

TIP SHEET: HEALTHY WAYS TO HANDLE THE HOLIDAYS

ANTICIPATE THE EVENT

- Think about what foods and drinks will be served and if you can make requests (e.g., salad dressing on the side, club soda with lime to drink, a lean meat or vegetarian item).
- Plan out how you will spend your fat grams and calories for the day.
- Think ahead about ways to control your calories during the evening (e.g., drinking lots of water, limiting appetizers and desserts, etc.).
- Focus on the non-eating aspects of the event that you enjoy, such as socializing or dancing.

PLAN PLEASURES OTHER THAN FOOD OR DRINK

- Plan the kind of holiday, vacation, or special event that you want, and make it healthy!
- Think about what you can do to stay active. Can you make physical activity a part of your holiday, vacation or special event? A morning or evening walk, swimming laps or dancing could easily fit the bill.

HOLD A FAMILY MEETING AHEAD OF TIME

- How will we handle food and eating out?
- Can we find a fun way to all be physically active this year?
- Ask your family to agree to encourage you to eat healthily and be physically active.
- Talk about other ways your family can help you maintain your goals.

SET A REASONABLE EXPECTATIONS

- Continue to monitor your eating and physical activity.
- Weigh yourself often, if possible. Don't forget that scales differ.
- Plan to maintain your weight; it may not be realistic to expect to lose weight during special events.
- Let go a little. Eat something special; choose the best and have a small portion.

AVOID OR REDUCE STRESS CAUSED BY HOLIDAYS, VACATIONS OR SPECIAL EVENTS

- Avoid trying to please others more than yourself.
- Plan daily times to relax.

DECIDE WHAT TO DO ABOUT ALCOHOL

- Drinking alcohol may lower self-control, making you more likely to eat and drink beyond what you otherwise would.
- If you drink, keep track of the calories you are consuming.

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BUILD IN WAYS TO BE ACTIVE

- Be a little more active with any extra time you have.
- Park further away and walk when doing holiday errands or sightseeing.
- Look for seasonal ways to be active that can become traditions, such as visiting parks, window shopping at a brisk pace or even sledding.

PREPARE FOR THE PERSONALITIES AND HABITS OF FRIENDS AND FAMILY

If you have a relative who likes to push food on everyone, or a friend who is constantly refilling your wine glass, mentally prepare for how you will handle the situation.

PLAN FOR PLEASURES AFTER HOLIDAYS, VACATIONS, OR SPECIAL EVENTS

Sometimes after the holidays or special events, people get the “blahs” and lose motivation to continue their healthy habits. In order to help avoid those feelings, plan something to look forward to in the near future (such as a weekend trip in February or a day spent with friends after a vacation).