

# Keeping Off Holiday Pounds Is Up To You!



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'Tis the season of food, food, and more food. How will you fare this Holiday season when it comes to maintaining your waist line? You can actually make it through in good shape if you remember this important fact: It's all in your head!

It may seem hard to believe, but it is completely realistic to avoid adding those expected holiday pounds we regretfully accept each year. By practicing the following nutrition and wellness strategies, you will breeze through the holidays without having to revert to wearing your "fat clothes" or killing yourself at the gym.

The first thing to do is to set some goals for yourself. Write them down on a piece of paper and commit to reading them out loud each day. Make sure to approach your goals by saying "I can," rather than, "I can't."



Fat Santa or Skinny  
Santa-Its all up to  
you.

Unfortunately, it is natural for us to focus on the foods we cannot eat. It's not our fault, since most diet and weight-loss programs set this premise. We tell ourselves we can't eat any of our favorite holiday foods, or that we can't have an alcoholic drink. We go to our holiday parties and don't eat certain things because we are worried about the consequences. We consistently deprive ourselves of everything, leading us to hate what we're doing and lose sight of our goals. It's not surprising that diets only last a few days for most of us before we simply cannot take it any more.

When you begin telling yourself you can't do something, you have already set yourself up for failure. You lose sight of your goals and lose the willpower to continue. On the other hand, when you approach your goals with a positive attitude, you are mentally in a place to handle the challenges you will face this holiday season. With that in mind, here are three ideas to help get you into a strong mental space that will get you through the Holidays:

**1. Focus on positive actions only.** Make sure to read your goals OUT LOUD every day. Rather than obsessing over the foods you can't eat, focus on all the positive and healthy

choices you are making. Give yourself credit where credit is due! It's not what you do one time that makes you healthy or not healthy, it's what you do MOST OF THE TIME that matters most. Focus on moving your body. Take every opportunity you can to engage in some sort of exercise. Park your car further away from mall when you do your shopping. Do sit-ups during commercial breaks, stretch while watching television, go for a walk, or perhaps you can find the time to get to the gym. Every time you move your body, write it down. You'll be amazed at how having a focus on positive, healthy behaviors can empower you to keep going.



Plan to skip the  
cake and eat  
healthy this  
holiday  
season...and you  
will!

**2. Make preplanning a priority.** It is important to plan for the unexpected. If you're going to a holiday party, eat a little something before you go, or bring a healthy dish that you will eat – you'll be surprised at how many other people will eat it too! Bring snacks in your purse or in your car so you'll always have a healthy option, regardless of where you are. Remind yourself of your goals prior to going out to eat or going to holiday parties. Remind yourself that these foods will always be available another time. Decide which foods are most important for you to have, and allow yourself to have a

small amount of it. It is also important to schedule time to exercise. During this busy time of year, exercise is often put on the back burner. Make exercise a priority and schedule time EVERY DAY to move your body.

**3. Reward yourself for positive action.** At the end of each day, make sure to take the time to evaluate how you did. Reward yourself for all the positive actions you took. Did you exercise? How were MOST of your food and beverage choices during the day? Did you read your goals? Did you drink water? Did you eat every 3 hours or so? Did you resist temptation or eat less of something you would normally have eaten more? Make sure you DO NOT use food as a reward. Reward yourself with new clothing, a book you've been wanting, a nap, a massage, or getting your hair or nails done.

It's all in your beliefs – what you think about, you bring about! If you tell yourself you won't gain weight this holiday season, you truly won't. Believe in your goals, and most importantly...believe in yourself.

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