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## **HEART HEALTHY SUMMER GRILLING BIG ON FLAVOR**

**GREENSBURG, PA, June 2, 2010** ...Ready, set....grill! Summer is the perfect time to enjoy eating outside. This includes picnics in the park, cookouts on the deck, graduation parties and pot luck neighborhood get-togethers where the grill is fired up and the food is plenty. But for those who are trying to limit fat, sodium and calories, this time of year can be a diet nightmare. ‘Yes, it is possible to enjoy cookouts without compromising on flavor’, according to Dawn Davoli, RD, LDN, nutrition consultant for Excela Health’s *Golden Hour* Cardiovascular Program. Davoli suggests keeping these important tips and ideas in mind to make your next grilling get together healthy for your heart:

### **Meat, Poultry and Fish**

- Grill fish more often. Go for the heart healthy types, such as salmon, tuna, halibut and trout, which are high in omega-3 fatty acids.
- Choose chicken breasts over higher fat thighs and legs and remember to remove the skin before eating.
- Opt for lean cuts of beef: “loin” or “round”. And buy “choice” or “select” grades of beef instead of “prime”. Don’t forget to trim all visible fat before cooking.
- Try vegetarian burgers or use lean ground beef or lean ground turkey when making your own burgers.
- Hot dog lover? Try these brands that have less than 6 gm of fat and 480 mg of sodium per serving: Boar’s Head Lite Beef Frankfurters, Oscar Mayer Light Weiners made with turkey and pork or Hebrew National 97% Fat Free Beef Franks.

### **Salads and Side Dishes**

- Go green! Choose a variety of leafy greens for salads: spinach, romaine, Bibb, or spring mix and top with vinaigrette or reduced-fat dressings. Add a healthy crunch with walnuts or almonds instead of croutons.
- Substitute low-fat or fat-free mayonnaise, low-fat yogurt, or low-fat sour cream in potato salads and slaws
- For rice, bean, corn or tomato salads, reverse the oil to vinegar ratio (it's usually 3 parts oil to one part vinegar).
- Eat the rainbow! "A fruit salad that includes strawberries, blueberries, cantaloupe, honeydew, kiwi, peaches, pineapple and grapes is a great way to get all the heart healthy anti-oxidants in a single low calorie dish," according to Davoli.

### **Desserts**

- Limit store or bakery bought items. They are often made with egg yolks, butter and shortening. Instead, make your own cookies, cakes and pies. Use healthy fats and whole wheat flour and reduce salt and sugar amounts.
- Try low-fat ice cream, frozen yogurt, sorbet or fruit ices instead of ice cream.
- Grill fruit. "Pineapple, peaches or nectarine halves on the grill, topped with brown sugar and low-fat whipped topping makes a great, quick dessert," suggests Davoli.

### **Oils, Seasonings and More**

- For salads, dips and marinades, choose reduced-fat, low-fat, light or no-fat dressings.
- Reduce salty seasonings and condiments, like teriyaki, soy and BBQ sauce. Try low-salt versions instead.
- Add more fiber by using whole-wheat or whole-grain buns and rolls.
- Use low-fat cheeses in side dishes, salads and on burgers.

To learn more about heart healthy nutrition and cooking tips, consider enrolling in Excelsa Health's Spectrum Program. This seven-week group educational series is based on the research of Dr. Dean Ornish. It is for

individuals who want to prevent disease, reduce the risk for developing chronic conditions or learn lifestyle changes that can help manage diabetes, hypertension, heart disease and cancer. Classes begin June 8, 10 a.m. to noon, Westmoreland Hospital, or 5:30 to 7 p.m., Latrobe Hospital. Contact the Excelsa Health Call Center, 1-877-771-1234 to register.

### **Grilled Chicken with Cucumber Yogurt Sauce**

4 servings

Prep time: 20 minutes

Grill: 12 minutes

#### Ingredients:

1 6-ounce carton plain low-fat yogurt

¼ cup thinly sliced green onions

2 teaspoon snipped fresh mint

½ teaspoon ground cumin

¼ teaspoon salt

¼ teaspoon ground black pepper

1 cup chopped, seeded cucumber

4 small skinless, boneless chicken breast halves (1 to 1 ¼ pounds total)

#### Directions:

In a medium bowl, combine yogurt, green onions, mint, cumin, salt, and 1/8 teaspoon pepper. Transfer half of the yogurt mixture to a small bowl; set aside. For cucumber-yogurt sauce: Stir cucumber into remaining yogurt mixture.

Sprinkle chicken breasts with remaining 1/8 teaspoon pepper.

Place chicken on the rack of an uncovered grill directly over medium heat. Grill for 12 to 15 minutes or until chicken is no longer pink (170 °F), turning once halfway through grilling and brushing with reserved yogurt mixture for the last half of grilling. Discard any remaining yogurt mixture.

Serve chicken with the cucumber-yogurt sauce.

#### Nutrition Information per serving:

Calories: 159

Fat: 2 gm

Sat. Fat: 1 gm

Cholesterol: 68 mg

Sodium: 251 mg

*Recipe adapted from [www.hearthealthyonline.com](http://www.hearthealthyonline.com)*