

# KEYS TO BETTER HEALTH™

## Healthier Holidays

The holiday season ushers in a wonderful time of celebration with family and friends. It also means an abundance of big meals, parties, and delicious treats that are often a central part of our favorite holiday traditions. Staying focused on your health and fitness goals during this busy time of year can be challenging, but we are here to help! Here are a few tips to help you enjoy a happy and healthy holiday season.

### 1. Set realistic goals

Trying to lose weight during the holiday season can be frustrating and impractical. Instead, aim to maintain your weight<sup>1</sup>. Likewise, busy schedules and holiday commitments can make it difficult to keep up your normal exercise routine. If you can't find time for a full workout, consider breaking up activity into smaller chunks throughout the day<sup>2</sup>. Try doing 10 minutes of strength training in the morning, a brisk walk at lunchtime, and another short walk or yoga in the evening. Enjoy the holidays, and make plans to get back on track with your regular eating and exercise habits in the New Year.



### 2. Eat regularly

Skipping meals or snacks before a holiday gathering may seem like a good way to cut calories, but, in reality, it can lead to poor food choices and overeating<sup>1</sup>. Having a light snack an hour or two before you eat can help curb appetite and make it easier to resist overindulging. Keeping healthy snacks on hand can also be a great strategy if you're trying to avoid the holiday treats that seem to be everywhere this time of year<sup>2</sup>.

Veggies with dip, fresh fruit, whole grain crackers, and individual containers of yogurt are all great options. Keep a snack stash at home, at the office, and in your car when you're out running holiday errands.

### 3. Pick and choose.

Rather than trying everything on the buffet, peruse your options ahead of time and consider which dishes are your favorites<sup>3</sup>. Fill most of your plate with healthier options such as green salads, lean meats, fresh fruits, and vegetables, and then choose just a few higher-calorie items you really love. Carefully consider your beverage choices as well since calories from alcohol and sugar-sweetened drinks can easily add up<sup>1</sup>. Try to mostly stick with low- or no-calorie options like water or club soda with a splash of fruit juice.

#### Sources:

1. Tips for Healthy Holiday Eating. California Pacific Medical Center website. <http://www.cpmc.org/about/e-health/11-05%20healthy-holidays.html> Accessed July 25, 2017.
2. 9 Healthy Holiday-Eating Strategies. Real Simple website. <https://www.realsimple.com/health/nutrition-diet/healthy-eating/eat-healthy-during-holidays> Accessed July 25, 2017.
3. Stay Mindful with 4 Tips for Holiday Eating. American Academy of Dietetics and Nutrition website. <http://www.eatright.org/resource/health/lifestyle/holidays/a-healthy-approach-to-holiday-eating> Updated December 20, 2016. Accessed July 25, 2017.

