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Holiday Survival Guide

During the holiday season, it is easy to get out of your normal routine and overindulge. Studies suggest that individuals gain an average of one pound a week. After all, between the holiday parties, family and work commitments, not to mention the financial stresses it can be overwhelming. Navigate the season by following these lifestyle guidelines which will set you up for a healthy New Year.

Holiday Stress Management

Maintenance is Key

This is not the time to commit to a cleanse or try the latest fad diet. You are not setting yourself up for success during the hectic season and may be missing out on celebrating with your family and friends. Wait until January.

“It’s best not to worry about losing weight over the holidays. Just work on maintaining your weight. Allow yourself some treats but try not to overdo it.”

-Marilyn Majchrzak,
Corporate Food Development Manager at Canyon Ranch

Combat Emotional Eating

If you’re a stress eater, the holidays can be problematic. Not only is your stress level heightened, but you’re continually surrounded by high-calorie foods and beverages. What can you do?

- **Practice Mindful Eating:** Countless studies suggest that keeping a food journal encourages you to eat fewer calories and make healthier choices because it increases your awareness of what, how much, and why you are eating. For example, you may not realize how many extra calories you are consuming from the holiday candy dish, passed appetizers, glasses of holiday cheer, or your child’s cookie stash. Therefore, download an app, such as MyFitnessPal, and record your food and drink intake throughout the season.
- **Be Prepared:** Have alternatives in place for when the desire to stress eat surfaces. You can go holiday shopping, call a friend, go to the gym, read a book - just to name a few.

Write down 10 activities you can do when you’re tempted to stress eat over the season.

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Practice Mindfulness

When your anxiety starts to heighten, close your eyes and practice deep breathing for two minutes. You can also practice meditation to relax your mind. Simply download a guided program on your smart phone, such as Calm.

Use Your No Button

You do not have to attend every holiday event. Get over your adult FOMO (fear of missing out). Do not overbook yourself to the point where your health suffers. Give yourself permission to take a night off to watch your favorite holiday movie in your PJs.

Exercise Your Stresses Away

Instead of eating or drinking, use movement to release endorphins and give yourself a mental break. If you have a regular fitness routine, stick with it throughout the season. If you are looking to start one in January, this is the perfect time to experiment with classes, join a local gym or track your steps (at least 10,000 per day).

Catch Your ZZZ's

Strive for 7-9 hours of sleep per night to regulate your stress hormones and keep your metabolism in check.

Keep a Gratitude Journal

Every morning and/or before you go to bed, write down five things that you are grateful for. This will create a positive mindset.

Volunteer

Nothing beats the holiday blues more than helping others in need. Get a group of friends together and adopt a family or volunteer for a cause that is close to your heart.



Holiday Party Survival 101

① Never Arrive Hungry

Eat a high-protein snack (turkey and vegetable roll-ups, hummus and vegetables, string cheese and apple, almond butter and wholegrain crackers) before you attend a holiday soiree. This will make it easier for you to pass on the high-calorie appetizers that add up to 100s of extra calories.

② Practice Portion Control

Portion sizes have grown exponentially over the past few decades, but this does not mean you need to eat everything on your plate. You can always take half home and eat it the next day for lunch.

③ Design Your Plate in Moderation

As a rule of thumb, fill $\frac{1}{2}$ of your plate with non-starchy vegetables and salad, $\frac{1}{4}$ of your plate with protein, and $\frac{1}{4}$ of your plate with your favorite holiday dishes (macaroni-and-cheese, green bean and fried onion casserole, mashed potatoes). Refrain from going back for seconds. If you have a sweet tooth, choose one small serving of a dessert.

④ Skip the Extras

Sugary high-carbohydrate foods are readily available from the office candy dish to the sugar cookies sitting on your friend's counter. Save your calories for special indulgences (such as your Momma's famous apple pie).

⑤ Be Mindful of Your Alcohol Intake

Stick to a two-drink maximum or the calories will add up exponentially. For example, a 5 oz. glass of red wine (or half the pour you think) is 125 calories. Further, most cocktails are loaded with sugary carbohydrates, so a night of drinking gives your body a sugar rush, followed by an inevitable crash. This leads to the next day's crave-over (a.k.a. fried food).

⑥ You Are in the Driver's Seat

Friends and family members who are indulging often encourage others to have an extra glass of wine, an unwanted dessert or stay out past their bedtimes. Be honest with your crew and say no, explaining that you are dedicated to sticking with your lifestyle plan. You can also prepare ahead of time by coming up with one or two "excuses" before you go to the party.

