



Aramark and American Heart Association Share Tips For a Tasty, Healthy Holiday Season

December 10, 2015

PHILADELPHIA, Dec. 10, 2015 /PRNewswire/ -- The holidays can be chock full of delicious dishes and desserts...and decisions about how to navigate the season's food frenzy in a healthier way. As part of their [Healthy for Life® 20 By 20](#) initiative, Aramark and the American Heart Association have created a series of smart tips to help families and friends make healthier food choices.



[Aramark](#) (NYSE: ARMK), a global leader in food, facilities management and uniforms, and one of the largest employers of registered dietitians in the world, and the American Heart Association, the nation's largest voluntary organization dedicated to fighting heart disease and stroke, joined forces earlier this year to create *Healthy for Life® 20 By 20*, a five-year initiative dedicated to empowering Americans to make better food choices every day.

The holidays can be a particularly difficult time for people to maintain healthy habits, but Aramark and AHA's experts are encouraging families to make a few small changes to make meals festive and nutritious.

Start by making little changes for a big difference

Making a few small changes in the kitchen can help make dishes more nutritious, but still delicious. To reduce the fat and calories in classic holiday foods:

- Try replacing cream in recipes with regular or low fat milk.
- Use healthy oils, like olive or canola, instead of butter, for sautéing.
- Top roasts with fruit chutneys or glazes.
- Replace traditional potatoes with seasonal turnips or sweet potatoes – they're easy to bake, boil, steam or mash.
- Use herbs and spices, like rosemary and cloves, to flavor dishes, instead of salt or butter.

Enjoy the colors of the season

Make holiday meals festive and healthy with a variety of richly colored fruits and [vegetables](#). Try these ideas to make the most of these seasonal beauties:

- Add butternut squash cubes to stews or vegetable soups.
- Mash sweet potatoes with a dash of orange juice and top with orange zest, or try a [heart-healthy sweet potato recipe](#).
- Spice up Brussels sprouts by dusting them with brown sugar and a pinch of salt, microwave for five minutes and serve hot.
- Mash steamed butternut squash and sweet potatoes together and flavor with ground ginger and cinnamon.
- Include some fall apples for a burst of flavor and some antioxidant protection in holiday recipes.

Don't forget to make your holiday kitchen safe

Aramark serves more than two billion meals a year and employs more than 1,600 chefs in the United States. These experts know safety is as important to the holiday feast as the menu itself. To help prepare for a safe and healthy holiday season, here are some safety tips to keep in mind while preparing holiday meals:

- Always wash hands BEFORE starting to prepare food and in between tasks. Handwashing is critical to preparing safe

food.

- It is recommended that a refrigerator is used to thaw frozen food, so plan ahead. For every five pounds of large frozen food, like a turkey or roast, allow 24 hours of refrigerator thawing time. Place the food in a tray or container deep enough to collect any draining fluids to prevent contamination of other foods in your refrigerator.
- Cook raw meat products to the minimum internal temperatures as stated on the product packaging. Poultry's minimum internal temperature should measure 165°F for 15 seconds, while other meats, like beef, pork, lamb or wild game's minimum internal temperature should measure 160°F.
- Leftovers are a great holiday tradition. To keep them safe, leftovers must be cooled to below 70°F within two hours, and then to 41°F or below, within four hours.

The holidays also provide a wonderful opportunity to spend time with children and set the foundation for a lifetime of healthy eating habits. Remember the following when cooking with children this winter season:

- Make sure kids stay away from hot food and liquids. The steam or splash from vegetables, gravy or coffee could cause serious burns.
- Keep children away from the stove. The stove will be hot and kids should stay three feet away.
- Keep knives out of the reach of children.
- Be sure electric cords from an electric knife, coffee maker, plate warmer or mixer are not dangling off the counter within easy reach of a child.

For more great holiday tips, download the American Heart Association's [Holiday Healthy Eating Guide](#) or visit: www.aramark.com/healthyforlife.

About Aramark

Aramark (NYSE: ARMK) is in the customer service business across food, facilities and uniforms, wherever people work, learn, recover, and play. United by a passion to serve, our 270,000 employees deliver experiences that enrich and nourish the lives of millions of people in 21 countries around the world every day. Aramark is recognized among the Most Admired Companies by FORTUNE and the World's Most Ethical Companies by the Ethisphere Institute. Learn more at www.aramark.com or connect with us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

About the American Heart Association

The American Heart Association is devoted to saving people from heart disease and stroke – the two leading causes of death in the world. We team with millions of volunteers to fund innovative research, fight for stronger public health policies, and provide lifesaving tools and information to prevent and treat these diseases. The Dallas-based association is the nation's oldest and largest voluntary organization dedicated to fighting heart disease and stroke. To learn more or to get involved, call 1-800-AHA-USA1, visit heart.org or call any of our offices around the country. Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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