

# MAINTAIN DON'T GAIN

## *Holiday Tips*



### TO AVOID EXTRA WEIGHT GAIN



**EAT BEFORE DRINKING AND CELEBRATING** Skipping breakfast or lunch in order to “save your appetite” may lead to overeating at meal times. Honor your hunger and have a small meal before your big Holiday meal.

**BRING YOUR OWN** Rather than trying to figure out what’s in every dish at a friend’s party (or avoid eating altogether), bring a healthy side dish or dessert. Taste what you want, but know you have a healthy alternative to fall back on.

**EAT AND CHEW SLOWLY** Eating slowly may not be easy when appetizer options are endless, but it pays to pace yourself. The quicker we eat, the less time the body has to register fullness.

**FILL UP ON FIBER** Snacking on vegetables and other high-fiber items like legumes can help keep us fuller, longer.

**USE SMALLER PLATES** Plate sizes have expanded significantly over the years. Whenever possible, choose the smaller salad plate (8-10 inches) instead of a tray-like one (12 inches or more). Using smaller plates can actually make us feel fuller with less food. The brain associates a big white space on the plate with less.

**DITCH ADDED SUGAR** Holiday cookies, cakes and pies are very tempting, but all that added sugar may increase the risk for cardiovascular disease and obesity. Stick to sugar that comes in its natural form (fruits, veggies and whole grains). Try small tastes of the desserts you’re truly craving rather than loading up a full plate of bland cookies.

**SNEAK IN THE VEGGIES** Munching on vegetables has long been recognized as a way to protect against obesity. Mix puréed veggies (like pumpkin) into baked goods or casseroles, or sneak them into pasta or potato dishes. Adding veggies increases fiber, which helps make us fuller.

**JUST SAY NO** Though your relatives may encourage overeating by shoving seconds onto a cleaned plate, it’s OK to respectfully decline. “I’m full” or “I’m taking a break” should be enough for friends and family members to back off (and give you time to decide if you’d really like more).

**WAIT BEFORE GRABBING SECONDS** The quicker we eat a meal, the less time we give our bodies to register fullness. Since it takes about 20 minutes for the brain to get the message that dinner’s been served, it’s best to go for a walk or chat with friends before dishing up seconds.

**GULP H2O** Drinking water helps people feel full, and as a result consume fewer calories. Rather than guzzling calorie and sugar-laden sodas and juices (which are associated with increased body fat and blood pressure) treat yourself to a glass of wine with dinner and keep your allegiance to water for the rest of the day.