - Once again we start preparing for the fall and winter holidays. Did you know that there are actually seven? Let's count them: Halloween, Thanksgiving and the day after, Christmas, New Year's Eve, New Year's Day and Super Bowl Sunday. Well, they aren't all real holidays but they certainly are days when we celebrate with a lot of food and drink.

You can make your holidays healthier by planning ahead.

## HALLOWEEN

Let's start with Halloween. If you are having a party, paint it orange with food. Use a vegetable platter with a low calorie dip and include carrots, celery, cauliflower and red peppers. Here's a low calorie veggie dip recipe:

### LOW CALORIE DIP

- ¼ cup low cal mayonnaise
- ½ cup plain yogurt
- 1 cut up carrot
- 2 chopped scallions
- 1 tsp paprika
- ½ tsp salt

Place all ingredients in the food processor and blend until smooth. It becomes a pretty orange color and is very tasty dip for vegetables.

Serve bruschetta, a thinly sliced toasted Italian bread, and make your own homemade topping using finely

chopped carrots, tomatoes, basil, onion, garlic, salt, pepper and little olive oil. Yum yum!

Finally we ask, what do we do with all the candy? Answer: Take it to work and put it in a bowl for all of your co-workers. You will be surprised how fast it will disappear, and you won't be tempted.

## THANKSGIVING

Thanksgiving and the day after are the days that we usually eat until we cannot move, but there are some tips to help those who are really trying to cut their calories.

First, get the bird in the oven and make sure that it is cooked to an internal temperature of 180 degrees then . . . while it's cooking, get out of the house and take a walk with a family member that you haven't seen for a while. What a great way to catch up on old times.

Before the big meal, drink a couple of glasses of water. At the meal, go for the turkey breast without the skin. You can fill your plate with all of the great vegetables like green beans, pinto beans and the salad. Cut way down on the heavier items like gravies, biscuits, stuffing and mashed potatoes.

On the day after Thanksgiving there is nothing like a cold turkey sandwich from the leftovers. Pile on the lettuce and fresh tomatoes and have some homemade cranberry relish for dessert instead of the leftover

pecan pie.

Remember to drink water before you eat. It helps to fill you up. Then get out there and play some football!

## CHRISTMAS

Now let's move into the Christmas season. Parties, parties everywhere! Be selective. Avoid the places, especially at work, where you know the food is. If you are invited out, you may want to eat something before you go so you are not so hungry at the party.

At the party, be selective again. Find the lower calorie items. Savor your beverage, don't chug. Enjoy the conversation and friendship more than the food.

## NEW YEAR'S

Then comes New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. There are not only parties, but there are parties and football bowl games. Always be careful about drinking and driving and it is better on New Year's Eve to go out where there is a set menu and not a smorgasbord or buffet.

As for the bowl games, use popcorn instead of chips and dip. Make a fruit platter with easy to grab pieces of fruit like grapes, strawberries, sliced melon, and any other berries.

## SUPER BOWL SUNDAY

Lastly, there is Super Bowl Sunday. The eating on this day usually starts about 2:00 in the afternoon and does

not stop until 11:00 in the evening. If you are the host of one of these events, it means, "bring on the food!"

Serving in courses may be a little easier on the waistline. This means timing things out and only serving one food item at a time.

Start your guests with something a little lighter like home-made salsa (not so hot) so they won't get so thirsty and serve it with cucumber rounds, or celery along with baked nachos. Wait a little while and serve subs filled with smoked turkey, lower fat cheese and load them up with all the vegetables. Add olive oil and vinegar and have lots of pickles to munch on.

Over the course of the game and festivities, take a time out and go for a walk at halftime.

Next make popcorn; it can be seasoned with a low fat shredded white cheese instead of adding melted butter. Then end the evening with peanut coated caramel apples (they're not that high in calories and they take longer to eat).

As long as you keep the food coming, everyone should be happy.

So as you can see, we have holidays and then we have extra holidays. Make wise choices in planning, shopping and cooking, throw in as much exercise as you can and your holidays can be fun without added weight gain.

Bon Appetit!

PAMELA BUTLER, MA,RD,LDN is the Clinical Nutrition Manager for Blue Ridge Healthcare.



## Blue Ridge HealthCare reminds you to stay safe this Halloween

Halloween is a fun time for kids, but it is also an important time to be extra vigilant for possible safety hazards so that your children have a fun and safe Halloween. Some tips to make Halloween safe include:

### TRICK-OR-TREATING SAFETY

- Children should be well supervised by an adult when trick-or-treating. Older children should trick-or-treat in large groups in well known neighborhoods.
- Carry a flashlight.
- Stick to well lit houses in familiar neighborhoods only.
- Follow traffic signals and rules of the road.
- Drive slowly.
- Avoid taking shortcuts across backyards or alleys. Stay on well lit streets.

### CANDY SAFETY

- Instruct your children to bring all candy home before eating it so that you can carefully inspect it for tampering. To help prevent children from munching, give them a snack or light meal before they go -- don't send them out on an empty stomach.
- Tell children not to accept -- and, especially, not to eat -- anything that isn't commercially wrapped.
- Throw out candy or treats that are homemade, unwrapped or if they appear to have been tampered with (pinholes in wrappers, torn wrappers, etc.)

- Parents of young children should remove any choking hazards such as gum, peanuts, hard candies or small toys.
- Wash all fresh fruit thoroughly, inspect it for holes, including small punctures, and cut it open before allowing children to eat it.

### GENERAL SAFETY TIPS

- Homeowners should prepare their home for trick-or-treaters by removing obstacles from the front yard, restraining dogs and other animals, and lighting the house well.
- Provide treats that are individually wrapped candy or offer kids nonfood treats, such as stickers and erasers.
- If going to an adult Halloween party, make sure that you don't drink and drive. Use a designated driver.

### COSTUME SAFETY

- Costumes should be short enough so that they don't cause your child to trip and fall.
- For good visibility, add some reflective tape to the costume or bag or make/choose a costume made of bright material.
- Masks should allow your child to see well.
- If using face paint, make sure it is nontoxic and hypoallergenic.
- Knives, swords and other props should be made of a flexible material, so that they don't pose a hazard if fallen on.

Information courtesy of [www.KeepKidsHealth.com](http://www.KeepKidsHealth.com)



*Shining a Light on a Healthier Future*

Blue Ridge HealthCare invites you to join us as we showcase our newly renovated facilities with an

*Open House*

**Sunday, October 28**  
**2pm - 5pm**

**Grace Hospital**

2201 S. Sterling St.  
Morganton

**Valdese Hospital**

720 Malcolm Blvd.  
Rutherford College

Tour our new Ladies Health Pavilion, and Labor & Delivery Suites at Grace and our new Digital Operating Rooms and Rehabilitation Services at Valdese.

**BLUE RIDGE**  
HEALTH CARE