⑦ Cook Homemade Food

Cook as much as possible over the holiday season. Keep up with your meal prepping and prepare extra portions for lunch and options that are readily available for post-event dinners. It will stop you from ordering late-night carry-out.

Reset Days

Schedule in One-Day Resets throughout the holiday season to get your body and mind back on track.

Rockstar foods to include:

- Non-Starchy Vegetables
- Fruit
- Protein
- Nuts and Seeds
- Healthy Fats
- Non-Dairy Milks and Yogurts

Foods to avoid:

- Sugar, Sweetened Beverages & Artificial Sweeteners
- Unhealthy Vegetable Oils
- Grains (including gluten free)
- Beans & Legumes (including peanuts)
- Dairy
- Alcohol

Reset Guidelines:

- Start your day with warm lemon water to stimulate your digestive track
- Consume 5 plus servings of non-starchy vegetables
- Eat a serving of protein at every meal
- Replace one meal with a green smoothie
- At least 30 minutes of exercise or 10,000 steps
- 13 cups (3 liters) filtered water for men and 9 cups (2.2 liters) for women
- Allow at least 12-14 hours between dinner and breakfast

Optional:

- Replace coffee with green tea or herbal tea (chamomile, peppermint, ginger, dandelion root)
- Take a Detox Bath: Soak for 20 minutes in 2 cups Epson salt, 1 cup baking soda and 10 drops lavender oil

Sample Day

Breakfast

Chocolate Almond Smoothie

Makes 1 Serving

- 1 serving chocolate protein powder
- ½ banana
- 1 cup spinach
- 1 tablespoon unsweetened almond butter
- 1 cup unsweetened almond milk
- ½ cup ice

Combine, blend and enjoy!

Lunch

Strawberry Chicken & Arugula Salad

Makes 4 Servings

- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breast halves (or use left-over chicken or ready prepared roast chicken for convenience)
- 4 sliced strawberries
- 6 cups arugula
- 2 tablespoons raw walnuts

For the Dressing:

- ¼ cup olive oil
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- ¼ cup water
- ½ teaspoon garlic, minced
- ½ teaspoon sea salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper

1. Combine the ingredients for the dressing in a small bowl and set aside. You may also mix in a blender.
2. Grill or broil the chicken breast for 3-5 minutes on each side, or until the internal temperature reaches 165 degrees. Let cool and dice.

3. Combine the chicken, strawberries, walnuts and arugula in a bowl. Toss the salad with the dressing.

Dinner

Soy-Glazed Salmon

Makes 4 Servings

- 2 6-ounce portions of wild salmon (ask for it deboned but with skin on)
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon tamari (soy sauce) wheat-free
- 1 teaspoon grapeseed oil
- 1 clove garlic, minced

1. Preheat the broiler on high with the top rack about 4 inches from the top.
2. Mix marinade for salmon in a small bowl: Dijon, tamari, grapeseed oil and minced garlic. On a foil lined sheet tray drizzle a teeny bit of grapeseed oil to keep fish from sticking and then place skin side down. Spoon the marinade evenly over the salmon. Clean up any excess oil or marinade on the foil with a paper towel--it'll burn/smoke in the oven. Let sit for 2-10 minutes.
3. Place the salmon under the broiler and cook for 3-5 minutes. Keep an eye on this until you get used to your broiler. The marinade should form a nice glaze on top and the salmon should cook through while staying pink in the middle. If salmon starts to burn, the broiler is too hot—turn off the broiler and turn back on the oven to 400 and finish cooking.

**Note that if you are using a thermometer, aim for 145 degrees. Otherwise, look for a glaze to develop and the fish to firm up, yet remain translucent on the inside.*

Roasted Asparagus

Makes 4 Servings

- 1-pound asparagus
 - 2 tablespoons olive oil
 - Salt and red pepper to taste
1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
 2. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or a silk pad.
 3. Toss asparagus with olive oil, salt and red pepper. Be sure to space out so the asparagus are not touching.
 4. Roast for 10-12 minutes.
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Optional Snack Choices

- 10 Raw Nuts and ½ Cup Cucumbers or Celery
- Apple and 1-2 Tablespoons Almond Butter or Cashew Butter
- 1 Hardboiled Egg and ½ Cup Non-Starchy Vegetables