

Holiday Eating Survival Tips

Have a nourishing holiday this year with food that tastes good, feels good and is good for you.

This time of year is packed with faith, fun, food and family but it can create unwanted pounds and derail our healthier habits. However, you don't have to abandon your health goals or family traditions to have a delicious and memorable holiday season. Here are some tips to help you have a nourishing holiday this year with food that tastes good, feels good, and is good for you.

Tip #1: Go Ahead – “Spoil your Appetite”

Have a piece of fruit and/or half of a whole grain English muffin before you leave home for a social gathering. This 150-calorie investment can keep you from swallowing 2,000 or more calories under “starvation” conditions.

Tip #2: Survey the Table

At a buffet, take a small portion of the foods you really love, and then choose Volumetric (filling) foods like vegetables and fruits to fill the rest of your plate.

Tip #3: Alcohol Party Pacer

Since alcohol packs calories and can destroy your resolve to resist food temptations, try this trick to keep you in the party spirit while cutting your alcohol calories by half for the night.

Insert 1 glass of water or calorie free beverage between each alcoholic drink.

Tip #4: Having Trouble with the Family Food Pusher? Try "Redirection."

If you encounter an overzealous hostess who repeatedly insists on serving you extra food, use the "redirection technique" by saying "I will skip the second helping, but I would love a cup of coffee or some water." Another trick is to savor a low calorie drink and respond by saying, "No thanks, I have something already."

Tip #5: Surviving the Holiday Stuff-a-Thon: Part 1

To keep holiday goodie calories in check, allow yourself "one" carefully selected treat once or twice a day. For reference, a 1 inch square of fudge supplies about 120 calories and 7 grams of fat.

Tip #6: Surviving the Holiday Stuff-a-Thon: Part 2

At a social gathering, instead of standing next to the buffet table, serve your plate and walk across the room to eat. This will prevent extra calories from grazing.

Tip #7: Leave 10% on Your Plate

For the average American, leaving just 10% of food behind on your plate at each meal every day saves about 83,950 calories per year. This is enough to lead to a 10 pound weight loss over a year's time!!

Source: Environmental Nutrition, Dec 2011

Tip #8: Swap Ripe Avocado for Butter

Butter is loaded with saturated fat, while avocado contains heart healthy monounsaturated fat, Vitamin E, fiber, and potassium. Per tablespoon, you'll save over 75 calories by making the swap while still getting the creamy satisfaction you crave.

Ripe avocado can be substituted in equal amounts for butter in most recipes.

Ex: 1/4 cup ripe avocado = 1/4 cup butter