

## Memorial Day Cook-out (or cook-in)

The unofficially official start of the summer Memorial Day, is upon us! 😊 Although, this year's celebrations will be quite different, I'm sure. In this week's video and blog, I've made a full menu for you to enjoy: Veggie stuffed turkey burgers, carrot "hot dogs" with Cole slaw and zucchini "chips" with roasted red pepper dip. You can play around with these as you like. For example: Sub ground chicken for the ground turkey, cook the zucchini chips in the air fryer, sub cream cheese for the goat cheese in the dip, and/or cook the burgers and "dogs" in the oven or on the stove top or griddle. You can play with the veggies that are mixed into the ground poultry. You can sub yellow squash instead of the zucchini, use chopped bell pepper in place of the roasted red peppers, add cheese as a mix-in vs on top. Really, any swap out will work! If you'd like to add bread crumbs, that's acceptable too. You can easily swap out ingredients in these recipes to make them your own!

As a dietitian, I generally tell people that it's ok to enjoy hamburgers and hot dogs every now and again, with an overall healthy diet and active lifestyle. They should not be consumed as frequently as monthly or weekly. Times like Memorial Day, 4<sup>th</sup> of July or when you're at the ball park, are times you can enjoy a hot dog. It's all about moderation and balance! Also, no food should be thought of as a "bad" food, except for lard... and maybe scrapple (which I'm pretty sure is only tasty to native Delawareans) 😊 However, if you are making a lifestyle change for heart health, or for personal reasons, these recipes are a great way to do so.

Let me be honest with you, the carrot dogs and zucchini chips aren't going to be fooling anyone, but they are a delicious option. The "dogs" minus the slaw are vegan. You could sub all vegan options though, for the dairy and mayo to make slaw vegan. With the slaw as is, they would be considered lacto-ovo-vegetarian, which means a vegetarian who consumes milk products and eggs. The roasted red pepper dip can be used with pita chips, sweet potato chips or with baked chicken. This dip so creamy and delicious as is, that I wouldn't suggest subbing vegan options. Instead, I would suggest drizzling zucchini with Italian dressing, or olive oil and balsamic vinegar sprinkled with dried Italian herbs.

I hope that you all get to enjoy this weekend and these recipes. Just remember, besides backyard and beach BBQ's, Memorial Day is about remembering those who've made the ultimate sacrifice for our country. Make sure you take a moment in the day to do so and be thankful.

Bon Appetit,

~~ Chef Jen