



Have a Happy Healthy Holiday - Planning Ahead

The holiday season is a time to celebrate with family and friends. It is also the time when most people attend parties and enjoy holiday feasts. Typically, the foods served are higher in fat and calories, and include more high carbohydrate choices. Studies have shown that over the holiday period, many people gain about 1 pound. Most people do not ever lose that pound after the holidays. Also, if you have diabetes, you might find that your blood glucose may go up and down. With good planning, you can still enjoy the holidays without trading off your health.

1. Include healthy dishes.

If you are hosting, include a few lower calorie and lower fat dishes. For example:

- Lightly stir-fried vegetables
- Salad with light dressing
- Fruits as desserts
- Brewed tea, or water mixed with a splash of juice as beverage choices

2. Follow healthy eating guidelines while preparing the dishes.

- Choose heart-healthy fats (e.g., canola oil or olive oil), instead of non-heart healthy fats (e.g., ghee or lard)
- Remove visible fat from meat (e.g., remove the skin from chicken)
- Choose lower-fat products (e.g., 90% lean ground beef, pork tenderloin or 1% milk) instead of the higher fat products (e.g. 80% lean ground beef, pork belly or whole-fat milk)
- Use whole-grain products (e.g., brown rice) instead of refined grain products (e.g., white rice)
- Use low or reduced-sodium products (e.g., low-sodium chicken broth) instead of the regular option

3. Make your food choices ahead of time.

If you are eating at a restaurant, research their menu ahead of time. Select the dishes that will fit into your meal plan before going to the restaurant.

4. Work with your registered dietitian.

Before the holidays, try to meet with your registered dietitian to discuss how to incorporate festive foods into your meal plan.

5. Stay active.

Don't forget to stay active! Physical activity is important for weight and diabetes management. You probably will have more time to exercise during the holidays. It is a great time to try out a new exercise plan.

