



# Holiday Survival Guide: Get Through the Holidays Putting on Pounds

December 2016  
Week 1

Let's face it: it is hard to stick to a healthy eating and exercise plan during the holidays. Everywhere you turn there are tempting foods and drinks—from treats at the office to your traditional family favorites. When you add in a busy schedule filled with shopping and get-togethers that make it tough to squeeze in exercise, you have a recipe for disaster as far as your scale is concerned.

The good news is that you really can get through the holidays without gaining weight. It will take some effort, but you will thank yourself a thousand times when January 1<sup>st</sup> rolls around and you have no regrets!

## Your Goal: Maintenance

In order to greet the New Year without tipping the scale try to maintain your weight during the next few weeks instead of trying to lose. Remember: you want to enjoy the holidays, not be miserable from deprivation. This means that you can allow yourself *occasional* treats and splurges (follow the 80/20 rule) and keep the scale where it is rather than trying to decrease your weight.

There are several ways to accomplish this:

- **Don't skip your workouts.** A moderate intensity workout can burn 300-400 calories per hour, but remember it doesn't give you a license to double dip on desserts. It's very easy to consume calories and it's very hard burn them off. Working out will reduce your stress level and often will suppress your appetite.
- **Eat breakfast.** People who eat breakfast consume fewer calories throughout the day than those who skip this important meal. Be sure that you include a serving of protein.
- **Keep a food diary.** Write down every single thing you eat—even if it is only one bite of shrimp cocktail. It is a proven fact that keeping a food journal results in better weight control than not keeping one.
- **Monitor your hunger.** Never show up at a party or buffet ravenous—you will most certainly overeat. Drink water and have a healthy snack (such as nuts or cheese) before arriving. This will help you to have more self-control around the temptations.
- **Weigh yourself twice each week.** Normally it is not a good idea to step on the scale too often, but during the holidays it's a great way to stay on track with your goals. If you see the scale start to creep, you can immediately take steps to correct it, such as backing off your calories for a day or two, drinking more water and adding in a little more exercise.
- **Watch your portion size.** If you have an idea of how much food you are putting on your plate, you will be less likely to overdo it. Remember that a portion of carbs is the size of your fist, a portion of protein is the size of your palm and a portion of fat is the size of your thumb. You especially need to watch carbs...they are everywhere!

- **Deal quickly with leftovers.** If you have unhealthy leftovers in your home, you are likely to indulge. Don't leave them sitting around. Freeze them, give them away or toss them. It's not worth the temptation!
- **Check in with your future self.** Every day, speak to yourself from the future—say, from January 1. Thank yourself for doing the tough work of self-discipline during these holiday weeks. You might say something like this:

*“Thank you! I feel great! I’m no heavier than I was in November, I’ve stayed on track with my exercise, my energy is incredible and I’ve got the momentum to spend the rest of the winter getting in even better shape before spring gets here!”*

- **Go public.** Sound scary? It's supposed to! Let others know about your goal. And report back daily or weekly to let them know how you are doing. You can do this in person or on social media. This accountability will give you will power when the cheesecake and fudge starts showing up at the office!

You can survive the holidays without putting on pounds. Remember these tips and keep a vision of what you want to feel like on January 1st in mind. It's going to be a great holiday season!



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