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Light Bites for Healthier Holidays

FAMILY FEATURES

For those who are always on the go leading up to the holidays, the season can feel more like madness than merrymaking. From planning get-togethers to building out a perfect menu for the events, there can be difficulties for hosts and guests alike to ensure proper nutrition is still top of mind.

Instead of sacrificing taste or eating less, aim for simple changes that give you the energy to power through the busy season. For example, instead of opting for a carb-loaded breakfast in the morning, try a low-carb Milk Chocolate Protein Muffin,

which takes just a few minutes of prep and microwave time. The quick cook time leaves you with ample opportunities to run errands or divvy up precious seconds toward other activities, while the protein can fuel you for the day ahead.

Almost nothing beats warm soup on a chilly day, and this Butternut Squash and Pear Soup provides feel-good flavor without weighing you down. Finally, when snacks are on the mind – as it tends to happen when constantly on the go – Coconut Muesli Clusters are simple to make and won't undo the nutritious efforts you've made throughout the day.

This full menu of tasty recipes is part of the Atkins low-carb lifestyle, a long-term, healthy eating approach focused on high-fiber carbohydrates, optimal protein and healthy fats. The plan also aims to reduce levels of refined carbohydrates, added sugars and the "hidden sugar effect," – when carbohydrates convert to sugar when digested. You don't see the sugar, but your body does.

Find more ways to live healthier during the holidays and learn more about the benefits of a balanced, low-carb lifestyle at Atkins.com.

Coconut Muesli Clusters

Recipe courtesy of "Atkins: Eat Right, Not Less"
Active time: 10 minutes
Total time: 20 minutes
Servings: 8

1/4 cup water

Heat oven to 350 F. Line large baking sheet with parchment paper, coat with olive oil spray and set aside.

In large bowl, mix together protein powder, sunflower or pumpkin seeds, pecans, coconut, chia seeds or flaxseeds, stevia, cinnamon and turmeric.

In large skillet, combine coconut oil, peanut butter and vanilla extract; melt completely then stir in nut mixture. Turn heat off and add eggs and water, tossing well. Transfer to prepared baking sheet and spread mixture in layer about 1/2-inch thick.

Bake 10-15 minutes until mixture starts to brown and clumps together to make clusters. Cool completely on baking sheet then store in airtight container, refrigerated, up to 1 week.

See **LIGHT BITES**, 18C

- Olive oil spray
- 1 cup plain protein powder
- 1/2 cup unsalted sunflower or pumpkin seeds
- 1 cup whole raw pecans
- 1 cup unsweetened whole flake shredded coconut
- 1/2 cup chia seeds or ground flaxseeds
- 1 tablespoon stevia
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground turmeric
- 1 tablespoon coconut oil
- 1 tablespoon peanut butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 large eggs

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19645 3rd St. N.
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Bus: (251) 866-2406
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