



**A newsletter for members of the Trusts
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Tips for Healthy Holiday Eating

by Gwen Mahabir

On average, Americans gain weight every year. The largest percentage of this weight gain comes from unhealthy eating during the holiday season. Over time, this extra weight can lead to an increased risk of serious health problems that could include diabetes and heart disease.

Here are some tips to avoid holiday weight gain and still allow yourself to enjoy those yummy holiday foods:

- Be active.**

Because you know you may have more calories than you normally consume, plan to get more active. Decide ahead of time to focus on physical activity and exercise more during this time of the year. Not only will you be burning more calories, but it will also help you cope with stress and depression that often accompany the holiday season.

- Eat a healthy snack.**

Right before you head out the door to that holiday dinner party, eat a healthy snack. By grabbing a piece of fruit, greek yogurt or another healthy snack, you will curb your hunger and be less tempted to overindulge when you arrive.

- Limit alcoholic beverages.**

Limit yourself to one alcoholic drink, and choose it wisely! Choosing a sweet dessert wine has 226 calories per glass. Having two glasses of sweet wine will give you over 450 calories! Instead, opt for a dry wine that has only 106 calories per serving. If having a cocktail, choose water or seltzer as your mixer.

- Avoid too many leftovers.**

Limiting the high-calorie food choices to one day will not wreck your eating plan. However, indulging for several days will. Enjoy portion-controlled amounts of your favorite holiday dishes for one day, and then return back to your normal eating plan the next day without any guilt.

- Enjoy time with family and friends.**

The holidays are not just for focusing on all those holiday treats. Instead of grabbing the second slice of pumpkin pie, indulge in the holidays by doing activities with your loved ones. These are the moments and memories that you will cherish instead of those second helpings.

Gwen Mahabir is Hometown Health manager for the Florida League of Cities. Contact [Mahabir](#) for more information about the health initiatives offered through the FMIT group health insurance program.

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