

Hi! Hope to find you all well and enjoying this wonderful time of the year! Thanks for the feedback on the past contributions to the Good Eating column of the newspaper. It is my sincere hope that you can use the information to help you with your food and nutrition questions. From my desk to the planning corner of your house or office, "Salud"!

Year 2003 is leaving us with the advice "Small Steps, Big Rewards". Let us examine what small steps we can take on a daily basis or during our very own special days to improve nutrition health. Some may say, "I will be satisfied if I survive the next week or two". If this is your saying, this column is for you.

When hosting an event or small gathering, you can go traditional with a health twist. By modifying recipes to reduce calories, saturated fat, and sugars, a small step is put forward. Just examine the two recipes at the end of this column. By using egg and sugar substitutes, and non fat milk, the total calories, fat, and cholesterol content changed. Many people are afraid to do substitutions to their favorite recipes. If this is your case, be afraid no more. These recipes were a hit and yours can be, too!

Among other things planned for the gathering, provide cooked and raw vegetables, vegetable salads and fruit salads. Place them at the start of the buffet table. Add vegetables to recipes for a new version of a favorite dish. Who knows, it may become the standard version of that recipe for your guest. Adding a vegetable or two to a traditional recipe, extends the dish a little further, gives extra eye appeal, and improves the nutritional value of that recipe. This is without a doubt an outward expression that you are interested in the guest's health. Good for you!

When ordering food for your activity, many commercial establishments, will be happy to accommodate you on the request for healthy choices. Meats, cold cuts, cheeses, can be found with less saturated fat and less sodium. Remember that establishments provide what people are interested in buying. A little planning ahead of time is the key.

Serve light calorie drinks. Green tea, herbal tea, or pasteurized apple cider with cinnamon and sugar substitutes can be the highlight of the occasion. Mix defrosted orange juice with part water and part diet non-cola. Serve with orange slices. It is a refreshing drink good for the whole crowd. Water has regained the status of a mainstream drink. Go for it. Serve it very cold on the rocks with a slice of lemon or lime.

Small to medium size plates are a must. Large plates, on the other hand give the impression that the guest is encouraged to partake of big portions. Small to moderate portions are encouraged when appropriate size plates are available. By way of concession, do not insist on second helpings. Too many may not survive the temptation and instead of saying "No, thanks, maybe later" they will go for "Of course, it is so good"!

As the person in charge of the activity, think what kind of non-food activities everyone can participate in. Distraction or avoiding boredom can do a lot to curb overeating. Anyway, eating is part of the activity not the activity itself. Let me tell you what a friend of mine did a couple of years ago. I was invited to her daughter's party. It was the idea to have everyone entertained at all times. Part of this was achieved by encouraging everyone to mingle and talk. The way she did it was by

giving each person a mini colored clothespin to wear. The word "no" was banned from all conversations. Anyone caught saying the word "no" would lose their pin. The person with the most pins was the winner. It was easy to see that in our daily conversations we use the word "no" quite often. Many times is graceful to use it. This time, let's use it to avoid overeating!

It is only fair that after pointing a few suggestions to the host/hostess, the guest part be mentioned. What small steps the guest can make to enjoy the festivities without regrets? Think of why you are going to the activity. Most of us would say: see and talk to friends, coworkers, or family members. Very seldom you hear, I am going there to eat, eat, eat and feel bad the next day. Which leads me to a suggestion. Read an interesting book or article, bring photos of past gatherings, think of what activity can be fun and get many people involved to avoid filling gaps with food.

After you get a few ideas on activities, work on the strategy to avoid overdoing the food thing. The suggestion to eat light previous to the activity, is a good one. At the activity, drink water and non-caloric drinks. Be moderate in the dressings. Choose small portions of rich foods and desserts. Serve your vegetables and fruits first, in this way, there is less space for high calorie items. Eat slowly, enjoy what you are eating. Find a spot away from the food table. Avoid second helpings. Walk before and after the activity. Finally, if what you planned was not achieved this time, keep trying. Anyway, you have 366 days this coming year to practice those small steps that will lead you to big rewards. Buen provecho.

The Osceola County Health Department, the Closing The Gap Program (Diabetes Type 2 prevention and education), and the WIC and Nutrition Services wish you a happy and healthy celebration! For Diabetes education, weight management, cholesterol, blood pressure nutrition, "Smart Kids Slim Down Program" call (407) 343-2082 or (407) 343-2076 for schedule.

For recipes and tips for these celebrations call Osceola County Extension Service at (321) 697-3000 ask for the free publication "Tidbit". You may visit the web: [www.mayoclinic.com](http://www.mayoclinic.com) for timely information and [www.deliciousdecisions.org](http://www.deliciousdecisions.org) for American Heart Association recipes.

Enjoy the following recipes. We are sure you will enjoy them as much as we enjoyed developing them.

