

Strategies for Healthy Holiday Eating

It's important to remember, that it's what you eat and do for activity over the weeks and months leading up to and following the holidays that makes the biggest difference! (The holidays are only 6 weeks- are you eating healthy the other 46 weeks?) Begin the holiday period with an attitude that you don't need to deprive yourself of special holiday foods—but you don't need to eat huge portions to enjoy these foods either! Eat slowly and savor each bite of the small portions of your favorite foods!

Other tips:

1. Limit the special foods to the actual holiday rather than all week.
2. Keep in mind the holidays are about spending time with family and friends-not the food! Socialize away from the food table and focus on good conversation.
3. Choose only the foods you really want and enjoy rather than trying some of everything offered. Ask yourself, "is this food worth eating?"
4. Eat a balanced snack or small meal before going to a party or shopping at the mall and you will be less likely to overeat. Pack a healthy snack to munch while shopping or something for after the party if you aren't feeling satisfied.
5. Survey the entire buffet first and "pre-plan" your eating. Choose a smaller size plate and set it up so there's space between all items to keep portions reasonable. Sit far from the buffet table to avoid returning for seconds.
6. Drink alcohol only after meals or eating. It increases hunger and lowers your will power. Watch out for eggnog (1 cup=350 cal, 19g fat!)
7. Become a "taster"-if you don't enjoy what is on your plate, don't feel you have to finish eating it-just leave it on your plate! Remember you control what you eat!
8. Keep your stress under control by using relaxation techniques to limit your stress or emotional eating. A brisk walk is a great way to deal with stress!
9. Try to steer clear of too many fat-laden munchies: dips, chips, deep-fried or cheesy appetizers. Fill up on low calorie vegetables-raw, steamed or grilled whenever they are available.
10. Keep up your physical activity! Add extra steps to your day using the stairs or distant parking. Put on holiday music and move your body to the tunes!

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