

While holidays are often filled with fun, excitement, and love, they can also be somewhat challenging for those trying to manage eating and weight. Food is everywhere during the holiday season. People may give you treats and you may attend parties, events and gatherings. Don't lose hope - research has found that people can still lose weight during the holiday season. Those who consistently monitor their dietary intake, participate in a weight intervention, prioritize their food choices, and weigh themselves daily continue to lose weight over the holidays (Baker & Kirschenbaum 1998; Olson et al., 2020). Below are some strategies to help you maintain success during the holiday season.

Surviving the Holiday Season

- ✔ Continue to log your protein and water intake throughout the holiday season. Even at parties, eat your protein first to help you stay full leaving little room for other foods.
- ✔ Tell others that you are committed to becoming healthier and that they can help by not offering you tempting treats and/or not being offended if you do not eat certain foods.
- ✔ Try to maintain an exercise schedule. Walking is important for weight management and it will likely help you stick to healthy goals. Go for a walk before going to a party.
- ✔ Take care of you during the holiday season. Taking care of everyone else and over committing yourselves may result in stress that can ultimately lead to poor eating choices, decreased activity, and weight gain. Doing daily self-care activities (even for just a few minutes) will help you remember that you are a priority.

Remember why you are doing this, your goals, intentions, & values.

Surviving the Holiday Parties

- ✔ Plan ahead and if possible, let the host know of dietary restrictions. Bring a side dish or dessert that is something you feel good about eating.
- ✔ Position yourself away from the food table. Hanging around the food will make it harder to resist temptation and stick to your goals. Distract yourself by talking to others.
- ✔ Visit the food buffet only once. Survey the scene first. Then select healthy options and maybe a small amount of the "fun foods" that you love. Don't waste room on food you kind of like.
- ✔ Eat mindfully by being aware of what and how much you are eating. Be conscious of your hunger and fullness levels. Take small bites, chew your food well, and eat slowly.
- ✔ Before you go to an event, decide your goals and strategies. Anticipate what others might ask you about your weight loss and what's on your plate. Decide how you will respond. There are no right or wrong answers. You can share whatever you feel like sharing or nothing at all.

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