

HEALTHY HOLIDAY EATING: MAINTAIN NOT GAIN



By Alissa Palladino MS, RDN, LD, CPT

Registered Dietitian Nutritionist, Certified Personal Trainer, Health Educator

AGENDA

- Challenges
- Strategies
- The Plate Method
- Other Tips
- Healthy Holiday Recipes
- Takeaway Messages

CHALLENGES

CHALLENGES

- The holiday season is a festive time, filled with parties, big meals and travel
- For many, the holidays mean a disruption to usual routines, including exercise and eating habits
- The average American gains 1-2 pounds during the holiday season
- While not a drastic number, this weight tends to stick around and can accumulate over the years
- In today's presentation, we will cover tips to help you stay healthy and prevent weight gain during the holidays, while still enjoying the season!



STRATEGIES

1. Eat Regularly - Don't Skip Meals

Be sure to eat breakfast and avoid skipping meals, as this may lead to excessive hunger and result in overeating later.

Choose fiber rich foods like fruits, vegetables, and whole grains to promote fullness

This may help decrease portion sizes of high calorie, high fat menu options.



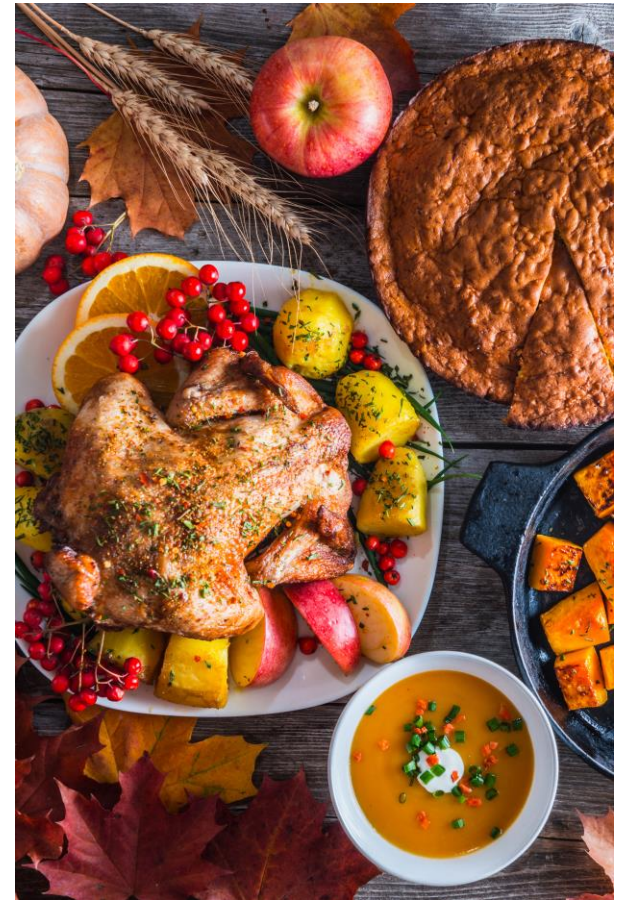
2. Make Your Plate Work for You

Choose a smaller plate to help limit the amount of food set in front of you. Eat a salad first or fill half your plate with vegetables and fruits. This can help you select smaller portions of the entrees and desserts.



3. Eat Slowly & Mindfully

Many of the menu options are only served at the holiday meals. Be sure to take time to savor and enjoy every bite. After finishing your plate, wait at least 10 minutes before going for seconds to see if you are still hungry.



