

## Tips for a Healthy Holiday Season

Many of us struggle to maintain our healthy habits during the holiday season. With a seemingly endless stream of parties and functions to attend, it can be a challenge not to over consume. Here are a few ideas that may help you navigate the month of December without feeling like an overstuffed Santa.

- 1) Eat a decent meal *before* you go out – Don't depend on snack foods at parties to replace meals. You'll end up consuming way more calories than necessary without getting adequate amounts of essential nutrients.
- 2) Eat mindfully - If the food is within arm's reach, you'll keep snacking without even thinking and enjoying. It's way easier to overeat if you don't even have to move to get the food. Instead, use a plate to select a few of your favourites then go sit far away from the snack table.
- 3) Try to balance – Most parties will have some healthy options such as raw veggies or fruit plates which you can alternate eating with your less nutritious choices.
- 4) Track what you are eating – If you commit to writing down *everything* you eat, you'll be way less likely to over-indulge. It will also be interesting to look back and see the food groups of which you tend to consume too much or too little.
- 5) Maintain your exercise routine – Don't let the busyness of the holiday season prevent you from getting your daily dose of physical activity.
- 6) Beware of beverages – Many of the tastiest festive drinks are also high in fat or packed with sugar. Consider this when indulging.
- 7) Give yourself a break - One or two huge dinners are not the end of the world. You can only eat so much in one sitting which won't likely mean any significant changes in your body weight. Weight gain usually occurs as a function of over consuming on a regular basis.



Finally, don't be a scrooge - the holidays are meant to be fun! Completely depriving yourself will only cause your cravings to increase. Instead, pick your 2 or 3 holiday favourites and enjoy!

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