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## 15 Tips To Avoid Overeating This Holiday Season

By Dr. Fab Mancini | December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2017

If you've already been enjoying slightly more than your share of eggnog, stuffing and Christmas cookies, you can take comfort in the fact that the average American only gains about one pound from Thanksgiving to New Year's Day, according to a study published in the New England Journal of Medicine. But don't let that fool you. Gaining one pound each year adds up, and in fact may be a major contributor to becoming obese later in life. "These findings suggest that developing ways to avoid holiday weight gain may be extremely important for preventing obesity and the diseases associated with it," said National Institute of Child Health and Human Development director Duane Alexander, M.D. This holiday season could be the one where you defy the odds and put on no pound at all or (gasp) even lose a few. And don't worry – it's not about denying yourself. In fact, the tips below are all about satisfying your hunger and enjoying the season to its fullest, without adding inches to your waistline.

1. Eat more health foods (this will leave less room for the desserts). Some common healthy holiday foods are turkey, pork roast and chicken, sweet potatoes, low-sugar cranberry sauce and veggies.
2. Snack on veggie crudites, a handful of nuts, or cold leftover turkey to avoid binging at a party.
3. Keep alcoholic drinks to a minimum, and if you're going to drink, choose a glass of red wine over eggnog.
4. Eat breakfast, and lunch, before the big dinner. Otherwise you'll be starving and likely to eat more.
5. When you're at parties, stand away from the food tables (so you can't casually consume hundreds of extra calories).
6. Keep up with your exercise routine, or sneak in some extra activity when you can (a few extra laps around the mall, a long walk after dinner, a family trip to go ice-skating).
7. Change your mindset: if you expect to eat a lot during the holidays, you will. But if you regard a holiday meal like any other meal, you'll keep your eating under control.
8. Serve yourself. This way, you can take small portions and skip things you're not in love with altogether.
9. Indulge wisely. If you're going to eat something "bad", make it something you really love, and something you can only get this time of year (i.e. not mashed potatoes, bread and butter, or chocolate chips cookies).
10. Don't eat to please others. Even if your great aunt made her famous pecan pie, don't feel obligated to take a piece unless you really want to.
11. Make it a point to engage in conversation. You'll be distracted from the food and will have a better time.
12. Eat slowly and wait at least 20 minutes before going back for seconds.
13. Beat the "I can only get this today" mentality by asking the host for the recipes of dishes you love. This way, you'll know that you can prepare them anytime you want (and there's no need to eat all you can today).
14. Deal with your emotions. If you're overeating because you're lonely, anxious or sad, treat yourself to a movie, a relaxing bath or a walk to see the holiday lights – anything that doesn't involve food.
15. Be picky. Pass up the daily treats at your office (eating a red and green doughnut will not make your workday go any faster), the candy bowl at the bank store and the store-bought cookie tin your neighbour gave you in favour of the homemade treats you'll really savour.