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HOLIDAY SURVIVAL GUIDE

By Aimee Deak

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The Holiday season has officially begun and Christmas is almost here. This is the time of year when most Americans are NOT beginning a new diet, rather ending their old one. The Holidays bring family, friends, and ... food. Lots of food. SO, PLEASE...Don't fight it. Don't be a "food martyr". The Thanksgiving and Christmas Holidays are the times of year where food not only "keeps us going", but is a social event. If you avoid everything, you won't feel like you are a "part of things."

Avoiding food this Christmas will leave you with a sense of having missed out on something good. Something that brings us closer to the people with whom we celebrate this special time of year. Not eating will leave you feeling deprived. Feeling deprived ultimately sets you up for failure in your diet, and your goal for a lean body.

So go ahead and eat. Enjoy yourself. But let's make a deal! As soon as Christmas Day is done, it's back to your healthy eating program. The last thing you want to do is make the Holiday season last from Halloween to Valentines Day.

Here are some suggestions:

- On Christmas Eve & Christmas Day, eat whatever you like until you are "not quite full". Then stop for at least 30 minutes to give your stomach a chance to send "fullness signals" to your brain. If you are still hungry at that point, then eat a little more. Remember: Allow yourself some slack but DO NOT abandon your sensible eating plan to irresponsible excess!
- Be sensible and really plan ahead. Slightly reduce your caloric (and carbohydrate) intake before and after your biggest eating days. Be strong and show some restraint. Do not gulp your food, nor over-stuff yourself, and whatever you do, NO hyperventilating! Do not stay and sit with those who continue to eat even though they are full BEYOND capacity. Walk away from the table!
Remember: Find A Happy Balance Between Indulgence & Moderation!

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·Give away your leftovers and don't accept any to "take home" if you are eating at someone else's house. The only leftovers you are allowed to keep is white meat turkey (breast.) Toss the gravy, mashed potatoes, the stuffing and yes...the cakes, pies, cookies, candy and other assorted goodies. You'll never get "back to normal" with that stuff cluttering your fridge.

·The day after Christmas Day...work out! Get back to your normal diet and your normal routine. If you allow your exercise program to falter you might not start again until February or March of next year. Exercise is your friend and should not be neglected. Remember all the hard work you put in during the year. Don't let the Holidays derail you! DO NOT use the Holiday season as an excuse to continue poor eating habits and skipping workouts once the social functions are finished.

If you follow my suggestions you can emerge from the "dreaded" Holidays without having gained a pound and with a new sense of control and confidence. You will have EMPOWERED yourself to "enjoy" but not "over-do".

Eat right, workout, BE HAPPY and most of all, have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Aimee Deak
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Aimee Deak is a certified personal trainer, nutrition analyst and author of the book, "Every Body Loses", an easy-to follow, step-by-step guide to fat loss. You can find more information about fat loss and exercise on her website www.aim4nutrition.com

Survival Guide For Holiday Parties

By Kim Beardsmore

If you have been watching your weight all year, you certainly won't want to add back the pounds during the holiday season! By making a commitment to yourself and your health, with these tips it will be possible to enjoy the holiday celebrations without adding extra pounds.

1. Don't think diet, rather think about eating smarter.

2. Before attending a party, have a small high quality, nutritionally balanced meal. That way you will be less likely to be hungry and fill up on snack foods served with drinks.

3. While at a party, determine to hold your drink in your dominant hand all evening. This will make it a little less convenient to reach for food.

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4. Think of one daily indulgence, rather than a 'day of indulgence'.
5. Before attending a party resolve to snack only from fresh fruit and vegetable choices.
6. If you must have a taste of chips and other 'dry' snack foods, alternate with fresh vegetable crudité's. It is quite difficult to mix the tastes, so you are likely to eat more slowly and eventually give up. When that happens stick to the fresh food choices.
7. Choose between an alcoholic beverage, a dessert or a 'sinful' main course, rather than indulging in all three. Rotate your choice when you have several events to attend.
8. Choose almonds, pecans and walnuts, eating individually and slowly. This way you can avoid handfuls of salted peanuts or cashews.
9. Alternate alcoholic drinks with a glass of sparkling mineral water with a dash of lime, or a vegetable juice dashed with a chili sauce.

(c) Kim Beardsmore

Kim is a successful weight loss coach who will cut through the diet-hype and help you reach your goal weight. No public 'weigh-ins', meetings that cost you money or fads...simply results you will love! You can receive a free consultation. Visit today:

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