“TGIF—Thank Goodness It’s Football [Season]!” Of course that also means it’s tailgating season, which calls for good friends, beautiful fall weather and plenty of great food! This fun-packed season could also mean consuming huge amounts of calories while enjoying the BIG game! Did you know that in a two-hour football game you could consume 1640 calories just by eating 2 slices of pizza, 9 hot wings and drinking 1 can of soda? If this sounds like your usual pre-game “snack”, keep reading to learn about portion sizes, healthier snack substitutions, and even a simple and delicious recipe to try with your friends!

**THE GAME PLAN**

**TOUCHDOWN BUFFALO CHICKEN DIP**
(MAKES 4 CUPS)
PREP TIME: 5 MINS  
COOK TIME: 20 MINS  
SERVING SIZE: ¼ CUP  
CALORIES: 35 calories per ¼ cup serving  
FAT: 1.5g, PROTEIN: 6g, CARBOHYDRATES: 3g  
8 oz. plain Greek yogurt  
¼ cup fat free Ranch dressing  
¼ cup part-skim Mozzarella cheese  
2 cans white premium chunk chicken breast in water, drained  
¼ cup Franks Red Hot Original Sauce

Heat oven to 350. Mix all ingredients in a deep baking dish and bake for 20 minutes, or until heated through.

Microwave instructions: Mix all ingredients in a microwave-safe bowl and cook on high for 5 minutes, stirring halfway through.

Serve with raw veggies or whole wheat crackers!

COMPARISON: 35 calories per serving size with this recipe, versus the original recipe of 144 calories per serving

**Portion size** plays a big role in excess calorie consumption and weight gain. For example, Tyson’s “Any’tizers Hot ‘n Spicy Wings” are 220 calories for just 3 wings. Think about how fast you could eat 6, 9 or 12 wings—even the Brower takeout menu serves about 12 wings per container.

Avoid “mindless eating!” - You are savoring that hot thick-crust pizza, yelling at the TV, laughing with your friends, coaching and figuring out your team’s next play…you are totally distracted! So, in order to sidestep overeating and excess calorie intake, keep the food in the kitchen or on your shelves in the dorms. This way, you have to physically get up in order to get more.

**Soda** can be another big downfall during tailgating. Think of this beverage as a 500-lb linebacker! Trying to switch left from regular to diet sodas seems like a great maneuver to cut calories, but somehow you still get smacked with the extra pounds. So to avoid the colossal caloric tackle, try brewing your own iced tea or adding flavor to your water with Crystal Light or fresh fruit!

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Rutgers Dining Services. [http://food.rutgers.edu](http://food.rutgers.edu), Accessed October 5, 2011