



NAVIGATING THE



HOLIDAYS

Tips to Successfully Maintain Weight Loss

Focus on maintaining, not losing, weight over the holidays

During the holiday season, many people have an "I'll start tomorrow" mentality, which can end up prolonging unhealthy habits. Continue to use the skills you have developed over the course of this program and these tips below to avoid weight gain.

- **Recipe swaps --- modify your recipes**

- Replace butter w/ applesauce, mashed banana, pumpkin puree
- Use stevia or splenda instead of sugar
- Add dried fruit instead of chocolate chips
- Flavor dishes w/ herbs and spices instead of butter
- Use low fat/ nonfat dairy instead of full fat
- Use greek yogurt instead of sour cream, mayo and cream cheese
- Flavor treats w/ extracts like vanilla, peppermint, almond, coconut, butter flavors

- **Be active w/ family and friends-----** walk the mall instead of shopping online

- Make a conscious decision to get more steps into the day by taking the stairs or parking the car far away from the grocery store entrance
- Before curling up around the fire, round up family members for a hike or snowshoeing session

- **Drink plenty of water---** Drinking water helps people feel full, and as a result consume fewer calories

- **Always be prepared---** read menus prior, ask friends and family what they will be having and also bring a dish that you know you can eat

- **Watch portion sizes---** The quicker we eat, the less time the body has to register fullness

- Wait before grabbing seconds; it takes about 20 minutes for the brain to get the message that we've eaten a meal therefore it's best to go for a walk or chat with friends before dishing up seconds



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Make your guests the focus of the day, rather than the food. Make eye contact, connect and engage with every person who is special to you in the room and make sure that you leave the event full of love, rather than cheese puffs.

- **Save indulgences and calories on something that is “worth it” to you**
 - Acknowledge a few cravings instead of pushing them all away completely
 - Caving to a craving—as long as it’s in moderation—can curb the desire to go at it like a kid in a candy store
 - Forbidding a specific food or food group during the holiday season may only make it more attractive
- **Limit desserts and sweets ----** take it easy on the white stuff; a dramatic spike in blood sugar can leave us feeling hungrier, faster
- **Avoid keeping a lot of treats at home---** less tempted
 - If enjoy baking, give baked goods away and cut back on taste testing
- **Never go hungry to social events---** skipping breakfast or lunch in order to “save your appetite” isn’t the best weight-maintenance tactic. Stick to a reasonably sized breakfast with plenty of protein to keep you fuller longer and temper the urge to stuff your face later.
- **Do not stand around food table / turn away from it---** feast on good company instead
- **Avoid drinking your calories---**
 - Alcohol hinders ability to make good food choices
 - Reach for a tall, thin glass, not a short squatty one. Research shows people pour less liquid into tall glasses. With a taller glass, you’re likely to down less in one sitting.
 - Keep things low cal and chose gin/vodka with club soda & lime/lemon
- **Invest in toss-away tupperware and baggies---** before guests leave you with half-full platters of food, have some Tupperware ready; load up containers for friends and family to hand out as they leave.
- **Freeze leftovers---** pack up the extras and store them in the freezer for a later date. Studies show that when food is out of sight, you’ll be less likely to reach for a second helping.

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You don't have to treat each festive meal like your last supper to be satisfied, nourished and full of holiday joy. Thanksgiving is only one day and Christmas only two, try not to eat like its a holiday everyday.

- **Build your holiday plate around protein---** fill your plate with mostly turkey, ham or chicken with vegetables. Eat the starch last.
 - **Do buffet style, keeping food away from where you are eating----** leave food in the kitchen (away from reach) rather than display a basket full of rolls, multiple casseroles, and an entire turkey directly on the table.
 - **Use the appetizer or desert sized plates---** lessens the ability to eat very large portions
 - **Turn off the TV---** getting sucked into It's a Wonderful Life or Elf may bring on mindless eating. Commercials for unhealthy foods and drinks may also increase your desire for low-nutrient junk, fast food, and sugary beverages.
 - **Food pushers ----- just say NO**
 - Though your relatives may encourage overeating by shoving seconds onto a cleaned plate, it's OK to respectfully decline. "I'm full" or "I'm taking a break" should be enough for friends and family members to back off (and give you time to decide if you'd really like more)
 - **Use the buddy system---** find someone that you will be seeing often during this time of the year to help keep you motivated and hold you accountable
 - **Get enough sleep---** exhaustion can lead to making poor food choices
 - **Keep your healthiest habits in check---** if you're breakfast eater, walk 10,000 steps a day or pack healthy snacks don't stop now
 - Pinpoint 2 of your healthiest habits and focus on getting these done each day
 - **Set realistic goals and write them down---** keep goals specific and attainable
 - Set SMART goals
 - Post a list of goals somewhere highly visible, like the refrigerator door.
 - If your goal is "stick to two cookies at every holiday party" seeing it periodically may help you commit
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