

## Helpful Tips for a Healthy Holiday Season

The holiday season is a time to celebrate with family and friends over food and drinks and with a little preparation, you can enjoy the season healthfully.

### 10 Tips For Healthy Holiday Eating

**1. Start a new tradition.** Stay healthy throughout the holidays by trying healthier versions of your favorite foods.

**2. Plan time for exercise.** Exercise helps relieve holiday stress and prevent weight gain. A moderate and daily increase in exercise can help partially offset increased holiday eating. Try 10- or 15-minute brisk walks twice a day.

**3. Don't skip meals.** Before leaving for a party, eat a light snack like raw vegetables or a piece of fruit to curb your appetite. You will be less tempted to over-indulge.

**4. Survey party buffets before filling your plate.** Choose your favorite foods and skip your least favorite. Include vegetables and fruits to keep your plate balanced.

**5. Eat until you are satisfied, not stuffed.** Savor your favorite holiday treats while eating small portions. Sit down, get comfortable, and enjoy.

Visit [ShapeYourFutureOK.com](http://ShapeYourFutureOK.com) for more healthy holiday food tips and recipes.

Source:  
<http://www.cpmc.org/about/e-health/11-05%20healthy-holidays.html>

**6. Be careful with beverages.** Alcohol can lessen inhibitions and induce overeating; non-alcoholic beverages can be full of calories and sugar. So balance holiday beverages with plenty of water.

**7. If you overeat at one meal, go light on the next.** It will keep your recommended calorie intake in balance. Plus, it's good practice for controlling portion sizes.

**8. Take the focus off food.** Turn candy- and cookie-making time into non-edible projects like making wreaths, dough art decorations or a gingerbread house. Plan group activities with family and friends that aren't all about food. Try serving a holiday meal to the community, playing games or going on a walking tour of decorated homes.

**9. Bring your own healthy dish to a holiday gathering.**

**10. Practice healthy holiday cooking.** Preparing favorite dishes lower in fat and calories will help promote healthy holiday eating.

## Make the Switch

You can reduce fat and calories in many recipes without sacrificing taste just by switching out a few ingredients.

**Mashed Potatoes** — Use skim milk, chicken broth, garlic or garlic powder and Parmesan cheese to add flavor and cut back on added butter or margarine.

**Green Bean Casserole** — Cook fresh green beans with chunks of potatoes instead of cream soup. Top with almonds instead of fried onion rings.

**Dressing** — Use a little less bread and add more onions, garlic, celery and vegetables. Add fruits such as cranberries or apples. Moisten or flavor with low fat, low sodium chicken or vegetable broth and applesauce.

**Gravy** — Refrigerate the gravy to harden fat. Skim the fat off. This will save a whopping 56 grams of fat per cup.

**Desserts** — Make a crustless pie. Substitute two egg whites for each whole egg in baked recipes. Replace heavy cream with evaporated skim milk in cheesecakes and cream pies. Top cakes with fresh fruit, fruit sauce, or a sprinkle of powdered sugar instead of fattening frosting.

Substitute applesauce for oil, margarine or butter in muffins and quick breads like banana bread. Try substituting a small amount at first, as the more you substitute the more the texture of the finished product changes.

Choose reduced-fat or low-fat cheeses for salads and casseroles.

Pack your shopping cart with plenty of fresh vegetables like sweet potatoes, winter squash, broccoli, carrots and green beans. Apples, cranberries and pears combine easily for a tasty salad, fruit crisp or topping for the turkey.

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## Keep Moving

Physical activity and movement can help lower holiday stress and keep off the extra pounds. Combine family time with physical activity and you can have the best of both worlds.

- Take a few extra laps around the mall while holiday shopping or at the grocery store. Take advantage of the mall's extended holiday hours and get in a few extra laps.
- Take an evening walk with the family and look at the holiday lights or get a group of friends or neighbors together for caroling.
- If there is snow, build a snowman, go sledding or have a snowball fight. There are lots of fun activities to get out of the house and enjoy in the snow, just don't forget your coat!
- Take advantage of local holiday activities and events such as ice skating rinks, snow tubing and holiday light displays (opt for walking through the displays).

## Be Tobacco Free!

With added visitors during the holidays, enforce a tobacco-free home and car policy. Ask guests to step outside to smoke and don't allow smoking in your car or around your children. Secondhand smoke contains more than 60 toxins and cancer-causing chemicals.

With the added holiday stress, the holidays may not be an ideal time to quit using tobacco. But you can set your quit date for after the holidays and kick off the new year tobacco-free.

Call the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline for free help quitting and free patches, gum or lozenges at 1-800-QUIT NOW. Help is also available online at OKhelpline.com.

