

# *The Lunchbox Nutritionist*

## *Kathleen Searles MS, RD, LDN*



December and the holiday season are full of fantastic meals and treats. Sometimes it is hard to keep an eye on healthy eating in the midst of the hustle and bustle. A few years ago I created my “Top Ten Tips for Eating Well During the Holidays” and for this month’s newsletter I want to share them with you! Enjoy celebrating the current year out and the New Year in!

- Kathleen Searles, MS, RD, CSSD, LDN

### Nutrition Tips for Holiday Shoppers

- Make a plan for your meals when you will be spending the day at the mall or going from store to store. Think about what food options will be convenient for you in advance.
- Consider packing a healthy lunch. A light, easy to carry lunch might be a peanut butter sandwich or some cheese and crackers along with a piece of fruit. No refrigeration needed!
- If you will be eating lunch at a mall food court, look for outlets that have more fresh foods such as Au Bon Pain or Panera Bread.
- At fast food restaurants look for smaller sized sandwiches and salads. Avoid fried foods. (One of my favorite fast food meals is a small chili and a garden side salad from Wendy’s.)
- If you shop non-stop, take along a meal replacement bar. This will provide some fuel during the day and keep you from getting too hungry later on.
- Stay hydrated!! Stores are sometimes hot and usually dry. Carry along a water bottle or plan a refreshing break for coffee, tea or a cold drink.

### Gluten Free Coconut Meringue Cookies

<http://www.intheraw.com/site/print/coconut-meringue-cookies/>

Ingredients

- 2 large egg whites, at room temperature

### Finish 2013 Feeling Great!

Get a head start on your New Year’s resolutions!

December is a great time to lay the groundwork for positive change in 2014. Call today so we can get started on your healthier new year!  
[978-697-2834](tel:978-697-2834)

### Nutrition Tips for Social Events

- At parties, focus on meeting and talking with people rather than food.
- Stand or sit away from the food dishes so that they are not distracting to you.
- Check out all the food options and only choose the ones that look the most delicious! Take small portions, fill up on fruits and vegetables, eat slowly, and enjoy the holiday flavors.
- Calories in alcoholic beverages can add up quickly!! For example, an apple martini can pack 150-200 Calories! Try water, coffee, tea, or seltzer with lime. Or try alternating an alcoholic drink with a non-

- 1 pinch salt
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/3 cup unsweetened shredded coconut, regular or reduced-fat
- 1/4 cup Monk Fruit In The Raw® Bakers Bag
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

**Preparation**

1. Place a rack in the center of the oven. Preheat the oven to 250° F. Line a baking sheet, preferably light-colored, with baking parchment.
  2. In a mixing bowl, use an electric mixer on medium speed to beat the egg whites until foamy. Add the salt and beat on high until the whites form soft peaks. While beating, slowly add the sugar, 2 tablespoons at a time; this should take 1 minute. Continue beating until the whites form stiff peaks, 2 to 3 minutes. Using a flexible spatula, fold in the coconut, Monk Fruit In The Raw® Bakers Bag, and vanilla until just combined. Drop walnut-size mounds of the meringue onto the lined baking sheet, spacing them 1 inch apart. With the back of the spoon, smooth and slightly flatten the meringue into even mounds.
  3. Bake the cookies for 2 hours. Turn off the oven and leave the meringues in the closed oven for 45 to 60 minutes, until they are crisp in the center. Gently lift the cookies off the parchment. These cookies keep in an airtight container, up to 1 week.
- Nutrition Information: Per Coconut Meringue Cookie: 22 calories, 1 g fat 1 g saturated fat, 2 g carbohydrate, 1 g protein, 0 g dietary fiber, 18 mg cholesterol, 18 mg sodium

(Recommended alcohol intake is 1 drink/day for women and 2 drinks/day for men. Stay safe and don't drink and drive!)

Food traditions are such a special part of holiday celebrations. Moderate portions and mindful eating can help you to savor and treasure all your family favorites within your health goals. Happy holidays!!

**Quote of the Month:**

"Fear less, hope more; eat less, chew more; whine less, breathe more; talk less, say more; hate less, love more; and all good things are yours."

~Swedish Proverb

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**About Kathleen Searles, MS, RD, LDN**

I am a Registered Dietitian and am licensed to practice in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Maine. The exciting field of nutrition has been my passion ever since I took a foods class with my friends in high school. Through my work in different states and different settings I have developed my philosophy of helping people improve their diets by finding foods that fit into their particular routines, budgets, and preferences. I look forward to helping you solve your nutrition challenges with tasty and satisfying foods.