

Eating Healthy This Holiday Season



It's that time of the year again, the festive holiday season is here and with it comes family, friends, festivities and lots of delicious foods! With Thanksgiving only just past, it's the month ahead that often promises parties, dinners and gatherings that lead to the average American gaining 1-6 pounds in this month alone!

There is nothing wrong with embracing this festive season and enjoying the delicious meals that come with it (after all, it is the season to be jolly!), however eating great foods doesn't always mean you have to be eating unhealthily!

Here are some healthy holiday tips to help you avoid gaining a festive bulge!

- **Fruits vs. Candy** - It can be tempting to indulge in candy and sweet treats, especially when there are so many available. Yet it is good to keep in mind that there are also lots of delicious fresh fruits in season at this time of year. Fruits such as strawberries, oranges, passionfruit, guava and carambola are delicious and a healthy way of satiating your sweet tooth whilst keeping your snacking healthy.
- **Avoid Going To Parties Hungry** - If you are planning on going to a party, and you know there will be lots of unhealthy snack food available, try to have a healthy light meal before you go, to help you avoid the temptation of eating all night.
- **Avoid Fatty Spreads** - Fatty spreads, such as butter, are really not that necessary and at this time of the year you will likely be getting plenty of fats from other foods you are eating, so try to avoid them when possible. A delicious alternative is using avocado instead of butter when having toast or sandwiches!
- **Eat Earlier** - To counteract all the extra calories you will be consuming, try to have a cut off point in your early evening (such as no food after 7). This will give your body time to

digest your meal before you go to sleep and help prevent you from storing the extra calories as fat. Unfortunately this also means drinks, so try to avoid drinking after this time, or if you are out with friends, opt for a spritzer, topping it up with soda, and try to make it last.

- **Water It Down** - When enjoying a delicious non- alcoholic beverage, try opting for sparkling mineral water, or soda water and adding a squeeze of orange or a couple of ripe strawberries. When drinking fruit juice, opt for 100% juices and mix it 50/50 with water. When drinking alcoholic drinks, try drinking spritzers and try to avoid beer, or creamy beverages and cocktails.

- **Opt For Healthy Snacks** - It can be tempting to graze on chips and candy, so it's good be prepared. Have some healthy options available to help encourage you to make good choices. Here are some delicious and healthy snack food options that are great for one off snacks or a whole group of people.
 - Light dips (light tzatziki or hummus) and vegetable sticks
 - Dried fruits and unsalted nuts
 - Festival Bliss Balls (see recipe below)
 - Plain popcorn, lightly salted
 - Platters of lean meats and fresh fruits