

Holiday Health Hints

Eat, Drink And Be Merry: Your Holiday Eating Survival Guide

by Heidi Diller, RD

(NAPSA)—Most people will consume thousands of extra calories during the holiday season, some beginning as early as Halloween.

Recent studies show that on average, Americans gain up to five pounds between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day. And a report by Health Management Resources, a national weight loss company, estimates the typical consumption on a Thanksgiving Day contains a staggering 7,100 calories!



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Here's a Holiday Survival Strategy that will work for mindless munchers, large "portioners" and emotional bingers:

Mindless Munchers: Avoid buffet tables, bowls of nuts and candy, plates of sweets at the office and any other situation where it's easy to mindlessly snack. If you need to, position yourself so you're standing on the other side of the room, keep a low-calorie drink in your hand, or substitute items to make low-calorie snacks. Another tip is to eat a bowl of broth-based soup before heading out the door—this low-calorie trick will help to fill you up so you can avoid mindless munching.

Large Portioners: Grab a smaller plate rather than a large dinner plate. Focus on your food so you will recognize when you're full. One easy way to do this is to avoid preloading your fork with the next bite while still chewing the last

one. Remember, this isn't your last meal—so savor every bite.

Emotional Bingers: Create a list of things that make you feel good (that doesn't include food). When you are on the verge of a binge, refer to your list to find another way to soothe yourself. If these techniques don't eliminate your emotional eating urges, go ahead and indulge—but try substituting healthier foods. Drink sparkling water instead of sugary soda; munch on veggies and healthy snacks; or nibble one or two pieces of dark chocolate instead of binging on a plate of chocolate brownies.

Most importantly, make your home environment healthy. It can be a virtual eating war zone out there with holiday cookies and candy around every corner. So do yourself a favor and make your home the one place where it doesn't matter if you are a mindless muncher, large portioner or emotional binger. Chocolate fudge can't call your name if it's not in your house. Ditch the candy and pack your pantry and refrigerator with healthy snacks your whole family will enjoy.

Regardless of what sets you off down the road to overeating, never do anything on an empty stomach. Being hungry at a party or while sitting at your desk makes the buffet table or plate full of treats in the breakroom all the more tempting. Remember, willpower on an empty stomach never works. Identify your triggers and be prepared.

Happy Holidays! Enjoy, but don't overindulge.