

Holiday Eating Without the Weight!

By

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With the Holidays upon us—both Thanksgiving and Christmas—we are faced with the challenge of avoiding overeating. It truly is a challenge when all of this delicious food is placed in front of us or on a banquet table; we want to taste and try everything sometimes to excess! The holiday season can be stressful in terms of fighting the urge to overeat. Research has shown that the average American will gain 5 pounds between Thanksgiving and New Year's.

Following are some suggestions for surviving the coming holiday season without gaining excessive pounds that will require a strict diet regimen after the New Year. Here are ten holiday survival tips that may help you as you face this season of abundance of food.

1. Eat a light, healthy snack such as soup, fruit or cereal before parties. This will help you curb hunger and make better choices.
2. Bring a low-fat holiday dish to the party. Better still, go home empty-handed!
3. Keep minimal baked goods on hand this year. Only bake enough to give away or use for one festivity. After baking goodies, immediately fill the mixing bowl with hot soapy water; sampling batter packs on extra calories.
4. Try to eat a large salad before most meals. Make sure vegetables take up half the room on most of your plates.
5. Substitute healthful ingredients. Splenda works great in baked dishes. Cut the sugar to half the original amount in the recipe and replace the remainder with Splenda. For more information about this option see www.splenda.com.
6. Make a goal with a friend to lose 5 pounds or to maintain weight during the holidays. This way you have a valuable support buddy.
7. Remember that the holidays are truly only three real days—Thanksgiving, Christmas (or Kwanza or Chanukah which is 8 days) and New Year's. This means if you blow it *only* on 3 days, then you really won't cause much damage. It's the vicious cycle of not enough exercise and too many calories on the other days that causes weight gain during this time of year.
8. Sign up for a 5K or fitness walk or other event to keep your mind focused on fitness goals. Keep up with your exercise during the holidays and try to be more active.
9. Limit alcohol. Enjoy one alcoholic beverage **if you must** and then switch to diet soda or soda water with lime afterwards. Plain water can be an even better choice since it has no calories and will give a feeling of fullness.
10. Finally, celebrate and focus on what the holidays are *really* about—spending time with family and friends. Find creative activities or ways to get your family and friends to play a game or be active instead of eating. Pick a time to get together that does not revolve around a meal.

Source: www.foodandhealth.com.