



Healthy Eating Tips for the Holidays

* Watch your portion size. Don't always use the biggest plate available and don't always fill your plate so it is heaping full. You can always go back for seconds if you are still hungry.

* Don't go to a party hungry. If you know you will probably overeat at a party have a snack or even a light meal before you head out. This way you will only have enough room in your stomach to try a few of your favorite things at the party

* Limit your alcohol consumption. Having too much alcohol at a party is never a good idea and most have a high number of calories. Try to limit your number of drinks at a party and switch to or alternate with another low-calorie beverage. Also, try not to drink alcohol on an empty stomach. This can set your body up to crave more food.

* Don't stand close to the food while you are socializing. You will probably nibble on food and not even realize it. Also, try to focus on socializing during the party not eating. You will probably enjoy the company on conversation just as much if not more than the food

* Take a look at all the food available before you make your choice. By doing this you can see what foods are available that you enjoy and which ones would not be much of a treat. After you have seen all of your food choices you can fix your plate accordingly.

* Ask family and friends for support. Let the people who will be celebrating the holidays with you know you are trying to watch the amount of food you are eating. This will help prevent them from encouraging you to "have just one more" or from saying "oh, just try one, it's the holidays"

* Enjoy the Season. You can't expect to enjoy the Holiday season if you don't partake in any of the activities planned, with eating being one of them. Try not to think of the Holiday season in terms of nothing but don'ts. Keep in mind that you can still enjoy everything if you do so in moderation. If you try to avoid all the good things it may make you depressed and you may cave in and eat more to compensate for feeling down.

* Don't make munchies too easily available. Many times during the Holidays we have food, candy, or snacks in every room of the house. Try filling your decorative dishes with festive potpourri instead of candy. This will help keep your snacking down.

* Don't stop exercising during the Holiday season. Most people are on an altered schedule during the holidays. Don't let this stop you from exercising. If you can't get to your normal exercise facility find an alternative. Also, use this time to get others in your family to start exercising. You will get to spend more time with them and they will probably enjoy the activity.

* Use low calorie and other healthy substitutes when preparing food. Although it might not taste exactly the way Grandma makes it, there are several easy substitutions that can be made that will greatly decrease the amount of calories in the foods you prepare. Some of these substitutions include:

1. Use skim milk instead of whole milk
2. Use the egg white in place of a whole egg or use egg substitute
3. Omit the bottom crust from fruit pies and just use the top crust; pre-made crusts are lower in calories than ones from scratch
4. Use nonnutritive sweeteners in place of sugar in pie fillings, puddings and cranberry sauce
5. Use a fat-skimmer cup or shallow container place in the freezer to remove fat from the juices before gravy is made

* Attempt to cut out stress. Many times stress causes us to overeat, whether we want to or not. By limiting your stress you may feel like eating less and will probably enjoy the Holiday time more. A few simple ways to relieve stress are as follows:

1. Don't feel bad to say "NO". Everyone is juggling schedules during the holidays. Respectfully decline an invitation if you know there is no way you can make it or would not enjoy the time spent. More than likely you are not the only one with other commitments
2. Avoid unnecessary or excessive travel. Don't always be the one making the long trip for the Holidays. Ask your friends and relatives to come and visit you this year. Also, if the weather makes driving dangerous don't risk making a trip.
3. Don't invite more people to your house then you are prepared to host. If you have a house that comfortably holds 15 don't invite 30 people to your party. Also, don't be afraid to ask for help from friends and family if you are hosting. Most of the time people are more than willing to bring a dish or share some of the workload.
4. Get Holiday shopping done early. Sometimes this is easier said than done but it will save you the trouble and headache of running to 5 different stores for a particular gift on Christmas eve. Also, don't spend too much money on gifts. It truly is the thought that counts and most people just appreciate the gesture.

Remember that as long as you do so in moderation, you should be able to enjoy all the good things during the Holiday season. If you follow this simple rule you will not regret your holiday celebrations at the beginning of the New Year.

Have a Happy and Safe Holiday Season!

