



Eat, drink and be healthy!

How to survive the holidays without gaining weight

The holidays can be a tough time if you're trying to lose weight or stick to a meal plan. Here are some helpful tips to get you through the season without putting on extra pounds.



Don't starve yourself. Some people try to save calories by skipping meals before going out. This can lead to overeating. Instead, try eating small, healthy meals or snacks throughout the day. Fill up on foods rich in fiber and protein to help you feel full. Other good choices include vegetables, whole grains, legumes (vegetables like peas and beans) and dairy products.



Keep active. Be sure to get regular physical activity during the holidays. Head to the gym, go for a jog or do a workout video at home. Or take a walk with your family and friends after sharing a meal. All of these activities can help burn extra calories.



Choose healthy appetizers. When you're at a holiday event, eat small portions of protein-based foods like nuts, shrimp and cheese. If you're bringing something to the party, make sure it's healthy so you have options. Some ideas include a veggie platter, hummus and whole wheat crackers. And move away from the food table so you aren't tempted to keep snacking. Instead, start a conversation with friends or family in another area.



Balance your plate. Be mindful of your portions. Make sure your plate is balanced. Fill half of your plate with non-starchy vegetables like salad or steamed vegetables, a quarter of your plate with lean protein like turkey or ham, and the last quarter of your plate with starches and grains such as mashed potatoes, corn or stuffing. Choose a small plate so you can control your portion sizes.



Slow down. After you eat, it can take 20 minutes for your stomach to feel full. So make sure to eat slowly. Follow these strategies: cut your food into small pieces, put your fork down between bites, chew your food well and drink water during your meal. Hungry for seconds? Give yourself at least ten minutes to see if you're still craving them before you fill up your plate again. If you do, choose vegetables and lean protein first.



Rethink your drink. Save calories by drinking sparkling water or diet drinks. Avoid regular soda and juice because they can contain a lot of sugar. Keep your alcohol to a minimum. This means up to one drink a day for women and two for men. Choose wine, light beer or hard alcohol mixed with soda water to cut back on calories.



Enjoy a sweet ending. Have your cake and eat it too! Just be mindful of the portion size. Choose a small piece or share with a family member or friend. Fresh fruit is another good option.

Did you overeat? Don't panic.

Get back on track the next day by eating healthy and working out. Keep up your good habits and don't get discouraged!