

Holiday Hints

Eating Healthy Around The Holidays: Eight Tips To Help

(NAPS)—With all the fun the holidays can bring, it can be challenging to stick to healthy routines. Eight tips can help.

The Problem

“If you have trouble making healthy food choices and getting enough physical activity during the holidays, you are not alone,” said Elaine Auld, chief executive officer of the Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE).

Eating healthy is hard to do when celebrations with family and friends so often revolve around food. Add a packed social calendar and travel time to see loved ones, and you have the perfect recipe for adding on the pounds.

Some Answers

Auld says there is a lot you can do to stay healthy without giving up the holiday fun. Small changes can make a big difference in helping you eat healthier and get enough physical activity. Here are some ideas to get you started:

Focus on portion size. You don’t have to skip your favorite holiday foods—just eat less. For example, if your family does a buffet-style meal, have one helping about the size of a deck of cards instead of two.

Try lower-calorie versions of holiday treats. Simple changes to your favorite recipes can make them a lot healthier. Try replacing full-fat cream cheese with light cream cheese in your go-to dessert.

Enjoy all the food groups at your celebration and share healthier options during your holiday meals. Serve whole grain crackers with hummus as an appetizer. Add unsalted nuts and black beans to a green-leaf salad. Include fresh fruit at the dessert table. Use low-



Enjoying such traditional holiday treats as fruit and nuts can also be a good way to keep eating healthfully.

fat milk instead of heavy cream in your casseroles.

Make sure your protein is lean. Turkey, lean roast beef, beans and some types of fish, such as cod or flounder, are lean protein choices. Trim fat when cooking meats.

Dip lightly when it comes to sauces. Go easy on the sauces and gravies. They can be high in calories, saturated fat and sodium.

Bake healthier. Use recipes with unsweetened applesauce or mashed ripe bananas instead of butter. Try cutting the amount of sugar listed in recipes in half. Use spices to add flavor such as cinnamon, allspice or nutmeg instead of salt.

Cheers to good health. Quench your thirst with low-calorie options. Drink water with lemon or lime slices. Offer seltzer water with a splash of 100 percent fruit juice.

Find time for physical activity. Remember, just 10 minutes of physical activity is better than none. Try taking a quick walk with your fami-

ly after a holiday meal. Park farthest away from the store when doing holiday shopping.

“Making healthier choices around the holidays can help you feel better, have more energy and even manage holiday stress,” said Auld.

SOPHE is working alongside four organizations with a network in 97 communities across 37 states. The other partners include the American Heart Association (AHA), the American Planning Association (APA), the Directors of Health Promotion and Education (DHPE) and the National WIC Association (NWICA).

Communities can take more steps to encourage healthy eating and physical activity at the holidays. “Community walks or races encourage people to get outside this time of year. When organizations sponsor a ‘healthy makeover’ contest for holiday recipes, they are really encouraging people to think in new ways about their favorite foods,” said Auld.

Learn More

Find facts about the national project to prevent chronic disease at www.partnering4health.org and get 10 tips for healthy holiday eating at www.choosemyplate.gov/ten-tips-make-healthier-holiday-choices.

Further Information

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