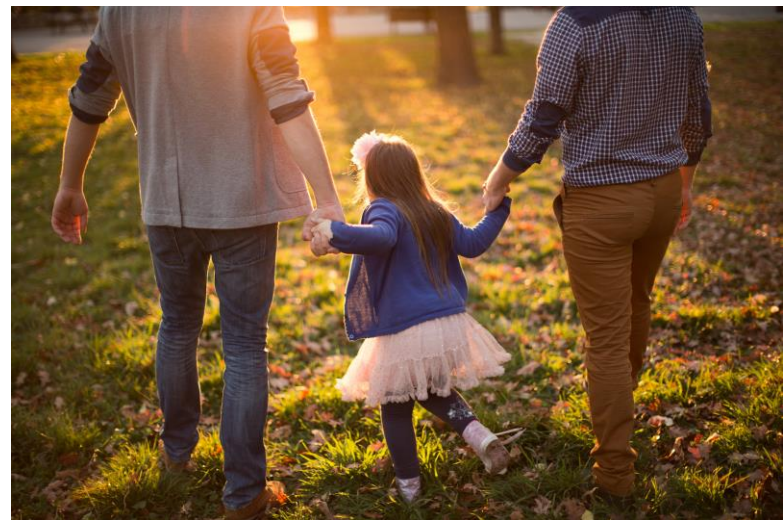
4. Choose Beverages Wisely

Watch out for extra calories in alcohol, punch, eggnog, and sodas. Limit alcohol consumption to 1-2 drinks and choose calorie free mixes like seltzer or diet sodas. Aim to drink mostly water or other calorie free beverages. Coffee and tea are also good options, as long as you are mindful of creamer or sugar.



5. Fit In Physical Activity

Aim to be active with friends and family at holiday gatherings. Go on a walk after the meal or suggest a game of catch or basketball. Try to stick with your workout routine on the days before and after the holiday gatherings. This can help reduce stress and prevent weight gain.



6. Keep Perspective

One day or even a couple days of overeating will not necessarily hinder your weight loss efforts. Typically, it takes days of overeating to gain weight. If you do overindulge, get back on track the next meal, the next day or as soon as possible without feeling guilty.



THE PLATE METHOD

Eating at potlucks and parties during the holidays is challenging. When you are choosing food at those events, try to follow **The Plate Method**:

- Choose a smaller plate (9 inches, if possible) to put your food on.
- Fill $\frac{1}{2}$ your plate with non-starchy vegetables and/or salad (spinach, string beans, carrots)
- Fill $\frac{1}{4}$ your plate with lean protein that is not breaded or fried (skinless turkey, ham, fish)
- Fill $\frac{1}{4}$ your plate with starchy vegetables and grains (potatoes, corn, noodles, rice)



In addition to following the Plate Method, strategies to help navigate a holiday meal...

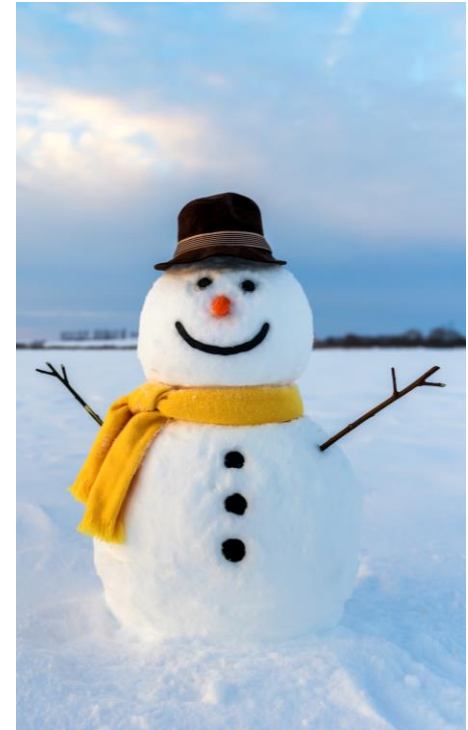
- Choose a beverage that is calorie free or very low in calories.
- Resist the urge to go back for a second helping of food.
- Try to pick foods that are not fried or keep your portion of those very small.
- Avoid high fat dips and sauces or keep your portion size of those very small.
- Bring something that is healthy for you to eat to share with others.
- Focus on enjoying the fun and fellowship more than the food.



