



HOLIDAY HEALTH



*U.S. Navy photo by Mass
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The holidays are for spending time with friends and family, decorating, and of course, all your favorite holiday foods. Unfortunately, these foods are usually not of the healthy variety. Office parties and family gatherings can make it very difficult to maintain your weight during the holiday season, but not impossible. Don't wait until the New Year hits to catch up. Establish a workout routine that you know you can follow during the holidays and stick to it. Make healthier food choices so that you can enjoy holiday dinners without feeling guilty. Below find tips to help you manage your weight during the holiday season¹:

Weight Management Tips

- ▶ **Choose the lower-calorie option.** There are easy ways to make any recipe healthier. By using lower-calorie ingredients, your favorite dishes can still be tasty without impacting your waist-line. For example, use non-fat milk instead of whole milk in your macaroni and cheese.
- ▶ **Fill up with fruits and veggies.** Steam, grill, or bake vegetables and add spices and low-fat sauces instead of breading and frying, and try to avoid butter! Before you head to a party, have a snack of fruits and veggies that will help fill you up before you are tempted by attractive and unhealthy holiday spreads.
- ▶ **Eat smaller portions.** If you serve yourself a large portion, you will probably feel like you have to finish it. Use a smaller plate or bowl to make it seem like you have more food. When eating out, save some to take home or share between two people.
- ▶ **Drink water.** Choosing water over sugary beverages like soda will save you hundreds of calories a day. Make water more interesting by adding a slice of lemon or cucumber, or even a flavor packet. During the holidays, watch out for increased alcohol consumption as that can add calories too.
- ▶ **Eat breakfast daily.** You will be more successful in maintaining your weight if you eat breakfast every day. Doing so gives your body calories to burn, jump starting your metabolism and preventing you from overeating throughout the day.
- ▶ **Don't forget to stay active.** It is easy to skip workouts during the busy holiday season, but this is when they are most important to make up for the holiday comfort foods that you enjoy. You should aim to at least maintain your physical activity during the holidays, if not increase it to compensate for heavier meals.

¹Resolve to Undo Holiday Overindulgences. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <http://www.cdc.gov/features/HealthyResolutions/>. Updated December 2014. Accessed July 2015.

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