Eat Smart Month

Daily tips to make this holiday season Healthy for Good™

Use these tips (one each weekday throughout November) to keep everyone focused on how we can eat smart, move more and be well this holiday season.

1. **Balance is the key.** You can enjoy some of the splurges of the season without overdoing it. For example, if you're going to miss your workout for a holiday event, walk during lunch or ride your bike to work. If dinner is going to be a feast, opt for a light lunch. Save your appetite for the big meal by skipping the appetizers or serving lighter snacks like cut-up fruits and veggies.
2. **Eat smart at special holiday events.** They often serve up extra helpings of less-than-healthy foods. If you're a guest, eat a healthy meal or snack before you go to avoid overdoing it at the event. If you're the host, challenge yourself to offer some delicious and healthier options using our recipes and cooking tips (your guests will thank you).
3. **Keep the family active.** When the kids are out of school, squeeze in some active chores and trips to the park. Break up the video game marathon with a physical activity break. Take advantage of cooler weather to get moving outdoors.
4. **Sip smarter.** Replace sugary drinks (including sodas, energy and sports drinks, sweet tea, lemonade and coffee drinks) with water or unsweetened tea and coffee to avoid excess calories. To make the switch easier, cut back the amount of sweetener gradually until your taste adjusts.
5. **Give yourself the gift of peace.** When the invitations pile up, don't be afraid to say no to some of them. If you need some down time to recharge for the next party, take a break. Do something that relaxes you, like yoga, meditation, reading, a warm bath or spending time in nature.
6. **Keep portions in check.** Enjoy your favorites without overeating. Put less on your plate and pass on that second helping. Split appetizers, entrees and desserts with others. Cut standard portions into halves or quarters before serving. Use smaller plates when possible so it will look like more.
7. **BYOB (be your own barista).** Opt for less-sweet homemade versions of sugary coffee drinks, hot chocolate and other holiday beverages. (You'll save money, too!) Swap out marshmallows and whipped cream with steamed or frothed low-fat milk.
8. **Keep up healthy habits.** Commit to staying healthy during the holidays. For example: "For the next three weeks I will move more and do something active every day, have a healthy breakfast and limit the sweets, and get at least seven hours of sleep each night." If you don't completely give up your healthy habits, you won't feel like you have to start all over once the holidays are in the rear-view.
9. **Bring something.** For holiday eating events, whether potluck or not, offer to contribute a lighter, healthier dish. That way, you'll have at least one better-for-you option!
10. **Mix it up.** If alcohol is being served at a holiday event, alternate each glass with a glass of water. This will quench your thirst and fill you up so you'll be less likely to overindulge. Or enjoy non-alcoholic versions of your favorite cocktails to lower the calorie count. Just watch out for added sugars.

©2017, American Heart Association 8/17DS12564

American Heart Association. Healthy for Good™

Eat Smart Month

Daily tips to make this holiday season Healthy for Good™

Use these tips (one each weekday throughout November) to keep everyone focused on how we can eat smart, move more and be well this holiday season.

11. **Get your ZZZs.** Aim for 7-9 hours of sleep each night to stay in the healthy zone. Don't let your wake-up time and bedtime get too far off your regular schedule. Nap when needed and ditch the digital devices at night.

12. **Treat yourself.** Try bite-sized tastes or split portions of desserts and other holiday treats. Or choose fresh fruit for dessert. Delicious, seasonal fruits make great gifts, too!

13. **Holiday hydration.** Remember, the healthiest thing you can drink is water! Make it your go-to choice when you're feeling thirsty. You can give it some extra appeal by adding fresh or frozen fruits, herbs or a splash of 100% fruit juice.

14. **Add color.** Seasonal fruits and vegetables can give your meals, snacks and party dishes that healthy holiday spirit. Try apples, dates, leafy greens, pears, pumpkin, root vegetables, sweet potato and winter squash.

15. **Make beverages sparkle.** Try seltzer, club soda or sparkling water if you love the fizz. For a festive holiday look, garnish with whole cranberries and mint leaves.

16. **Fit in fitness.** Try to stay committed to your workouts when the holidays kick into high gear. But when a full social calendar gets in the way, squeeze some healthy activity like walking into your daily routine. Or do something active with the whole family.

17. **Gotta have the 'nog'?** If it's just not Christmas without eggnog, try a low-fat version or mix it with an equal amount of low-fat or nonfat milk. You'll still get the flavor without as many calories.

0. **Shake it off.** Many holiday dishes can be packed with sodium. Breads, poultry and canned soups are three common foods that can be loaded with salt. When shopping for ingredients to prepare your holiday meal, compare the labels and choose options with the lowest amount of sodium. Use herbs and spices (like rosemary and cloves) to flavor dishes instead of salt.

1. **Spice it up.** Use spices to flavor foods and drinks with less sugar. For example, make a skinny hot apple cider with unsweetened apple juice and plenty of cinnamon, cloves, allspice and nutmeg. Garnish with whole cinnamon sticks.

2. **Focus on being present instead of buying presents.** When holiday stress starts to get to you, the two simple practices of mindfulness and gratitude can help. Focus on what you're doing right now and what you're thankful for. Slow down, take it one step at a time and make your wellbeing a priority.



American Heart Association. Healthy for Good™

©2017, American Heart Association 8/17DS12564