

Hearty, Healthy Tailgating



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A tailgate party is a great time to enjoy friends, football, and food. Do your guests a favor by serving some healthier options at your next event. A smarter tailgating menu is easy – but does take a little planning.

Start by examining your current menu. Better choices are easy to find and may be even easier to prepare. Let this chart be your guide to help reduce fat, cholesterol, and sodium, while increasing antioxidants, healthy fats, fiber, vitamins, and minerals.



If you usually serve:	Try this instead:
Chicken wings	Marinated grilled chicken
Boneless, skinless chicken can be marinated in advance and will cook quickly when thrown on a hot grill. Use a meat thermometer to avoid over- or under-cooking; chicken breasts should reach a minimum internal temperature of 165 degrees F.	
Bratwurst	Turkey sliders*
Ground turkey is a lean meat that makes an excellent burger. Slice buns widthwise and toast on the grill during the last few minutes of cooking for a nice crust.	
Take-out pizza	Vegetable pizza**
This veggie pizza requires no cooking and holds up well when made in advance. Use any raw veggies you have on hand.	
Nachos with cheese	Baked chips and salsa
Fried corn chips and cheese sauce can be easily replaced by a delicious salsa.	
Cocktail weiners	Caprese skewers*
Skewers of tomato, mozzarella, and basil drizzled in a balsamic vinaigrette make a for a beautiful presentation while adding calcium and vitamin C. Use mozzarella sparingly to minimize fat content.	
Potato chips	Hummus** and whole-wheat pita
Hummus is a traditional Middle Eastern dip made from chickpeas. Contributing fiber, protein, and healthy fats, this dip is a healthful crowd-pleaser.	
Beef chili	Pumpkin chili**
The unexpected addition of pumpkin contributes rich flavor and aroma to a fall favorite. Deep orange vegetables like pumpkins are loaded with beta carotene, a powerful antioxidant. Use leaner beef or turkey, or omit meat altogether for a vegetarian chili.	

*Find recipes on next page

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** Find recipes in West Virginia's Family Nutrition Program Recipe Bank:
www.familynutrition.ext.wvu.edu/recipes

Dessert

To complete the menu and show your spirit, try using bamboo skewers to build fruit kabobs in your team's colors. Following are some suggestions to help you create your color combinations:

Blue or navy – blueberries

Gold or yellow – pineapple

Green – grapes, kiwi

White – honeydew melon

Orange – cantaloupe, orange sections,
mango

Red – watermelon, strawberries,
cherries, raspberries

Purple – grapes

Black – blackberries

Thread on skewers; keep cold to serve.

Turkey Sliders

Yield: 12 sliders; serving size = 1 slider

1½ pound ground turkey

3 garlic cloves, minced

1 tablespoon olive oil

8 Kalamata olives, pitted and chopped

2 tablespoons each fresh basil and oregano, chopped

1 tablespoon rosemary, chopped

1 jalapeño pepper, minced (optional)

Dash salt (optional)

12 small whole-wheat rolls

Combine all ingredients in a medium bowl, mix thoroughly. Pat into small circles; grill until internal temperature reaches 165 degrees. Serve on mini whole-wheat rolls; if unavailable, cut whole-wheat sub buns into halves instead. Add your favorite toppings. Spinach, spicy mustard, banana peppers, and red onions make great additions.

Nutritional Analysis

Calories: 222

Protein: 18 g

Fat: 10 g

Carbohydrates: 15 g

Sodium: 215 mg

Cholesterol: 58 mg

Caprese Skewers

Yield will vary by size of tomatoes; makes approximately 12 servings

- ½ pint cherry tomatoes
- 4 ounces part-skim mozzarella cheese
- 3 tablespoons basil leaves
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 2 teaspoons balsamic vinegar
- Salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste
- Toothpicks



Wash tomatoes and basil leaves thoroughly. Chop mozzarella into small chunks. On each toothpick, thread one tomato, one basil leaf, one chunk mozzarella, and another tomato, if possible. Meanwhile, prepare vinaigrette by mixing olive oil, balsamic vinegar, salt, and pepper. Adjust amounts according to preference. When all are threaded, drizzle with dressing. Add more pepper for garnish and to taste.

Nutritional Analysis

- Calories: 67
- Protein: 2.5 g
- Fat: 6 g
- Carbohydrates: 1g
- Calcium: 63 mg
- Sodium: 45 mg
- Cholesteol: 5 mg

The West Virginia Family Nutrition Program (FNP) is a statewide outreach program that focuses on nutrition, food and physical activity through multiple projects, community-based initiatives and key partnerships. FNP prioritizes accountability and documents its impact on related behaviors of West Virginia's limited resource families. As a visible and critical part of West Virginia University and WVU Extension Service, FNP maintains a strong research base and uses an experiential, facilitative approach to delivering information to the people of West Virginia.

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