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100% Effective Natural Hormone Treatment
Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances
Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!

Playing the Holiday Food Game

By Marjorie Geiser, RD

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As the holidays come towards us, minds drift to the fear of weight gain and that fitness plans will fall by the wayside. Some people work hard to lose weight before the holidays, only to regain that weight, and add on MORE weight, once the holidays have passed. How are you going to avoid the dreaded five to 10 pound weight gain we all hear about? You need to plan your strategy just as if you were playing a game! So, sit down, read the recommendations below, and plan your own strategy today, before the holiday games begin!

1 - Have a game plan.

All successful teams and professionals have a plan. Why should controlling your weight at this time of the year be any different? So, as the parties and family events are also in the planning stage, determine how you are going to approach the obstacle course of high fat and high calorie goodies calling out to you?

- Determine how you are going to handle parties and the food provided.
- Plan your events ahead of time. Although there will be surprise invitations, most people know what they will be doing over the holidays. Avoid excessive parties.
- Make a plan for what you will prepare at home when not entertaining or visiting. Just because it's the holiday season does not mean you have to eat holiday fare all season.
- Determine how you will keep your fitness routine intact.

2 - Prepare for the party game.

Ok, we've all heard these recommendations, but how many of you actually try them? If you use them all, great! Check out to see if there are any new ideas here or use them to remind yourself of some you may have forgotten.

- Eat before the event. If you are already full from healthy food, you are less likely to 'pig out' on high calorie, empty carbohydrate, high fat snack foods that just add up in our mid-section.
- Wear something tight in the midsection. Tight clothes will help you tend to want to eat less, if for no other reason than it's uncomfortable!
- Bring your own drinks and munchies. The more you are in control of what your choices are, the less likely you are to grab foods you really don't want to eat.

Playing the Holiday Food Game

- Avoid the alcohol. Many people feel out of place if they don't have a drink in their hand. Try keeping your glass filled with ice and water! No one will know what you're drinking unless you tell them or they ask. In the meantime, you will be drinking calorie free.
- Concentrate on conversing more than eating.
- Stand clear of the food tables. The further you are from the food and goodies, the less likely you are to pick up and mindlessly eat them.
- Choose smaller portions. Even if a food or snack looks very good, to avoid feeling deprived, just have a smaller serving.

3 - Plan your party strategy early.

Whether you are the host/hostess or you are the guest, be selective about where you go and how many events you take part in.

- Attend the 'have to' events. These are the events with family and close friends. The ones you enjoy the most (we hope). Then there are the business and work events.
- Watch out for the office parties, especially! Some you may have to at least make a showing to these, but nothing says you have to drink all the punch and be the last one out the door! Stick with your water and leave early for dinner at home.
- When you are the host/hostess, you have control over what the food will be. Choose foods you enjoy and are what you want to eat. Since so many other people are trying to watch what they eat, you may be surprised to find this a very popular choice!
- When you are the host/hostess, provide plenty of non-alcoholic beverages. People just want something in their hands, but many will also opt for no alcohol if it's available.

4 - Put your home game plan together.

Just because it's the holidays doesn't mean you have to eat as if you're at a party the entire season! In fact, because you will be socializing more at this time, this is even a better reason to eat as well as possible when home.

- Always plan ahead when going to a party or event that evening. This could include eating fewer calories throughout the day or cutting down on the fat.
- Avoid making desserts just for the family. There will be plenty to sample at events.
- Choose extra fruits and vegetables. This would be a perfect time to strive for 5 per day. Make a pact to eat healthier at home during this period than 'usual'. It may even rub off to create habits that last past the holidays!
- If you receive a lot of candy, cookies or alcohol as gifts, give them to others as gifts, or bring them to work to share with others.

5 - Determine your exercise plan of action.

Many people strive all year to get a regular exercise program going, only to let it slide over the holidays. Then, once New Year comes, they again struggle to re-start a regular program. The best way to avoid this from happening year after year is to plan ahead for such things.

- Hire a personal trainer. Whether you find someone to come to your home or meet him/her at the gym, this could help keep you on track during the holiday season. Just that motivation alone might keep you going!
- If you have a stationary bike, elliptical trainer or treadmill at home, put it in front of the TV so you can

Playing the Holiday Food Game

watch either the news or your favorite show. Another option is to get a book on tape or audio files of seminars to listen to while working out. Because life is so busy during this time, you will be able to accomplish two things at once; exercise and enjoy some entertainment.

·While doing chores at home, put some music on and build up a sweat dancing.

The holidays are a great time to enjoy friends and family. Many holiday events are centered around food and eating, and we are so busy that often our exercise routines fly out the window. Use these strategies to plan your course of action for the holidays. This could be a great time of the year to find help, such as a personal trainer, a Registered Dietitian or perhaps a life coach to help you stay focused and in control.

Marjorie Geiser has been teaching health, fitness and nutrition since 1982. She is a nutritionist, registered dietitian, certified personal trainer and life coach. As the owner of MEG Fitness, Marjorie's goal for her clients is to help them incorporate healthy eating and fitness into their busy lives. To learn more about the services Margie offers, go to her website at www.megfit.com or email her at

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Multi-Cultural Holiday-Party Teaching Tip

By Freda J. Glatt, M.A.

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Happy Holidays! At this time of year, why not plan a multi-cultural holiday party?

Have your children research the holiday customs of their family's heritage country. Depending upon their ages, your students may watch a video, read a book or article, research on the internet, or interview family members.

Have them make a collage or write a report of their findings.

Graph the number of students whose families come from different countries.

The day of the party, let them wear clothes, bring in food (labeled with name of the food and the country it represents), bring in music, and play games representing as many of the countries as possible.

Another way to have an international celebration is for each teacher on the team to be in charge of a different country. Make a passport for the children that needs to be stamped upon their visit to that country. At each stop, the teacher will present an activity for the country (s)he is representing...anything from a dance to a game to a cooking activity...the list is endless.

However you celebrate, have a festive, safe holiday!

Freda J. Glatt retired from teaching after a 34-year career in early childhood and elementary education. Her focus, now, is to reach out and help others reinforce reading comprehension and develop a love for reading. Visit her site at <http://www.sandralreading.com>. Reading is FUNdamental!



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