Summer Cookouts

What better way to celebrate the summer, than getting together with family and friends for an all-American cook out. Some foods weigh heavy on your heart, but can wreak havoc on blood sugar control and waist line.

This summer, change it up! Fire up the grill and make your cookouts a celebration of family, friends and healthy food.

Choose a lean entrée – instead of high-fat burgers, brats and hot dogs, choose chicken, fish, turkey, veggie burgers or tofu.

Grilled vegetables make for a great entrée themselves. They can be marinated ahead of time in a low-sodium marinade, or low-fat Italian dressing to enhance the flavor. Vegetables can be grilled in a grill basket or on a skewer.

Skip the chips and provide the “crunch factor” with raw veggies and dip – Choose a mixture of fresh veggies, combining a variety of colors to add eye appeal. Lighten up the dip by using low-fat plain Greek yogurt in the recipe instead of sour cream.

Lighten up the salads – bulk up the salads with fresh, grilled or roasted vegetables. Vegetables are low calorie and add more volume, texture and flavor without adding extra fat. Use flavorful vinaigrette dressing instead of creamy, or replace full-fat mayo or sour cream with the low-fat version.

Use Fruit for dessert – Fresh fruit plates add beauty to your table. Layer melon and pineapple slices on a tray and scatter a variety of berries on top. Set out a bowl of cut up fruit chucks with a low-fat yogurt for dipping.

“Kabob” anything – Lean meats, vegetables and fruits can be used to make eye appealing, delicious kabobs, all on one skewer.

- Soak wooden skewers for 20 minutes before putting food on to prevent burning
- While the skewers are soaking, cut up veggies, fruits and meat into chunks. Marinated ahead of time as well.
Pork Teriyaki Kabobs

Ingredients:

- 2 pounds pork tenderloin, trimmed, cut into 1-inch cubes
- ½ cup low-sodium teriyaki marinade or sauce
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 (20 ounce) can pineapple chunks, drained
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes
- 2 red or green bell peppers cut into 1 ½ inch pieces

Directions:

1. Pierce meat with a fork so marinade can penetrate. Combine teriyaki sauce and oil. Reserve 2 tablespoons in separate bowl. Pour remainder of marinade over meat cubes and marinate 1 hour, turning occasionally.

2. Thread meat on skewers alternating with vegetables and pineapple chunks. Place on grill 4-5 inches from heat and cook 15 minutes. Turn skewers and brush ingredients with reserved marinade and cook to desire doneness.