### **CARAMEL CUSTARD MARIE**

MARIE Lo PRESTI RD, LD/N, MSPHN

NUTRITIONIST

(THIS RECIPE CONTROLS CALORIES, FAT, SATURATED FAT, AND CARBOHYDRATES)

PREPARATION TIME: 1 HOUR

RECIPE FOR: 8 PORTIONS

PORTION SIZE: 1/8 OF CUSTARD

INGREDIENTS:

¼ CUP GRANULATED SUGAR

¼ CUP WATER

4 TO 5 DROPS LEMON JUICE

12 OZ FAT FREE EVAPORATED MILK

½ CUP EGG SUBSTITUTE (EGG BEATERS)

1 TEASPOON VANILLA

4 TABLESPOONS GRANULAR "SPLENDA" OR ANY ARTIFICIAL SUGAR

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. PUT THE GRANULATED SUGAR WITH ¼ CUP WATER IN THE PAN YOU ARE COOKING THE CUSTARD. SPRINKLE THE LEMON JUICE ON THE MIXTURE OF WATER AND SUGAR. PUT ON THE STOVE TO PREPARE THE CARAMEL ( UNTIL THE SUGAR MELTS AND TURNS GOLDEN BROWN). CAREFULLY LIFT THE MOLD FROM THE HEAT. TILT AND MOVE IN CIRCLES UNTIL ALL THE BOTTOM OF THE PAN IS COATED WITH THE CARAMEL. A RING MOLD WORKS WELL FOR THIS RECIPE.
2. IN BOWL, MIX THE FAT FREE EVAPORATED MILK, EGG SUBSTITUTE, VANILLA, AND ARTIFICIAL SUGAR. POUR OVER THE PAN.
3. PUT ON BAIN-MARIE AT MEDIUM HIGH APROXIMATELY 45 MINUTES OR UNTIL AN INSERTED KNIFE COMES OUT CLEAN. FOR BAIN-MARIE COOKING, PUT THE CUSTARD MOLD ON A BIGGER MOLD WITH AN INCH OF WATER.
4. TAKE FROM THE HEAT AND LET COOL, REFRIGERATE. UNMOLD ON A PLATE. GARNISH WITH STRIPS OF ORANGE PEEL.

NUTRITION INFORMATION:

**CARAMEL CUSTARD MARIE****REGULAR CUSTARD**PORTION 1/8<sup>TH</sup> OF CUSTARD1/8<sup>TH</sup>

CALORIES: 84

277 CALORIES

TOTAL FAT: 0.1 GRAMS 9.7 GRAM

SATURATED FAT: 0.1 GRAMS 5.2 GRAMS

CHOLESTEROL: 1.7 MILLIGRAMS 13.4 MILLIGRAMS

CARBOHYDRATES: 15.4 GRAMS 38.3 GRAMS

**RICE PUDDING LOLITA**

MARIA DOLORES GOMEZ BORQUEZ RD, LD/N CC

NUTRITIONIST AND SOUS CHEF

(THIS RECIPE CONTROLS CALORIES, FAT, SATURATED FAT, AND CARBOHYDRATES)

PREPARATION TIME: 1 HOUR

RECIPE FOR: 6 PORTIONS

PORTION SIZE: ½ CUP

**INGREDIENTS:**

½ CUP UNCOOKED RICE

1 CUP WATER

½ FAT FREE EVAPORATED MILK

1 ½ CUPS FAT FREE MILK

5 TABLESPOONS GRANULAR "SPLENDA" OR ANY ARTIFICIAL SUGAR

¼ CUP RAISINS

1 CINNAMON STICK

¼ TEASPOON GROUND CINNAMON

1/8 TEASPOON SALT

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. COOK THE RICE WITH WATER UNTIL IT IS VERY SOFT.
2. ADD THE FAT FREE EVAPORATED MILK TO THE COOKED RICE. MIX WELL.
3. ADD THE FAT FREE MILK, ARTIFICIAL SUGAR, STICK OF CINNAMON, AND HALF OF THE GROUND CINNAMON. COOK ON MEDIUM HEAT, MOVING CONTINUOUSLY TO AVOID SCORCHING. WHEN IT BREAKS INTO A BOIL, REDUCE THE HEAT. COOK ON SLOW HEAT UNTIL IT THICKENS, APPROXIMATELY 45 MINUTES.
4. FIVE MINUTES BEFORE FINISHED COOK TIME, ADD THE RAISINS, AND SALT. MIX WELL
5. SERVE ON 6 INDIVIDUAL CUPS OR DISHES. DECORATE WITH GROUND CINNAMON, CINNAMON STICKS, MINT LEAVES, AND SHREDDED COCONUT IF DESIRED.

NUTRITION INFORMATION:

(DOES NOT INCLUDE THE COCONUT)

**RICE PUDDING LOLITA    REGULAR RICE PUDDING**

