



TIPS TO AVOID THE HOLIDAY BULGE

As the weather warms up so too can our social calendars, with many opportunities to get together with family, friends and colleagues. These times can be super fun and relaxing but they can often also lead to a little over indulging.

Here are some great tips to minimise the impact of tempting holiday foods.

Start your day strong and healthy. Stretch and move your body and feel connected with yourself and how you want to care for you that day. Take some deep breaths into your body and think about your health priorities, about what's important to you. This will go a long way towards reducing temptation and will help you to choose more of the foods that will support you and less of those foods that will deplete you.

Keep hydrated. This will reduce the temptation to snack between meals and will also reduce sugar cravings, which are often a mask for dehydration. Make sure you are eating because you are hungry and not because you are thirsty, which is actually a common habit.

Set goals before going to a social event. It may be to eat smaller portion sizes, to fill half your plate with vegetables and if there's dessert, to split it with a friend. You could offer to drive someone there to avoid alcohol or you could park around the corner to add in some extra exercise.

Bring a healthy dish with you to share. Impress your friends with your homemade creation and it's likely they will appreciate the healthy option as well.

Remember to slow down when eating. Try to eat slowly and really enjoy the flavours of each mouthful. You'll find you will fill up much quicker while appreciating yourself and your food more. It can take 20 minutes for the brain to register that you are full, so take your time. Pay close attention to what foods you are choosing and know that when you're full, you can just leave the rest. A little trick, when you're eating out, throw your used napkin on your plate when you've stopped eating or if at a friend's place, help to put away plates and leftovers to avoid over eating.

Try a 3-day detox during each week to get connected to your body and to reduce the urge to over-indulge on the weekend. This may mean avoiding coffee and sugar, eating more fresh salads and whole foods. It could also mean cutting out processed foods, drinking more water and increasing your exercise.

Stay active. In this gorgeous sunny weather, try to plan more time for walking or cycling or playing more with your kids. This will increase your metabolism and regulate your appetite.

Try not to give yourself a hard time if you over-indulge one day, the guilt will only increase your stress hormone cortisol, further contributing to an unbalanced blood sugar level and sugar cravings. If you do choose to indulge in a holiday treat, enjoy the moment fully, after all moderation is the key.

Enjoy your week in the kitchen,

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