

MAINTAINING HEALTH EATING THROUGHOUT THE HOLIDAYS

The holiday season is a joyous time of the year filled with friends, family and giving.

However, the season also comes with parties, eating, chaotic schedules and stress.

People are busier than usual and cannot keep up with their work out routine; and eating

habits are thrown off by holiday travel, busy schedules and tempting sweets and

fattening dishes. Here are some tips to help you enjoy a healthy and happy holiday

season this year.

Plan Ahead

If you know you are going to be attending a holiday party at night and will be indulging in not-so-healthy foods, eat healthy and low-calorie foods during the day to balance out your caloric intake, while still getting your daily nutrients.

Also, be sure to exercise that day to balance out the calories consumed and burned.

Make Substitutions

Many ingredients in traditional holiday recipes can be substituted for ones that are not as unhealthy.

- Mix skim-milk in your mashed potatoes instead of whole milk. Swap the white rolls with whole wheat.

- Use low-sodium broths, soups and canned items.
- Serve steamed green beans instead of a green bean casserole.
- Making healthy substitutions will lower your fat, calorie and sodium intake, helping you stay healthy this holiday season.

Avoid Overeating

You will be much happier and feel better the next day if you resist the temptation of overeating.

- Choose moderate portions of foods you like best and fill up half your plates with fruits or vegetables.
- Eat slowly so your body can digest and signal that is full and only go back for seconds if you are still hungry.
- Sweets are fine in moderation. If you are going to indulge, enjoy, and limit yourself to a small quantity.
- Eat an apple, cut up vegetables or other healthy snacks before attending a holiday party or meal to avoid overeating while you are there.

Beverage Control

Although it is perfectly OK to raise a glass for a holiday toast, it is important to be conscious not to consume excessive calories through beverages.

- Drinks such as eggnog, hot chocolate and apple cider have empty calories and high sugar content.
- Limit yourself to one alcoholic or seasonal beverage a day and remember that water is always the best option to keep you hydrated and energized.

Exercise

Be sure to keep up your normal exercise routine if you have the time to do so. For those whose exercise schedule is altered by the holidays, there are other ways to get your exercise in during the holiday season.

- One way is to complete shorter and higher intensity workouts. For example, complete 30 second sprint intervals outdoors or on the treadmill for 15 minutes, or complete three sets of squats, push-ups and sit-ups when you are at home.
- Another way to get your exercise in is to go on a walk with family or friends to catch up instead of sitting on the couch.

Be Selective

Before you begin eating at a holiday party, check out all of the options and choose the foods that you really want to eat.

- If everything looks tempting and delicious, have a small sample of different foods to satisfy your craving.
- Use self control and limit yourself to the sweets and treats that you really love. You'll thank yourself the next day.

Enjoy the holidays and follow these tips to stay healthy and prepare for the New Year.

SOURCE: <https://www.memorialcare.org/blog/maintain-healthy-eating-habits-during-holidays>

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