



Lady of America Newsletter - December 2009 - 'Tis the Season

Eating: Holiday Stress and Food

Ho, ho, ho, the annual food-and-drink fest is back, making it harder to stay on track. Navigating your way through office parties, family get-togethers and business engagements can be overwhelming. By eating a piece of pecan or pumpkin pie, a glass of eggnog, a couple of potato latkes or a few butter and sugar cookies everyday, you will gain anywhere from 2 or 3 pounds, even more over the holiday season. The holidays are not about deprivation. They are a time to celebrate and enjoy. The challenge is to do it without gaining back the weight you've worked so hard to lose. Your healthy holiday eating habits will get you through. Remember, don't deprive yourself, but make small changes and smart food choices so you don't self-sabotage. Nothing tastes as good as thin [and healthy] feels. We offer healthy holiday eating tips for getting through all the holiday stress and food without spoiling your weight-loss efforts.



- ❖ Weigh and measure.
- ❖ Start every day with a balanced breakfast and eat every 3-4 hours. Oatmeal is a great choice. Add fruit and protein, and you're good to go for a few hours.
- ❖ When cooking and baking, substitute healthier ingredients for processed foods and try lighter versions of your favorite foods. And keep sugar to a minimum.
- ❖ Watch portions. A taste or bite generally satisfies a craving. If one bite doesn't do it, weigh and measure portions.
- ❖ Fill half your plate with vegetables and the remaining quarters with protein and a carbohydrate.
- ❖ If possible, eat on a smaller plate. This keeps you from piling on the food.
- ❖ Pack a nutritious lunch and snacks for work to avoid going overboard on catered meals, company lunches and the cookies/cakes/candy floating around.
- ❖ Commit to a minimum of 30 minutes of exercise every day. Increase your workout time and intensity at the gym the day before, on and the day after a party and the holiday.
- ❖ If you are attending a brunch, make the rest of the day lighter fare. If you have a dinner party to attend, eat light during the day.
- ❖ Before you dig in, take a minute to scan the table or buffet and opt for the better food choices. Choose your indulgences carefully.
- ❖ Going to a party? Eat a small, healthy snack beforehand. Choose a high-fiber carb as your base and add a healthy protein or fat. For example, have an apple with 1 tbsp natural peanut butter or almond butter, or a slice of turkey breast and low-fat cheese on whole wheat pita bread.

- ❖ Pace yourself. Eat slowly, take smaller bites and put your fork down between each bite.
- ❖ Before you go for seconds, take a 20-minute break. It takes your brain 20 minutes to know it's full.
- ❖ When hunger strikes, snack on fruit, vegetables or a handful of raw, unsalted almonds. And remember, drink plenty of water.
- ❖ At a party, mix and mingle, don't hover around the food.
- ❖ Know the word "no" and use it.
- ❖ Cocktails can add extra calories. Eggnog has 343 calories and 19 grams of fat per cup. Beer, wine and mixed drinks average 150 or more. Try wine spritzers, cranberry juice with seltzer and lime or a virgin drink.
- ❖ Don't let the "other" holiday stuff stress you. While shopping, cooking or cleaning, make sure to have sensible snacks on-hand.
- ❖ Write down everything you eat, even if you overdo it.
- ❖ Write down your goal weight and carry it with you for those tempting moments.

Sit down, relax and enjoy not only your meal but those around you.

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