



10 TIPS FOR A HEALTHIER,
HAPPIER HOLIDAY SEASON





10 Tips for a Healthier, Happier Holiday Season

The holiday season is a time to enjoy friends, family...and food, of course! But with all the hustle and bustle, it can be difficult to maintain a healthy diet and not overindulge in all the food and drinks we love most.

We know the holidays are a tempting time to throw in the towel when it comes to a healthy diet and lifestyle and use the old, “I’ll start over next year” excuse. But imagine how much better you’ll feel if you *don’t* trash your healthy habits and instead find a way to celebrate in moderation.

At Health Coach Institute, we try to walk our talk all year round. But even for us, avoiding temptation can be challenging when our calendars are full of parties and rich food is in abundance. So, we’ve put together a list of 10 effective (and easy!) ways to enjoy the holidays in moderation—so you don’t have to sacrifice your favorite treats and traditions!

1

DRINK WATER

Water keeps you hydrated and healthy, while also keeping your stomach fuller—so there’s less room for treats. We recommend you start your day off by drinking 16 oz. of water, even before you reach for the coffee or tea, and aim to drink at least half of your body weight in ounces each day. (if you weigh 150 pounds, you’ll want to drink at least 75 oz. of water.) Before you eat a holiday meal, try to consume another 16 oz. so your stomach is nice and full before you dig in!

2

PLAN AHEAD

Before you attend a party or event, determine your plan of attack. For us, it’s eating a meal with power foods like veggies and lean protein before the party. Even a protein bar in the car will help! If you’re already full when you arrive, you’ll be less likely to load up on tempting treats.

3

PORTION CONTROL

It’s unrealistic to expect that you’ll be able to avoid every single serving of mashed potatoes, pumpkin pie, and holiday cookies. You can enjoy your favorite things, but portion control is the name of the game. Do your best to hold yourself accountable and stick to just one regular-sized portion. When you do have to eat at an event, plan to fill your plate with colorful produce and salads, then add treats and indulgences in smaller portions.

4

SKIP THE EXTRAS

This is a tough one but, trust us when we say that if you cut back on (or even skip altogether!) the extra stuff like cheese, gravy, sauces, butter, and whipped cream, you’ll save hundreds of calories. The food will still taste great and you’ll feel much better.

5

CHEW SLOWLY

Okay, we know this one sounds a little funny, but it really works—and there’s science behind it! When you eat too quickly, your brain doesn’t have enough time to realize you’re full. Basically, you don’t give your brain a chance to tell you, “Stop eating!” By taking the time to eat slowly, and savoring your food in small bites, you’ll eat far less.



6

EXERCISE

The holidays are notoriously a time of year when many relax on their exercise routines. But exercise is a great way to burn off those extra calories and reduce stress during the most wonderful time of the year. Try to get moving for at least 30 minutes every day and make sure you're doing activities you enjoy!

7

DRINK IN MODERATION

Sweet alcoholic drinks can have a lot of hidden calories, as can heavier drinks like beer. Stick to lower calorie drinks like vodka and sparkling water, with some lemon or lime for flavor. You can also follow the one to one rule—for every alcoholic drink you have, follow it with a glass of water. And during the last hour or so of the party, switch to water completely. Your head will thank you in the morning!

8

BE SMART WITH LEFTOVERS

We all know everyone brings too much food to a party. If you keep the unhealthy food around or take it home, you're more likely to eat it! If you're hosting a party, the best way to combat this is to send everyone home with a "doggy bag" of food so you can clear it out. If a host asks you to take something home, either decline politely or take the leftovers to the office the next day.

9

DON'T BEAT YOURSELF UP

If you do overindulge, forgive yourself and step right back into your healthy habits the next day. Continuing to feel guilty won't help your mental or physical health and could actually make you more likely to fall off the wagon completely (or just make you a Grinch!).

10

HAVE TREATS IN SMALL PORTIONS

The holidays are a time for celebration and we don't believe in completely depriving yourself. So, go ahead and have small portions of your favorite treats (just maybe don't go back for seconds!) and **ENJOY!**

Happy Holidays

from Health Coach Institute
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