

**MAINTAIN
DON'T
GAIN**



YOUR CHALLENGE: Maintain your weight during the holiday season. Begin with an initial weigh-in around November 1 and, using the same scale you used for the initial weigh-in, have a final weigh-in on January 2. Report the completion of your goal at www.dmba.com with a simple “yes” or “no.”

MAINTAIN, DON'T GAIN!

One of the toughest times of the year for maintaining (or losing) weight is during the winter holiday season.

The holidays are a time to have fun, celebrate, and enjoy time with family and friends. But many of these activities revolve around food, and for some, stress.

Between Halloween and New Year's, we enter a period where we're exposed to candy, treats, and homemade goodies almost daily. Once Thanksgiving week hits, our calendars seem to become over-scheduled.

Holiday times mean a smorgasbord of rich, high-fat foods, office parties, holiday block parties, family Christmas parties, football game parties, and New Year's Eve parties.

From the well-intentioned “food pushers” to the social gatherings that could derail even the most dedicated fitness fanatic, read on for tips on how to beat the holiday weight-gain odds.

SCHEDULE WORKOUTS INTO YOUR DAY

During the holidays, we can always come up with an excuse for not exercising. But slacking off on your fitness goals will only leave you with more pounds (and stress) come New Year’s Day.

Keep fitness a priority in your schedule. Regular physical activity will burn calories, relieve stress, elevate endorphins, and improve your mood.

The holidays may affect your regular routine, so be flexible when your days get busy. Whether you already have an established routine or are trying to create one, be sure to schedule physical activity into your day.

PLAN AHEAD

With a little planning, the holiday season can be a healthy time of year, both physically and mentally. Plan your meals by keeping in mind the demands you’ll have on your schedule that day.

Don’t go shopping or to a party hungry; you’re more likely to overeat. Don’t tempt yourself by keeping trigger foods or comfort foods around the house. Keep healthy snacks on hand.

Again, don’t forget to plan fitness into your day, which is easy to overlook as your calendar fills.

DON’T SKIP MEALS

Eating regular meals and healthy snacks every day makes it easier to resist overdoing it at parties or social events. Hunger and low blood sugar almost always lead to overeating.

DON’T PASS UP YOUR FAVORITE FOODS; SET LIMITS

Don’t deprive yourself completely. Moderation is key

this time of year. Pick what you want to splurge on rather than mindlessly nibbling on any party food that comes your way. Factor in little favorite extras to satisfy your sweet tooth, but set limits.

BE A HEALTHY HOST

Help your guests by cutting fats and calories when you’re hosting a party or taking a dish. Use healthier recipes in baking. Try these healthy alternatives: wild-rice stuffing, baked sweet potatoes, whole-grain rolls, and angel food cake with fruit.

EAT HEALTHY FIRST

At parties, pile your plate with lower-fat foods to limit high-calorie splurges. If you’re at the mercy of your dinner hosts, eat modest amounts of the foods offered and fill up on foods with more fiber and fewer calories. You can also make a small plate and skip seconds.

GET RIGHT BACK ON TRACK

It’s OK to give yourself a little wiggle room during the holidays. It is, after all, a time to have fun and enjoy good company. Sometimes, if we’re too strict



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or set our sights too high when it comes to our diet and exercise routine, we give up.

Eat whatever you want for your main holiday feast, but go back to your regular plan the next day.

TAKE TIME TO RELAX

If you find yourself feeling depressed, soothe your spirit with a massage, manicure, pedicure, or facial. Men can enjoy this, too.

Also, be sure to take a quiet meditative moment at least once every day to breathe deeply and clear your mind of all the clutter.

WANT MORE INFORMATION?

- American Heart Association <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living>
- WebMD <https://www.webmd.com/living-healthy>
- CDC Healthy Living <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyliving/index.html>

Note: If you can't complete this challenge because of a medical condition, let us know and we'll come up with an alternative for you.



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