



Healthy Holiday Eating

Your health is important.

Because the Youens and Duchicela Clinic believes this, the following is brought to you in an effort to provide wellness information that you can use to help manage and maintain your health.

This week, the focus is on healthy holiday eating.

Scrumptious buffets, delectable baked goods, and succulent treats can become real temptations for hungry holiday tummies. After all, in this season of sharing, why not go for seconds, ask for a refill of punch, or snag just one more cookie? While our taste buds say "Yes," continuously yielding to such temptations can be unhealthy.

The holiday season is not an excuse for overeating or for poor nutrition habits. Instead, the holiday season is a wonderful time to practice exercising restraint and to learn how to engage in smart, healthy eating choices.

But what is one to do amidst all those holiday party sweets and treats? The U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services suggests the following tips for healthy holiday eating:

EAT SMALLER PORTIONS OF FOOD. This is especially important at a buffet, where you may want to try everything. Choose the items you want to try the most, and eat a small portion of each.

EAT SLOWLY. Many times, people eat so fast that their stomachs do not have enough time to register that they are full. Savor each bite and enjoy the taste of the food. Chances are you will eat less.

AFTER A MEAL, GO FOR A WALK with your family to see holiday displays in your neighborhood.

OFFER TO BRING A LOW-CALORIE DISH TO HOLIDAY PARTIES. Your host might appreciate it, and you will know that at least one healthy item will be on hand.



DO NOT PARK YOURSELF IN FRONT OF THE BUFFET AT A PARTY. Mingle! If you stand by the buffet, you'll eat more than you would if it was across the room.

AVOID FAST FOOD. The holiday season can keep you on the go with little time to prepare meals. Fast food may be handy, but often is high in fat. Prepare and freeze quick, healthy meals ahead of time to stay out of the fast food trap.

BE REALISTIC. Do not try to diet during the holidays; just aim to maintain your present weight.

All-in-all, it is important for you to take control of your nutrition and take ownership of your choices during the holidays.

One specific way to take control is through incorporating healthy recipes into your diet.

Many websites offer online recipes, but two sites are especially helpful in delivering healthy collections which you can search. The United States Dept. of Agriculture site www.nutrition.gov offers lots of free recipes through its "Shopping, Cooking, and Meal Planning" tab online.

The Mayo Clinic also offers hundreds of healthy recipes free online through <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/healthy-recipes/RecipeIndex>. Users can search this collection by number of servings, type of meal, preparation style, main ingredients, course, and more. Additionally, special collections are given for dietary restrictions like for those with diabetes, those on a low-sodium diet, or those who may be vegetarian. Be sure to search their special holiday recipe section, too, for seasonal ideas. With each recipe, a nutritional analysis is provided.

With awareness of eating habits and some restraint, the holiday season can be enjoyable but still healthy.

The information provided here is not to be used as a substitute for medical attention. Remember that, should you have specific medical questions or desire more information, contact your doctor. Your health is important.