

HOLIDAY SEASON HEALTH AND DIET MOTIVATION: 12 WAYS NOT TO LOOK LIKE A BEAR AFTER ITS OVER.

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The holidays are a time of joy, celebration, and indulgence. However, for those committed to maintaining a healthy lifestyle, it can also be a period of immense temptation, potential setbacks and negative self talk. The combination of festive feasts, sweet treats, and a relaxed schedule can make it challenging to stick to your

health and diet goals. But fear not! With the right mindset and a few strategies, you can navigate the upcoming holiday season without compromising your health and well-being!

1. SET CLEAR GOALS: Start by setting specific, realistic goals for the holiday season. Rather than aiming to lose weight during this time, focus on maintaining your current weight and health. Setting achievable goals will help you stay motivated and reduce the pressure to be overly restrictive.

2. PLAN AHEAD: Preparation is key. Before attending holiday gatherings, consider eating a small, balanced meal or snack. This will curb your appetite and help you avoid overindulging in unhealthy options. If you are pressed for time, drink a water bottle to make your tummy full.

3. CHOOSE WISELY: When faced with a buffet of delicious dishes, make mindful choices. Opt for lean proteins, plenty of vegetables, and smaller portions of high-calorie items. Fill your plate with colors and flavors that nourish your body.

4. STAY ACTIVE: Don't let the holiday hustle and bustle disrupt your exercise routine. Even if you can't stick to your regular workout schedule, find ways to stay active. Take a family walk after dinner, try winter sports, or engage in festive activities like ice skating. Do stretching at a minimum for 10 minutes if you miss a work out.

5. MINDFUL EATING: Practice mindful eating by savoring each bite. Slow down, engage your senses, and truly enjoy the flavors. This can help you recognize when you're satisfied and prevent overeating. Practice taking 1/3 of the amount you want and if you eat slower you will be full. It takes 20 minutes from starting to eat for our brain to realize we are full.

6. LIMIT LIQUID CALORIES: Be cautious of sugary cocktails and excessive alcohol consumption. These beverages can quickly add empty calories and impair your judgment, leading to poor food choices. Opt for water, herbal tea, or light alcoholic beverages if you choose to drink. "Mocktails" are non alcoholic drinks you can create with fancy garnishes and just hints of fruit flavor and ice.

7. STAY HYDRATED: Proper hydration is crucial for maintaining overall health. Drinking enough water can help control your appetite and prevent confusing thirst with hunger. Drink hot water with lemon, lime or orange to warm up this season. I like mine with cinnamon.

8. ACCOUNTABILITY PARTNER: Consider sharing your holiday health goals with a friend or family member who can help keep you accountable. Having someone to support and encourage you can make a significant difference.

9. HEALTHY ALTERNATIVES: Get creative with healthy holiday recipes. Swap out ingredients in traditional dishes to make them more nutritious. For example, use whole wheat flour in baking or replace heavy cream with Greek yogurt in creamy sauces.

10. FOCUS ON TRADITIONS, NOT JUST FOOD: Remember that the holiday season is about more than just food. Embrace traditions like decorating, gift-giving, and spending quality time with loved ones. Shift the focus away from indulgence and towards creating meaningful memories.

11. FORGIVE YOURSELF: If you do indulge more than planned, don't be too hard on yourself. Guilt can lead to a cycle of unhealthy eating. Instead, acknowledge it, and refocus on your goals for the next meal.

12. STAY POSITIVE: Maintain a positive mindset throughout the season. Remind yourself of the progress you've made and the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. Visualize how you'll feel when you stick to your goals.

The holiday season is a wonderful time to celebrate with family and friends. While food plays a central role in these celebrations, it's essential to remember that you have the power to make choices that align with your health and diet goals. Focus on the fun, gathering and moments not the food. This holiday season, prioritize your health, and you'll step into the new year feeling energized, refreshed, and proud of your accomplishments!

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