



### A Fact About Family Meals

Although it may seem a simple and old-fashioned activity, taking time out for family meals has a lot of hidden benefits. Eating dinner together can have a positive effect upon the character and social development of the children, family communication skills, nutritional intake of the entire family, development of family traditions, and the culinary skills of family members.

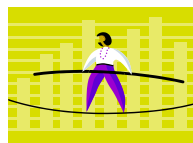
Ohio State University Extension, Family Tapestries Fact Sheet



### Ways to Stay Healthy for the Holidays



#### Balancing Food, Fun & Fitness



'Tis the season to beat sickness, tiredness, or stress. Fortunately, you and your family can stay well and have a good time even if everyone else is falling apart.

- **Fend off germs:** Family gatherings, airports, and stores are all places germs like to mingle. Protect yourself by getting a flu vaccine and washing your hands a lot. The holidays are all about sharing, but keep your forks, spoons, and drinking utensils to yourself.
- **Eat healthy and be merry:** Holiday foods can be high in calories and low on the nutrition you need to battle germs and boost energy. Eat five or more fruits and vegetables a day. Don't give your exercise routine a holiday. Exercise gives you energy in addition to burning calories.
- **Chill:** If you are stressed out, stop what you are doing for just a moment. Take five deep breaths. Concentrate on each breath as you inhale and exhale.
- **Beat the blues:** If you feel down, go outside; even if it is cold. Sunlight and exercise are great mood lifters. Try a seasonal activity to put you in the holiday spirit.
- **Get some Z's:** Getting at least 8 hours of sleep a night during the holidays can help strengthen your immune system and give you more energy.

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## SILENCE BUSTERS

Family conversations help everyone feel more secure and connected in a confusing and often overwhelming world. Try the following new ideas on what to talk about at the table.

*If you could start a new holiday family tradition, what would it be?*

*Describe your perfect holiday. Where would you be, who would you be with, and what would you be doing?*

Keep it on the light side, leaving serious discussion for another time. Turn off the TV, cell phones, and iPods and just listen to what each other has to say.

## HALFWAY HOMEMADE

### Gingerbread

Every culture and country has its own holiday traditions with different foods. Since late in the eleventh century, gingerbread has been a delicacy in western Europe. However, its form varies greatly from region to region. In some places, it is in the form of a soft cake, in others, a crisp cookie or thick bread. It may be light, dark, sweet, or spicy. However, gingerbreads almost always have been cut into shapes and decorated.

### Easy-to-Make Gingerbread House

1. Rinse and dry small (1/2 pint) milk cartons. Tape the top edge of the milk carton together. This forms the peak of the roof.
2. Center each milk carton on a paper plate using frosting to "glue" it in place.
3. Measure graham crackers to fit the sides of the milk carton; break or cut with a knife using a sawing motion.
4. Spread icing on one side of the milk carton and thinly on graham cracker. Press in place. Repeat for each side of carton and on the peaked roof.
5. Spread a thin layer of frosting on top of the graham cracker peaked roof. Cover this roof with gum drops, candy canes, mints, or your choice of decoration.
6. Use frosting as glue and snow, and candies as decorations to finish the house and yard.

### For More Fun:

1. Use small round pretzel sticks and make a log cabin.
2. Use small and large pretzels to make a fence around the house.
3. Cover the house and/or roof in vanilla cookies or gingersnaps.
4. Use leftover frosting to make a snowman in the yard or to drip icicles off the roof.

### Royal Frosting

6 egg whites  
1 teaspoon cream of tartar  
2 pounds powdered sugar

1. Beat egg whites and cream of tartar in bowl until frothy or foamy.
2. Gradually add sugar while continuing to beat until the icing stands up in peaks and is stiff enough to cut through with a sharp knife.
3. Cover with a damp cloth to keep moist.



Keep young children from eating this frosting as raw egg whites may contain the salmonella bacteria.

