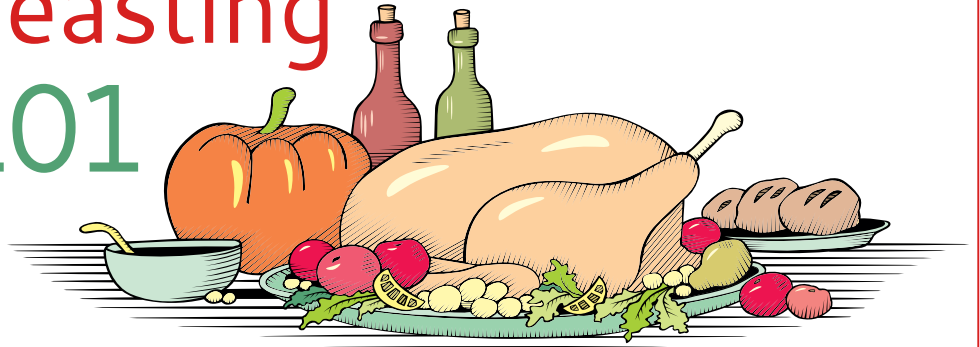


# HEALTHFUL TIPS

HEALTH AND FITNESS TIPS FOR YOUR ENTIRE FAMILY

## Surviving Feasting Season 101



**W**ith the holiday season well on its way this is the time for feasting. We know this time of year is focused on fellowship, celebration, and good times, but food is a big deal. So what triggers do we need to be aware of to avoid overeating and the sluggish, guilty, overstuffed feeling that comes with it?

**First of all, recognize that this can be a very stressful time.** Everyday life is stressful enough without holiday obligations or expectations added on. All that extra work can be overwhelming, creating stress that can lead to overeating.

**Exhaustion.** The demand to make everything perfect or find the right-priced gifts leaves people feeling sluggish and sleep-deprived. And when people are tired, they're more likely to overeat.

**Beware of Emotional Eating:** People use food to soothe sadness, anxiety, dissatisfaction or loss. Others use any celebration as an excuse to overindulge, and the month of December is full of mini holiday celebrations.

**And of course there are food-focused celebrations.** We normally socialize with friends and family using food and drink.

And on special occasions, such as holidays, the availability and quantity of social fare increases the temptation to overindulge. The pressure to give in can be great because we don't want to put a damper on the merrymaking or disappoint loved ones who have worked hard to present good eats.

No holiday season is guiltier of bringing together a disastrous eating program than Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's. So how do we enjoy all the magic and wonder this time of year brings without going nuts with food? Here are just a few tips that you might find helpful as you celebrate.

- Stick to your regular routine with sleep and exercise. Being tired or stressed can often be mistaken for being hungry.
- Eat regularly; don't skip a meal for the "big meal" to come. This will keep your metabolism active rather than allowing it to slow down and store fat.
- Eat slowly. You will enjoy the flavor more, take in fewer calories, and allow the brain to communicate fullness a little bit more clearly.

May peace be your  
gift at Christmas  
and your blessing  
all year through!

Author Unknown

- Eat protein first so that you get the feeling of fullness and help maintain even blood sugar levels. Then go for the vegetables, fruit or a "treat" of your choice.
- Don't stand by the food at the party or even linger in the kitchen. This will only encourage continuous nibbling.
- Eat what you love, but in moderation. Focus on the quality of food, not the quantity before you.

It is important to celebrate sensibly. The holidays are a time to enjoy the company of good friends and, yes, good food. But if you tackle it in a sensible manner by remembering the triggers above and adopting a few tips at your various celebrations it could be an even more enjoyable time of year.

Happy Holidays!

