

Winter 2005

Nutrition Backpack

The holiday season is a wonderful time to see family and friends and enjoy their company. It is also the season of plenty - of food. It is ok to indulge a little during the holidays, but if you are trying not to sabotage your recent weight loss efforts, these tips will help.

Watch your portion sizes.

- Keeping portions smaller will keep your calories in a healthier range. Visit <http://hin.nhlbi.nih.gov/portion/> to check portion sizes and take the *Portion Distortion* quiz.

Think of the food pyramid when making your selections.

- Choose a variety of grains (especially whole grains), fruits & vegetables.
- Limit the number of high fat items you choose in any one meal.
- Try to choose a food from each category to get a balanced meal.

Never go to a party hungry.

- Avoid empty party-food calories by eating a healthy meal of fruits and vegetables prior to the event.
- Keep a glass in one hand and a napkin or your purse in the other hand so that you don't have as many opportunities to grab calorie-dense snacks.
- Plant yourself away from the food. You'll be more likely to socialize and less likely to eat.
- Eat one plate of carefully chosen items, rather than grazing throughout the whole party.

Remain physically active everyday.

- Keeping up on your exercise routine during the holidays will help ward off those extra pounds even if you do overeat a few times.
- Add 10 extra minutes to your workout the day of or the day after a holiday party.
- Encourage your family or friends to take a walk after a holiday meal.

Use Holiday meals to educate your children

- This is a great time to teach children about foods they may not see regularly.
- Encourage them to eat a balanced meal - not gorge on desserts.