



It's summertime and eating is easy-if you are not careful you can easily consume twice the calories of a normal day at Picnics and BBQ events. Here are some tips for picnic planning to promote healthy choices for you and your guests:



A variety of crisp, raw veggies like cucumbers, carrots, celery, asparagus tips, cherry tomatoes and radishes are ideal for snacking throughout your picnic. Dips such as hummus, salsa, and low fat yogurt with herbs and spices add dimension to the snack tray.

Choose lean protein options. Try mixing ground beef and ground turkey or use 90% lean beef in making your burgers or in recipes. Lean chicken, beef, pork tenderloin will help to cut the calories and fat in recipes. Bring out the grill, or bake or broil meats. Avoid frying.

Use fresh and flavorful herbs to flavor up your entrees, vegetables & desserts!



Don't go overboard with starchy foods. Limit yourself to 1 cup of starchy side dishes, such as potato, pasta and bean dishes. Visualize the portion to the size of a tennis ball. In making salads, try mixing low fat mayo with yogurt 50/50 in the recipe to cut calories. 1 Tbsp. Mayo= 94 calories!



Substitute colorful vegetables for some of the usual starchy choices. Chopped salads come in a variety of recipes; try adding fruit and nuts to your salad and use a low calorie dressing such as a light Poppy Seed dressing.

With vegetables fresh in season and most flavorful, offer a variety of vegetable dishes that are nutrition packed and full of fiber and lower in calories Grilled vegetables (yams, sweet potatoes, zucchini, onion, red peppers, (portabella) mushrooms etc.) add a colorful side dish or a topping for grilled chicken sandwiches or alone in a wrap as a "veggie wrap". Add olive oil, sherry vinegar (or favorite vinaigrette) to the vegetables.



Add whole grain goodness! Choose breads, rolls & wraps made from whole grain for added nutritional value. Artesian breads can add a new option to the table with dipping oil!



Fill your table with summer produce like peaches, berries, cherries, watermelon. Make a colorful platter of fresh fruits that are flavorful and full of water. Simple desserts from these foods (cobblers, fruit mixes or added into Jell-O) will add a refreshing touch to any picnic!



If you offer sweet desserts, keep the portions small.

Provide better beverages. It is easy to get dehydrated on a hot summer day. Kids playing outdoors may perspire away additional body fluid. Provide plenty of ice water, sparkling water and plain iced tea and perhaps a nutritious fresh fruit drink! Additionally, you might offer frozen fruit pops, lemonade with a splash of cranberry juice or fruit juices mixed half with water.



Enjoy your company and the day!

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