

# Staying Healthy during the Holidays

Lauren Teague, MS, RD, CSSD LDN, CDE

# Holiday Eating

- Americans gain 5-10 pounds on average during the holiday season, and has a tendency to stick around for the whole year
- This weight gain can be avoided, this doesn't mean not having your favorite holiday dish, but by being more mindful of your eating habits
- The tips in this powerpoint will provide you with tools to prepare for the season



# Do not skip meals

- Do not skip meals in order to save calories for a holiday dinner party
  - There is no such thing as “banking” calories to eat your favorite foods later
- Make sure you are eating small, frequent meals and snacks throughout the day to prevent overeating at a dinner party



# Size matters

- Choosing a smaller plate, like a 6 inch dessert plate instead of a dinner plate, can help you control your portions better
- It can also give you the perception of having more food



# Fill up on vegetables

- Try choosing the vegetable platter or salad prior to eating entrees or desserts
- These will fill you up to prevent overeating fattier foods
- Research shows those who eat salad before the main course eat less calories overall than someone who skips salad



# Eat slowly



- It takes 15-20 minutes before your stomach can register that you have eaten, but most Americans eat their whole meal before the stomach knows it is full
- Take breaks between bites to catch up with family and friends
- Try putting your fork down between bites
- Chew your food longer



# Buffet table



- Once you arrive at a holiday party that has a buffet table, try to move your socializing away from the table to prevent picking and grazing on food
- This mindless eating can increase the amount of calories you consume
- When the food is out of sight, it will be less tempting to eat

# Exercise

- Don't let cold weather keep you from your exercise regimen
- Consider getting a fitness center membership during the winter months to exercise indoors, or invest in long pants, coat, and gloves, and continue your exercise in the great outdoors
- Exercising at least 30 minutes, 5 days per week will help keep off holiday weight gain. Don't have 30 minutes? Fit in 10-15 minutes after each meal





# Bring your own dish

- Bringing your own dish to a potluck or holiday event can give you control over what you are eating
- Having these options available will help you control your intake
- Additionally, your host will be so happy you brought a dish!



# Healthy substitutions

- Substitutions for ingredients in recipes can reduce the amount of calories, fat, and/or sodium in the dish
- Try substituting low-sodium chicken broth in mashed potatoes instead of butter or margarine
- Use fat-free Greek yogurt or fat-free sour cream in dips and sauces
- Top dishes with sliced almonds instead of fried onion sticks
- Make your pies and quiches crustless

# Take the focus off food

- We usually like to make cookies and snacks at Christmas. This year, try to change the focus on non-edible projects like making a Christmas wreath or a family holiday game night.



# Be realistic

- Be realistic during the holiday season and don't try to lose weight
- Instead, make your goal to maintain your weight
- Once the stress of the holiday season is over you can start trying to lose weight again

