






Healthy Holiday Eating



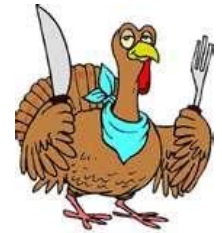
It is said that between Thanksgiving and New Year's, the average American gains as much as seven pounds. For many people, just the thought of the holiday season, with its temptations and overindulgences, creates anxiety about what to eat and what not to eat.

The key to sticking to your weight loss plan during the holiday season is moderation and balance... and a little extra exercise doesn't hurt either!

CONTROLLING HOLIDAY EXTREMES

-  **BE REALISTIC.** Make sure you maintain the usual total daily calories in your meal plan. You may want to save room for the larger portion of your calories for evening celebrations. Not consuming the prescribed snacks during these days and eating the smaller meals for breakfast and lunch will allow for some room for a few additional calories at dinner. If foods are rich, eat smaller portions to keep calories from exceeding your daily limit.
-  **CURB YOUR APPETITE *BEFORE* A PARTY.** Have a plan before you arrive at a party and stick to it! If you arrive at a party starving, you're more likely to overeat no matter how much willpower you have. Eat a snack from your meal plan before you head out the door. When you get to the party, take time to meet and greet people; conversation is calorie-free and keeps you from rushing to the food table. Arriving fashionably late may be a good idea as well. Sip on calorie free beverages such as mineral water or diet soda.
-  **FILL YOUR PLATE WITH LOWER-CALORIE FARE.** Most holiday events are likely to feature some healthier, lower-calorie foods. Choose vegetable crudité (dip lightly), boiled shrimp with cocktail sauce or lemon and lean turkey with bread, instead of fried appetizers, cheese cubes, ham and pork dishes and biscuits. Have a glass of wine (160 calories) instead of eggnog (340 calories) and choose fruit and a few cookies for dessert instead of pie and ice cream. Seltzer is a calorie-free beverage choice. If you're asked to bring your own dish, bring something healthful like a green salad, fruit salad or hummus.
-  **MAKE JUST ONE TRIP TO THE BUFFET...** And be selective. Take a peek at all the foods on the table before filling up at the start of the line; this way, you can better choose only the foods you really want. Your best choices would be raw fruits and vegetables with a small amount of dip, boiled or broiled shrimp or scallops with cocktail sauce or lemon, and slices of lean meats. Once you've filled your plate, move away from the table so you're not tempted to take seconds. If you're at a sit-down dinner, ask for small helpings. That way, if your host expects you to take seconds, you won't overdo it as much.
-  **BRING HEALTHY TREATS TO THE OFFICE.** One of the toughest parts of the holidays is staying away from goodies brought in by co-workers. Why not then bring in your own healthier snacks to share? Instead of brownies, bring in gingersnap or low-fat chocolate chip cookies. Instead of regular eggnog, bring in low-

fat eggnog or fat-free. Your co-workers will thank you for adding sweetness to their day without an overindulgence of fat and calories.



Healthful Thanksgiving Eating and Entertaining

1. Slash Calories from Side Dishes

If you're the chef, a few simple tricks of the trade can help save on calories:

- Consider purchasing a gravy separator to remove fat and cut back on calories.
- Mash potatoes with low-fat or fat-free milk and trans fat-free margarine instead of whole milk, cream or butter; add garlic and herbs.
- Sautee' onion and garlic in broth, or with a touch of canola or olive oil, rather than butter.
- Baste the turkey with sodium-reduced broth rather than fatty meat drippings.
- Try pureed root vegetables like carrots or parsnips in place of white potatoes.
- Stuff the turkey with wild rice or stuffing made from whole grain bread.
- Prepare soups and gravy ahead, refrigerate, and scoop off the hardened fat.

2. Lighten Up Holiday Desserts

Sugar – Many cookbook recipes call for more sugar than is necessary. Start by reducing the amount by $\frac{1}{2}$. Adding dried fruit such as raisins, dried cranberries, chopped apricots or chopped dates, adds natural sweetener as well as extra fiber and nutrients.

Fat – Substitute applesauce, pureed pumpkin or mango, dried plum (prune) puree, or baby prunes for part of the butter, margarine or oil in a recipe. This adds moisture while reducing fat and calories. Applesauce is better suited for light colored baked goods and prune or pumpkin puree for darker colored products such as chocolate, gingerbread and spice cake.

Portion size – Use small oven-proof Pyrex custard cups for any of the following desserts:

- Individual portions of fruit salad topped with colorful pomegranate seeds.
- Fruited gelatin in layers or holiday colors.
- Baked fruits like apples or pears with cobbler toppings; a little goes a long way.
- Chocolate soufflés prepared with cocoa powder and low fat milk.
- Gingerbread baked in individual molds dusted with powdered sugar.

Think Fruit and Nuts – Why not adopt the after dinner practice common in many Mediterranean countries? Serve an array of fresh fruit and assorted nuts after the main meal. Set the table with small festive plates, napkins, knives and several nutcrackers. Sit back and enjoy!

3. Keep Holiday Beverages in Check

With so much focus on food during the holiday season, beverages are often overlooked as a contributor of unwanted calories. Did you know that a cup of eggnog spiked with rum can pack on at least 400 to 500 calories and nearly 20 grams of fat? Or that stopping at a coffee bar to warm up with a caramel mocha latte with whipped cream can pack on nearly 400 calories and 17 grams of fat? In general, creamy or sweet drinks, hot or cold, can mean lots of extra calories and fat.



Here are some healthful options:

- Cinnamon-apple or orange-spice flavored tea. Tea brewed from real tea leaves provides disease-fighting antioxidants; herbal teas are calorie-free and can be an enjoyable winter beverage as well.
- Hot unsweetened apple cider simmered with a cinnamon stick.
- Sparkling water or club soda with a splash of fruit juice, citrus slice or sprig of mint.
- Cranberry spritzers made with cranberry juice and seltzer are a great alcohol-free version of wine spritzers and can pass for the real thing.
- Hot chocolate made with low-fat or skim-milk can have a holiday touch by sprinkling with cinnamon or adding a drop of almond or peppermint extract.

4. Make Time for Yourself... Find Ways to Exercise

It's easy to forgo regular habits when holiday season rolls around. More often than not, the trip to the gym or walking routine with friends is put on hold, while shopping, office parties and other errands take precedence. During this time of year, putting aside time to exercise becomes even more important if you plan on losing weight.

- Schedule a brisk walk first thing in the morning before the activities of the day pull you away.
- Continue with your regular exercise program through the holidays.
- Exercise before you go to a party.

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- When possible, walk when taking care of errands.
- Use the stairs at work instead of waiting for the elevator.
- Keep one or two exercise videos on hand for days when inclement weather keeps you from going outdoors.
- Lastly, don't be hard on yourself. If you skip several days of physical activity, get back on track as soon as you can.

