

healthy tailgating

finally, college football season is upon us! time to dust off the cornhole board, stock up on face paint and whip out the car flags. it also means it's time to clean off the bbq tools and prepare for another season of finger-licking tailgating fun. while a great tailgate definitely adds to the game day experience, it can also add inches to the waistline. but that doesn't have to be the case. if fans call a few simple audibles (forgive us- we're trying to stick with the football theme), they can watch the scoreboard and not the scale. katherine brooking ms, rd, a new york-based nutritionist, has a couple of great play-calls for your next tailgating menu.

1. plain old hot dogs and burgers aren't going to cut it. experiment with other fare, like tuna, chicken or shrimp. or if you can't stop that hot dog and burger craving, go for low-fat hot dogs or lean ground turkey for turkey burgers. the veggie hot dogs and burgers these days taste fantastic. and as long as you've gone that far, go with whole wheat rolls. small change, big difference.
2. hold the mayo! if you have cole slaw or potato salads, make it with low-fat mayo, or better yet skip the mayo all together. opt for pasta salads made with plenty of vegetables and tossed with a low-fat italian salad dressing.
3. get creative. go beyond the traditional vegetables of potato chips. put some cut up vegetables (firm veggies like bell peppers, squash, or zucchini work best) on a skewer, season with salt, pepper, garlic, or even a store bought marinade and place on the grill. your taste buds and the button on your pants will thank you.
4. hydration is key. because a tailgating party usually includes alcohol, make sure to drink plenty of water to avoid getting dehydrated. most people need a bit of flavor and variety, so i always like to recommend **vitaminwater** – it's low-calorie, packed with nutrients and great tasting. the potassium in **vitaminwater** revive (fruit punch) also helps with nasty hangovers!
5. offer lower-fat dessert items such as angel food cake with fruit and fat-free whipped topping.

Press Contact:

Trey Sarten
Full Picture
212-995-2409
tsarten@fullpic.com

Sasha Marden
Full Picture
212-995-2857
smarden@fullpic.com

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