## QUICK FIXES

### Pizza

#### T-Rex Tortilla Pizza—Serves 1

|   |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Butter-flavored cooking oil spray                 | 1 tablespoon cheddar cheese, shredded |
| 1 (6-inch) flour tortilla                         | 1/2 teaspoon dried chives             |
| 1 1/2 tablespoons mild salsa                      |                                       |
| 1/2 cup frozen yellow corn, cooked                |                                       |
| 1 1/2 tablespoons cooked chicken breast, shredded |                                       |

Preheat oven to 400° F. Cook corn according to package instructions. Spray cookie sheet with cooking oil. Place tortilla on oiled sheet. Top with chicken, cooked corn, cheese, chives and salsa. Bake for 10 minutes. Cut in quarters and serve.

**Variations:** Can use whole wheat flour tortilla, tomato or spaghetti sauce instead of salsa, mozzarella or Monterey jack cheese instead of cheddar. Can also add chopped vegetables like red or green pepper, mushrooms, or onion.

Calories: 257, total fat: 7.6g, saturated fat: 2.4g, % calories from fat: 26%, % calories from saturated fat: 8%, protein: 12g, carbohydrates: 38g, cholesterol: 19mg, dietary fiber: 4g, sodium: 441 mg.

The recipe was developed for Produce for Better Health Foundation by Chef Mark Goodwin, CEC, CNC. This recipe meets PBH and Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) nutrition standards that maintain fruits and vegetables as healthy foods.

#### Fruit Pizza—Serves 8—Serving Size: 1 wedge

|                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 1 large egg white                  | 1 cup uncooked quick-cooking oatmeal          |
| 1/4 cup vegetable oil              | Cooking Spray                                 |
| 1/4 cup brown sugar, firmly packed | 3 ounces fat-free cream cheese, softened      |
| 1/3 cup all-purpose flour          | 1/2 (6-ounce) container nonfat vanilla yogurt |
| 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon       | Fruit for topping the pizza                   |
| 1/4 teaspoon baking soda           |   |

Preheat oven to 375°F. Use mixing bowl to beat egg white until foamy. Add oil and sugar. Beat until smooth. Use another bowl to stir together 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. Use a small bowl to stir together the cream cheese and yogurt until smooth. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate until cool. Transfer crust to serving plate. Spread the cream cheese mixture over the crust. Arrange fruit on top. Cut into wedges and serve, or refrigerate up to 2 hours, covered and uncut. Source: [www.extension.iastate.edu/foodsavings/recipes](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/foodsavings/recipes)



## DOABLE DINNER



Ham  
 Cheesy Hash Brown Potatoes  
 Lettuce Salad  
 Milk



### Cheesy Hash Brown Potatoes

12–16 servings—Prep: 10 minutes—Bake: 55 minutes

#### Ingredients:

- 2 cans (10-3/4 ounces each) condensed cream of potato soup, undiluted (can also use cream of chicken or cream of mushroom)
- 1 cup (8 ounces) sour cream
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic salt
- 1 package (2 pounds) frozen hash brown potatoes
- 2 cups (8 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese

#### Directions:

1. In a large bowl, combine the soup, sour cream and garlic salt. Add potatoes and cheddar cheese; mix well.
2. Pour into a greased 13-inch x 9-inch baking dish. Top with Parmesan cheese, Bake uncovered, at 350° F for 55 to 60 minutes or until potatoes are tender.

Nutrition Facts: 1 serving (1 cup) equals 157 calories, 8 g fat (6 g saturated fat), 30 mg cholesterol, 357 mg sodium, 13 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber, 7 g protein.

### Shopping List

- ✓ Ham
- ✓ Cream of potato soup, cream of chicken or cream of mushroom soup
- ✓ Sour cream
- ✓ Garlic salt
- ✓ Frozen hash brown potatoes
- ✓ Cheddar cheese
- ✓ Parmesan cheese
- ✓ Lettuce
- ✓ Milk

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