OTHER TIPS

Other Tips:

- Set yourself up for success! Make a plan for how to make healthier options based on people you are with, the foods served, and your personal triggers to overeat
- When preparing the food, avoid sampling or grazing as these calories can add up
- When you finish a plate of food, brush your teeth, pop a mint, or chew a stick of gum to avoid going for seconds
- Position yourself at a holiday gathering away from where the food is served, this allows you to focus on the people and the conversation rather than be distracted by the spread
- Be positive! Positive self-talk is encouraging and motivating, it can help you stay or get back on track with healthy habits, whereas negative thoughts can make you feel frustrated, helpless or guilty



HEALTHY HOLIDAY RECIPES

Appetizer: Goat Cheese, Cranberry, Walnut Stuffed Celery

Ingredients:

- 4 stalks of celery, washed and thoroughly dried
- 1 – 5 oz package of goat cheese, softened to room temperature
- 2 Tbsp dried cranberries, chopped
- 2 Tbsp pecans or walnuts, chopped

Directions:

- In a medium bowl stir together chopped cranberries, chopped nuts until well blended.
- Using a butter knife spread cheese mixture into celery stalks and cut celery stalks into 3-inch pieces.

Starter: Spiced Waldorf Salad

Makes 6 - ½ cup servings

Ingredients:

- 3 medium apples cored and diced
- 1 - 6 oz container of vanilla yogurt
- 2 stalks of celery chopped
- ¼ cup pecans, chopped
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- ¼ cup raisins
- ½ tsp cinnamon
- 1/8 tsp ground cloves
- ¼ tsp ground ginger

Directions:

- Wash, core, and dice apples
- Wash and chop celery
- Chop pecans
- Add apples, celery, raisins to 4-6 quart mixing bowl
- Stir in yogurt and lemon juice
- Combine spices in a small saucer, then add to fruit mixture and gently stir to combine
- Serve immediately or chill before serving.
- Refrigerate leftovers, keeps for 1-2 days

Side Dish: Apple Butter Sweet Potatoes

Makes 8 - ½ cup servings

Ingredients:

- 2 ½ lbs sweet potatoes (3 large), washed
- ¼ cup lite butter
- 1 Tbsp brown sugar
- ¼ tsp salt (optional)
- 1/3 cup coarsely chopped pecans
- ½ cup Apple Butter
- ½ tsp cinnamon
- 1/8 tsp ground cloves
- ¼ tsp ginger

Directions:

- Peel and cut potatoes into 2- inch cubes. Partially cover with water and boil until tender, about 15 minutes. Drain and mash. (Instapot; add 1 cup water, cook on high setting for 12- 15 minutes)
- Melt butter in nonstick skillet over medium heat. Mix in apple butter, sugar, spices, and salt. Cook over low heat until heated through and sugar is melted, gently stirring often.
- Pour apple butter mixture into sweet potatoes and gently mix until blended.
- Turn into serving bowl. Sprinkle with pecans.

Dessert: Holiday Fruit Salad

Makes 6 - 1 cup servings

Ingredients

- 1 Tbsp finely chopped candied ginger
- 3 oranges
- 3 kiwis, peeled and halved lengthwise
- 1 ½ cups fresh pineapple, cut into small wedges
- 2 bananas, sliced



Instructions

- In a small saucepan, cover ginger with ¼ cup water and simmer until soft, about 2 minutes. Puree in a blender.
- Cut peel and white pith from oranges. Working over a serving bowl, cut between the inner membranes to release segments into bowl. Slice kiwi halves into half-moons and add to bowl along with pineapple and bananas.
- Pour in ginger syrup and stir gently to blend

TAKEAWAY MESSAGES

TAKEAWAY MESSAGES

- **Disruptions to routine and an abundance of food focused gatherings can make sticking to a healthy eating and exercise routine more challenging during the holidays**
- **But it is possible to enjoy the season while maintaining your health and weight**
- **Use the tips covered to manage the holiday season while preventing unwanted weight gain**
- **But above all, focus on other joys of the holidays besides food like fellowship, service, time with family and friends, and being thankful for the gifts in your life!**



THANK YOU! QUESTIONS?

Alissa Palladino MS, RDN, LD, CPT