



Maintain Don't Gain

Week 1: 6 Tips to Maintain a Healthy Weight

Did you know that ... Almost all the weight people had gained over the course of a year could be explained by the pounds they added over the *holiday period* (Dr. Yanovski, Growth and Obesity Unit at NIH).

Maintaining weight is a matter of **balance**. If you take in more calories than you burn, you store the extra energy as fat and gain weight.

To maintain your weight, you need to balance the energy you take in with the energy you burn.



6 Tips to Maintain a Healthy Weight over the Holiday Season:

1. Focus on friends and family instead of food.

Remember, the holidays are a time to slow down and catch up with your loved ones. Play games, volunteer, or spend time outdoors enjoying the winter weather together. Family gatherings may be centered around the dinner table, but it certainly is not the focus of the holiday season.

2. Stay active.

Sure, the holidays are busy, but plan time into each day for exercise and don't break your routine. Make the holidays an active time! Go skating, start a game of pick-up football or play other games in the yard. After eating a holiday dinner, bundle up and go for a walk with your loved ones. Offer to help clean up after a meal instead of sitting in front of leftover food. This will help you avoid snacking on it and get you moving around!

3. Holiday drinking.

If you drink alcohol, remember to eat something beforehand to prevent low blood glucose levels later. Whether it's a glass of eggnog or red wine, holiday drinks can add a significant amount of calories to your holiday intake. Keep it to no more than 1 drink for women and 2 drinks for men.

4. Eat a healthy snack beforehand.

Don't skip meals or snacks earlier in the day to "save" calories and carbs for the large holiday feast later on. If you skip meals, it will be harder to keep your blood glucose in control. Also, if you arrive somewhere hungry, you will be more likely to overeat. Snack on a healthy snack with tons of protein. Protein keeps you full for a longer period of time and burns more calories for metabolism.

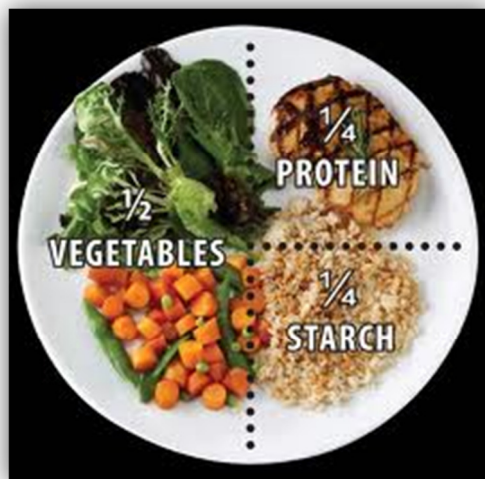
5. Portion Control Practically.

Eat slowly, and really enjoy the foods that you may only have once a year. If you plan to have a portion of dessert, cut back on another food during the main course.

Use smaller plates. When you serve yourself using the smaller plate, you will be serving yourself 20% less, but still feel like you ate an entire plate of food.

Use the “half plate” rule. Fill half of your plate with fruits, vegetables, and salad. Put whatever else you want on the other half.

Use a tall, skinny glass instead of a short, wide one. You will pour less and drink less.



6. If you overindulge, get back on track.

If you eat more carbs or food than you planned for, don't think you have failed. Stop eating for the night and focus on spending the rest of your time with the people around you. Include extra exercise, monitor your blood glucose levels, and get back on track with your usual eating habits the next day.

Resources: <http://www.nih.gov>,
<http://win.niddk.nih.gov>,
<http://www.foodinsight.org>

