

Newsletter

Winter 2020

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Busting the Top 5 Excuses to Overindulge During the Holidays

Strategies to Cope with Holiday Eating

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house, Everyone was eating...even the mouse!

The most wonderful time of the year is back, and that means one thing: notorious holiday parties! Between the neighborhoods open house, family gatherings, religious festivities, and community get-togethers, sticking to a healthy eating plan becomes, well, difficult to say the least.

The reason? Simple. Tempting, high fat, calorie-laden dishes are the common denominator of almost every holiday celebration. And excuses for overindulgence are as easy to find as holiday cheer.

Check out the following excuses. If any of them sounds familiar, don't worry. We have the strategies to help you deal with these excuses, and still enjoy the holiday season.

Excuse #1: The food looks and tastes so good! How can I resist?

It's true—there will be plenty of terrific foods. But will you feel good after you eat them? Imagine yourself overindulging. How do you feel



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afterwards? Was the taste really worth it? Could you have received the same pleasure with a smaller amount?

Excuse #2: It's a special occasion. It only comes once a year.

The holidays only come once a year, but the parties, events, and gifts of food never seem to end! Stop and decide which ones are really worth the splurge. When it is time for the splurge, bank calories from earlier in the day.

Excuse #3: Everyone else is eating.

The hostess will be offended. Just because everyone is eating does not mean that you have to eat everything too. Choosing smaller portions shouldn't offend anyone. Remember, "If you half-it, you can have it." And sometimes it may be necessary to "just say no".

Excuse #4: I should offer desserts to the company in my home.

Keeping your favorite desserts at home usually spells trouble. When treats are in the house, more of the dessert usually ends up in you, rather than your guests. Therefore, keep some low fat, low-calorie alternatives on hand. Make a trip to your local library and flip through the healthy holiday cooking magazines and books for other creative alternatives.

Excuse #5: I'll get back to my healthy eating plan tomorrow.

This thinking is okay, as long as it is realistic. Make sure an occasional splurge does NOT become a repeated excuse (or turn into "next week" or "next month").

- Article reprinted from SparkPeople.com

Putting it All Together

The best defense against holiday eating disasters is a combination of both planning and strategy:

1. **Take inventory.** Identify all the situations that make it difficult for you to eat healthy during the holiday season. Is it being on the road? Food courts at the shopping mall? Family gatherings? Extra baking and cooking at home?
2. **Plan a system of attack.** For example:
 - Don't go shopping on an empty stomach.
 - Use healthier substitutions and make a low-calorie, low-fat dessert for the family gathering.
 - Budget calories throughout the day, so you can afford to spend a few more at the party.
 - Burn extra calories in a longer-than-usual exercise session. Some research shows that adding just 10 more minutes of intense exercise to your usual workout can stave off holiday weight gain.
 - Stay focused by getting 7-8 hours of sleep nightly.
3. **Remember to reward.** Making it through the holidays can be hard work. Establish a reward system to stay motivated along the way. Deposit a pre-determined amount of money (the amount should be based on what you can financially afford) in a jar every week that you are able to follow your healthy eating plan. Then after the holidays—when the sales are big—go out and buy something special just for you!
4. **Stay positive.** Everyone makes mistakes, so there will be times when even the most disciplined person will slip. Don't worry or stress during these mishaps—it is critical to get back on track. Staying positive is half the battle.

Small Bits of Fitness Add Up

EXERCISE COMES IN ALL SHAPES AND SIZES



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“Where did the day go?”

Is this a common question in your life? Many of us jam-pack so much stuff into our daily routines, seemingly there’s no time to relax for just one minute, let alone exercise. Lack of time is one of the most common excuses for not having a decent fitness regimen. But do you realize that in the time it might take you to go through your e-mail, you could fit in a good workout? We’re not talking about giving up 60 minutes either; all you need is 10.

Just 10?

Forget the “all or nothing” mentality when it comes to exercise. Fitness does not live or die by 60-minute workouts; there is middle ground. Short spurts of exercise, when they accumulate, have been shown to share similar benefits of longer workouts.

Your body will reap numerous benefits just by becoming more active. This approach is perfect for times when you don’t have time for a regular workout, or when you want to start off slowly and build up a routine.

