

Why Do We Overeat During The Holidays & Tips On How Not To

By Dr. Keith Kantor

We overeat during the holidays mainly because we have been trained to do that since we were children. We remember being told not to snack before we go to Grandma's for Thanksgiving or Christmas. Once there we were expected to try everything and indulge ourselves.

As a result, Americans gain between 5-10 pounds during the holidays. The problem is a majority don't lose this weight afterwards. So yearly we are adding 5-10 pounds, called "weight-creep" that is undesirable and unhealthy for us. The big question everyone has is "how do I avoid gaining weight during the holidays?" The answer is simple, have a plan and follow it.

Step one is don't go to the holiday party starving. Eat before you go. If it is a dinner meal, have a normal lunch, preferably late in the day. What you eat at home will inevitably be healthier, with less calories than the extra food you would consume at the party.

The second step is to drink a lot of water. You are supposed to drink 1/2 your body weight in ounces daily. So if you are 150 pounds, you should drink 75 ounces of water daily. Make sure you do this or more during the holidays. Drink water before you go, between food courses and if you are going to drink alcohol, make sure you have a glass of water between each alcoholic beverage. Drinking water in this way will have you consume less food and less alcohol, lowering your calorie intake.

Step 3 is to survey the feast before partaking. Most holiday meals are buffet

style. There tends to be numerous choices in many food categories, like casseroles, stuffings, and desserts. If you take your time and look over the entire buffet before you start you can select your favorites. Try and only pick one item in each category. If you feel you have to pick 2, cut the portion in half.

The last part of your plan is time management. If you are driving to your holiday feast bring some healthy snacks with you - instead of stopping for fast food. Fruits, granola bars and trail mix are a few healthy examples.

If you regularly work out but the holiday event will interfere with your normal work out schedule, don't skip it, plan it.

If you normally do not work out, make an exception and take a walk before you go and after the party. Nobody will mind and you will burn up some calories.

Remember, have a plan, stick to it and avoid the creep.

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