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Happy Holidays

The holiday season is great--family, friends, and parties. There always seems to be an abundance of the good stuff--hors d'oeuvres, cookies and large meals. It is tempting to overindulge, but with a few helpful tips you can maintain your waistline, instead of gaining.

Holiday Eating

Here are a few suggestions of making the most of holiday eating, without sacrificing any of your favorite treats:

1. Take a half portion of the foods you enjoy. This means you can still enjoy the foods without going overboard.
2. Use a smaller plate. A smaller plate will fill quicker and can help trick your brain into thinking you're eating more than you really are.
3. Chew slowly and enjoy every bite. Studies show it takes 20 minutes for your brain to realize you are actually full. Take time to savor what you are eating and avoid the food coma afterwards.
4. Be careful of the holiday totties--1 cup of eggnog packs nearly 350 calories! Opt for water or lower calorie beverage or soda if you must.
5. Load up on the healthy stuff--if vegetables or fruit are offered at a happy hour, snack on those before the breads, dips and desserts. This also counts for dinner!
6. Plan ahead! If you know of a holiday gathering coming up, eat a nutritious and lower calorie breakfast or lunch the day of the party to help keep the calorie total reduced for the day.



Holiday Fitness

Just because the major holidays in November and December fall in the middle of the week, doesn't mean it is an excuse to let yourself fall off the fitness bandwagon. Keep your fitness levels high with these tips this season.

1. Make time. Lay out a daily or weekly calendar of the days and times you want to workout, and make it a point to stick to the schedule.
2. Plan ahead. Know of an upcoming get-together? Plan an extra few minutes on your walk or in the gym to combat the extra snacking and delicious foods.
3. Buddy System. Find a friend, family member or coworker to exercise during the holiday season and to keep each other in check. Who knows--maybe you'll continue to exercise together well into 2014!
4. Make use of the holidays to your advantage--find a fun 5k in the area, take a walk in the evening to look at Christmas lights and decorations, or pick an afternoon to go ice skating. Even shopping can be used as exercise by taking a few extra laps around the mall, or picking up the walking pace.
5. Ask Santa for new workout gear. When we look good we feel good--

and this may inspire an extra trip to the gym or a few more minutes out jogging. Maybe it will give you the confidence to try a new class or fitness program!



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