Treat these 10 minutes like you would a regular workout. Take one to two minutes to warm up and get the muscles ready, including stretching. Follow with at least seven minutes of exercise at a medium or high intensity. Then, make sure to include a 60-second cool down.

Since it’s brief, it’s important to work at a fairly high intensity to obtain all of the benefits. Work at raising your heart and respiration rates. Just like regular workouts, try to include cardio, strength training and

flexibility work in your shortened routine. Either knock out all three during the 10 minutes or plan a 10-minute segment for each area.

Example: Push out 10 cardio minutes on the stationary bike. For strength, do pushups, wall sits or lift dumbbells. For flexibility, it’s helpful to just stretch every day. Work different muscle groups and keep it simple. After 10 minutes, you will feel healthier and be on your way to developing solid fitness habits.

But I Still Don’t Have Time

It only takes 30 minutes a day, broken up into manageable chunks of 10. Start with a quick exercise when you wake up. The second session? A lunch break is the perfect time to re-energize and get the blood flowing again. The last 10-minute blitz could come in the evening, even while you are watching TV. It’s an ideal way to involve the family, as well. Go for a power walk after dinner with your spouse or ride bikes with the kids.

It is all about convenience; if you try, you can fit exercise into your schedule no matter where you are. Start building exercise spurts into your daily routine and you’ll start feeling better.

- Article reprinted from SparkPeople.com

How to Read a Nutrition Facts Label

Solving the Ninth Mystery of the World

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 cup (228g)	
Serving Per Container 2	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 250	Calories from Fat 110
% Daily Values*	
Total Fat 12g	18%
Saturated Fat 3g	15%
Trans Fat 1.5g	
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 470mg	20%
Total Carbohydrate 31g	10%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 5g	
Protein 5g	
Vitamin A	4%
Vitamin C	2%
Calcium	20%
Iron	4%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

What do you look for when you're checking out the nutrition facts on that macaroni and cheese box? Whether you're one to zoom in on total calories or total carbs, you might be missing the real picture. Nutrition facts should be a part of your decision in what to eat or even what to buy. But interpreting the facts requires a bit of know-how, so make sure you aren't misleading yourself.

Understand the Power of "Serving Size"

The most important rule is to know your serving size and the number of servings in the package or can. If the label says "one cup" per serving size and "two servings per container," that means there are two cups in the whole package. If you know you'll eat the whole package by yourself, you are going to consume two cups (1 cup x 2 servings/container = 2 cups). That means that you must double all the nutrition facts measurements to know your total intake of each nutrient – the good and the bad. Using the mac and cheese example, eating the whole package means you will have consumed 500 calories, 220 of which are from fat. You will have consumed 24 grams of fat, of which 6 grams are saturated fat.

The only time you can avoid doing the math is when you eat the exact serving size that is listed. Always compare the listed serving size to how much food you think you'll eat and compute calories from there.

Crack the Code in "Percent Daily Value"

Confused by what all those percents really mean? The percents refer to "percent daily value" and they're a bit trickier to interpret. The FDA bases these percents on a 2,000-calorie-a-day diet. Looking at cholesterol on the mac and cheese label, the FDA says that you are getting 30 milligrams per serving, or 10% of the recommended amount of cholesterol for a person eating about 2,000 calories per day. (Remember, you're getting 20% if you eat the whole package.)

So how do you know if 10% is a good or bad number?

For ease of explanation, let's break this down into a guide that will help us look at a percent and immediately know if it is high or low for one food source. The magic numbers are 5 and 20%. Anything listed in the percent daily value column that is 5% or less is a low number for nutrients. This is a good range for things that you want to limit (fat, saturated fat, cholesterol, and sodium), but too low for things you want to eat plenty of (fiber, calcium, and vitamins). Anything listed as 20% or more is high. This is a bad range for things that you want to limit (fat, saturated fat, cholesterol and sodium), but a good range for things you want to eat plenty of (fiber, calcium, and vitamins).

Look at "Total Fat" on the mac and cheese label. The 18% daily value is close to the high point, but if you ate the whole package, you actually ate 36% of the recommended daily amount of fat (well above our benchmark of 20%). That amount, coming from just one source of food in a day, contributes a lot of fat to your daily diet. It would leave you 64% ($100\% - 36\% = 64\%$) of your fat allowance for all other meals, drinks, and snacks you would eat that day.

