



# MAINTAIN, DON'T GAIN! HOLIDAY NUTRITION TIPS

## WHEN YOUR EYES ARE BIGGER THAN YOUR STOMACH

Let's face it... one thing we look forward to the most during the holidays is the food. Turkey dinner, mashed potatoes, gravy, eggnog, pies, sugar cookies, gingerbread – there are so many tasty dishes and treats to enjoy!

It's no surprise that weight gain over the holidays is a large part of the typical weight that adults accumulate over the years. While it may seem impossible to enjoy holiday meals without eating anything unhealthy, the key to maintaining a healthy weight is balance. It's not about depriving yourself, but about finding *practical* ways to maintain self-control and keep your sweet tooth in check.



## HEALTHY EATING PLANNING TIPS

**Decide ahead of time** what and how much you will eat. Simply saying "No, thank you. I'm too full." is acceptable.

1

**Discover new options** for low-sugar treats if you know you can't say no to desserts. Try baked apples, angel cake, or fresh fruit, or look for ways to lighten-up traditional favourites.

2

**Have a snack before the feast.** Choose a healthy, protein-packed snack like edamame, almonds, hummus, or apples with peanut butter. Protein staves off hunger for a long period of time.

3

**Provide at least one healthier option per category** when preparing a menu. Include a vegetable side dish and fresh fruit for dessert.

4

## Revise Your Recipes

Look for opportunities to update holiday favourites and make them even a little healthier. Often, you can omit close to half of the sugar or replace it with a natural alternative like honey or maple syrup. You can also use cinnamon, nutmeg, vanilla, and other sweet spices to add flavour without the extra calories. To add fibre, replace half of the fat in your recipe with applesauce, mashed banana, or food puree. Although these tricks can help cut down on fat, sugar, and calories, you still need to be mindful of portion sizes. Keep them small and savour the treats you choose to indulge.

## MAINTAINING YOUR HEALTH AND WELLNESS GOALS!

The holidays are all fun and games until the copious amounts of food and drinks start to catch up with us. With these tips, you can maintain your health goals and still enjoy yourself!

- 1 Pass on the bread, or limit yourself to just one piece. If you're dining out, decline the bread and butter plate so you won't be tempted.
- 2 Start your meal with a soup or salad. Skip the second helpings of stuffing, mashed potatoes, and gravy, and go for more vegetables instead.
- 3 Choose white meat over dark meat. White, skinless turkey has 119 calories and 1 gram of fat whereas dark meat has 145 calories and 5 grams of fat.
- 4 Go for colour. Choose naturally colorful foods, as they tend to offer the most nutrients to satisfy your hunger. Go for the healthy appetizers, including a veggie platter and fruit salad.
- 5 Chew slowly. Proper chewing helps with nutrient absorption and digestion allowing you to train the body to feel satisfied with smaller portion sizes. It also helps your food taste richer as you break down more of your food on your taste buds.
- 6 Go for a walk while dessert is on the table. If a family member is also trying to eat healthier, ask them to join you.
- 7 If you can't pass on dessert, share one portion with someone else. Scrape off high-fat whipped cream topping or the extra frosting.
- 8 Be mindful of the alcohol you are drinking. Stay away from high-calorie cocktails like mixed drinks and eggnog. Treat yourself to a glass of wine or two, and drink plenty of water. Keeping a glass in your hand helps prevent encouragement to drink more!



Sources: <http://planetgreen.discovery.com/> | <http://www.foodinsight.org/> | <http://www.diabetes.org/> | Images by Freepik.com