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WELLNESS WEEKLY



Watch Out ... For Fattening Fall Foods

When the temperature drops, many of us turn to rich fall foods – perfect for football games, holiday parties, and, if we aren't careful, weight gain. Below are some of fall's most fattening foods you should avoid or improve so you can make it through the season without gaining a pound.

Game-day Foods

Chips, hot dogs, pizza, wings, and beer can ruin any diet. If you're a sports fan, you may be glued to the couch for hours every week. Here are some tips:

- Do push-ups, sit-ups, or jumping jacks during halftime or commercials.
- Watch the game while you pedal on a stationary bike.
- Serve veggies and low-fat dip as part of your spread.

Seasonal Beverages

Hot chocolate, pumpkin-spice lattes, seasonal beers, and apple cider – are a quick and easy way to take in lots of extra calories. Adding whipped cream or caramel drizzles only makes it worse. Instead:

- Try a hot cup of green or flavored tea, rich with antioxidants and calorie-free.
- Opt for light beer or wine spritzers, and limit yourself to one or two.

Cream Soups and Hearty Stews

Cream of potato and broccoli cheese soup may seem like perfect fall foods, but soups that are loaded with cream, cheese, or meat are also loaded with calories. Instead:

- Choose broth-based and vegetable-based soups to fill you up for fewer calories.
- For chili use small portions of lean meat, plenty of beans, vegetables, and spices,

Pumpkin Desserts

Pumpkin layer cake, cheesecake, bread pudding. There are many ways to turn vitamin A-rich pumpkin into a rich dessert. Be careful: If you add tons of cream and sugar, you negate the health benefits of pumpkin. Tip:

- Try crustless, low-fat pumpkin custard, or low-fat pumpkin muffins.

Macaroni and Cheese

Mac and cheese is a favorite comfort food for both kids and adults. But it can wreak havoc with your diet. One cup can pack 300 to 400 calories, depending on the brand. Add sausage or ham and it's even more fattening. Tips:

- Modify the recipe by using a low-fat cheese and milk.
- Substitute veggies for meat to get more nutrition. It'll still taste great!

Halloween Candy

October brings bowls of candy bars at the office – and tempting bags of candy at home awaiting trick-or-treaters. It's easy to get enticed by those bite-size candies. But few of us can have just one. Tips:

- Stash sweets out of sight.
- Satisfy your midday hunger pangs with something nutritious, like fruit.
- If you crave something sweet, try sugarless gum.

Root Vegetables with Added Fat

Roots like yams and sweet potatoes are super-nutritious, but you quadruple the calories when you mix them with cheese, cream, butter, canned soups, or bacon.

- Slash the calorie count by eating root veggies oven-roasted or grilled

All Things in Moderation

All it takes is an extra 100 calories per day to pack on 10 pounds a year. The best strategy for your health is to avoid weight creep altogether.

- Check your portion sizes.
- Limit alcohol.
- Eat lots of veggies made without added fat and sugar.
- Use low-fat cooking techniques and substitutions.
- Put candy bowls out of sight.
- Stay active and exercise regularly.