

# *How to Have a Healthy Holiday!!*

*By Traci B. Hawkins, MA LLP*



*While the holiday season may seem like a great time to splurge, instead think of it as an excellent time to take your first step toward good health. Even though this can be a hectic time, there are steps you can take that will make it easier for you to tackle your weight-loss goals in the New Year.*

*Here are a few helpful hints to get you through the holidays:*

- 1. Just because it's the holidays, don't tell yourself it's OK to over eat. That attitude will just set you up to splurge for the entire season.*
- 2. Always eat a healthy dinner before you go to a holiday party. Leave just a little room to snack instead of going to the party starving.*
- 3. Wear slim-fitting clothes instead of spacious, baggy outfits—you will be much less likely to overeat if your belt feels snug.*
- 4. Bring "safe," healthy foods to potlucks.*
- 5. At appetizer tables, choose two or three of your favorites, put them on a small plate or napkin—not a large plate that could lead to overeating—and then walk away.*
- 6. If there are fruits and veggies, load your plate with them before eating smaller portions of the high-calorie items.*
- 7. Saying "no" to your favorite foods will only leave you feeling deprived and craving those foods more. Instead of completely avoiding favorite dishes, limit your portion size. You do not have to skip on your favorite foods, just enjoy smaller servings.*
- 8. Don't fall victim to "all or nothing" thinking. When you feel guilty for overeating, forgive yourself immediately and start fresh right at that moment instead of having an excuse to continue the binge till the next day or week.  
Remember: One meal is one meal. One day is one day.*
- 9. If you choose to drink, limit yourself to one or two and don't indulge every night. And choose wisely — a gin and tonic has 155 calories for 7.5 fl oz, while the same size frozen strawberry daiquiri has a whopping 450 calories.*

10. *If you are drinking, alternate alcoholic beverages with nonalcoholic, calorie-free ones, like flavored seltzer.*
11. *Drink extra water. It will fill you up and also prevent dehydration from the salty, rich foods and alcohol.*
12. *No matter how busy you get, make time for a healthy breakfast. Eating a morning meal will help control cravings later on.*
13. *If you love baked goods consider swapping holiday cookies with family and friends. Everybody brings one batch of his or her favorite cookies, plus the recipe, and shares. This way, you and your family get a variety without having to bake loads.*
14. *Store healthy snacks at the front of your fridge and pantry.*
15. *Chew gum while preparing meals or baking. Those little "tastes" add up.*
16. *Keep your hands busy. Busy yourself with washing veggies in the sink or go play football outside with the kids. You are less likely to eat if you are busy.*
17. *Streamline your grocery shopping with lists of the ingredients you'll need for a week's worth of quick, easy meals to prevent last-minute convenience and fast food runs during those nights when you're dashing around.*
18. *Park as far away from stores and malls as you can to add extra minutes of walking.*
19. *Despite the busyness, try not to miss your regular workouts. Write them into your calendar and make them a priority.*
20. *On heavy-eating weeks, compensate for the extra food with extra exercise.*
21. *Add health-related gifts to your wish list this year — they could help make for a slimmer, healthier 2005!*

*Traci Hawkins is a clinical psychologist with an office at 107 Chicago Street in Brooklyn. She has 15 years of experience and specializes in eating disorders, weight loss, depression, anxiety, marriage repair and enrichment, grief and loss and goal achievement. For more information on how to eat healthy and cope effectively with stress, feel free to contact Hawkins at*

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