If your daily goal is well below 2,000 calories for your weight loss plan, then use the percents as a frame of reference (realizing you need to be below the percents shown, per serving). Or, you may find it simpler to keep track of grams and milligrams instead of the percents. The Nutrition Facts footnote gives a scale in grams and milligrams for recommended amounts of fat, cholesterol, sodium, carbohydrates, and fiber based on 2,000- and 2,500- calorie diets. (This footnote does not appear on small packages where there is no room for it.)

The percent daily value also offers a great way to watch your diet without completely giving up your favorite foods. For example, if you ate one serving of macaroni and cheese but ensured you had a low fat intake for all other foods you ate that day, you made a successful trade off. When you really want a food that is high in fat, always balance it with healthy low-fat foods in the same day.

- Article reprinted from SparkPeople.com

Quick Interpretation Guide

- Start at the top with Serving Size and Servings Per Container. Adjust all measurements below this point according to the serving size you will eat.
- Look at the number of calories per serving (including how many calories are from fat).
- Limit these nutrients: total fat (including saturated and trans fat), cholesterol, and sodium.
- Get plenty of these nutrients: fiber, vitamins, calcium, and iron
- Use the % Daily Value to determine what is a high or low number for your daily diet. 5% or less is low; 20% or more is high.

Don't just use the nutrition facts to track the nutrients you want to cut back on. Use it to track the nutrients you want to increase (like fiber, calcium and vitamins)! Whether you're a stickler for tracking every fat gram and calorie per day or someone who just wants a rough estimate of her daily nutrient intake, the nutrition facts label is a handy tool. Learn how to use it for foods you eat frequently and anything new that you are tempted to incorporate into your regular meal plan.

The Portion Distortion Guide

A List of Serving Sizes

Selecting the right foods also means choosing portions that are proper serving sizes. The terms “portion” and “serving” are often used interchangeably, but they don’t mean the same thing.

A “portion” is the amount of food you choose to eat for meals or snacks (like a plateful of pasta or a handful of raisins). In comparison a “serving” is the amount of food that experts recommend you eat (like 1 cup of milk or 1 ounce of bread). Servings are listed on a food’s nutrition facts label too.

When choosing your portion, try to make it as close as possible to these recommended serving sizes.

Meat & Beans



Aim for 2-3 servings each day. Choose lean meats and plant proteins whenever possible..

- Meat & Tofu: 2-3 oz cooked beef, poultry, fish or tofu, or a about the size of a deck of cards.
- Beans: 1/2 cup cooked beans, split peas or legumes, or about the size of a billiard ball.
- Nuts & Seeds: 2 tbsp nuts, seeds or nut butters, or about the size of a ping pong ball.

Fruits & Vegetables



Aim for 5-9 servings each day. Choose fresh fruits and veggies whenever possible..

- Raw fruit: 1/2 cup raw, canned or frozen fruit, or about the size of a billiard ball.
- Dried fruit: 1/4 cup raisins, prunes or apricots, or about the size of an egg.
- Juice: 6 oz 100% fruit or vegetable juice, or about the size of a hockey puck.
- Raw vegetables: 1 cup leafy greens, baby carrots or about the size of a baseball.
- Cooked vegetables: 1/2 cup cooked broccoli, potatoes, or about the size of a billiard ball.

Fats & Oils



Eat fats and oils sparingly and in small portions. Choose heart-healthy fats whenever possible.

- Fat & Oil: 1 tsp butter, margarine or oil, or about the size of one die.

Grains



Aim for 6-11 servings each day. Choose whole grains whenever possible..

- Bread: 1 oz (1 small slice, 1/2 bagel, 1/2 bun), or about the size of an index card
- Cooked Grains: 1/2 cup cooked oats, rice or pasta, or about the size of a billiard ball..
- Dry cereal: 1/2 cup flakes, puffed rice or shredded wheat, or about the size of a billiard ball.

Dairy



Aim for 2-3 servings of calcium-rich foods each day. Choose low- or non-fat products whenever possible..

- Cheese: 1 oz or 1 thin slice of cheese, or about the size of a pair of dice.
- Milk: 1 cup milk, yogurt or non-dairy milk alternative, or about the size of a baseball.

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Association for U.S. Professional Drivers

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Consult your doctor before starting any exercise and dietary program.



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