

HEALTHY HOLIDAYS

KEEP YOUR NUTRITION ON TRACK



A big part of the Thanksgiving and Christmas tradition, especially here in Puerto Rico, is the food. There is no festivity without the typical holiday menu of pork, “arroz con gandules”, pasteles, Flan and Tembleque.

This can pose a challenge to our eating habits, and we often tend to give up on healthy eating altogether, telling ourselves that we will get back on track after the holiday season.



However, there might be another way, if you are willing to let go of perfection and adjust your nutritional plan to create some balance, while allowing yourself to enjoy your most favorite holiday foods.

Following are some tips for you to stay on track with your nutrition during the holidays:

PLANNING IS THE KEY

There's nothing wrong with enjoying an indulgent, festive dinner, just make sure that your meals surrounding it are healthy and nutrient-dense.

Choose a light lunch before the big dinner, like salad with chicken and a light vinaigrette and enjoy a healthy breakfast the next morning like avocado on whole wheat toast or some fruit with yogurt. By eating healthy during the holiday season, you can afford to go all out for a few big events.

SLOW DOWN AND EAT MINDFULLY.

While a plate full of delicious food might make us eager to eat, a key tip to staying healthy over the holidays is to slow down during mealtime. Multiple studies have shown that eating slowly can give our stomachs enough time to send the hormonal signal to our brain telling us that we're full, which will stop us from accidentally overeating.

When you're eating, sit back and allow yourself to truly enjoy your favorite holiday flavors. Pay attention to the taste, aroma and texture of the foods.

CHOOSE HEALTHIER SUBSTITUTES.

With a few simple diet tweaks, you can indulge in your favorite holiday foods without packing serious pounds. When you are in charge of the meal preparation, experiment with different options. For example, replace sour cream with greek yogurt, use whole grain rice instead of white rice and try out natural sugar substitutes, like stevia or monkfruit.

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MAINTAIN ACTIVE DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON



Just like with your nutrition regimen, if you aim for perfection following your workout plan during the holiday season, there is a great chance you'll get stressed out and frustrated and end up not doing anything at all.

During the holiday season make your goal to stay active in any way you can. If you can't fit in your usual 1-hour visit at the gym, think of other ways you can enjoy some physical activity.

Following are some tips to help you stay active during the holiday season:

ONCE AGAIN: PLANNING IS THE KEY

The holidays can get very busy. In order to stay active, plan your workouts around your holiday schedule. If there is no time for the usual 30-minute workout, split your physical activity into smaller, more manageable time intervals: For example, do a 15-minute routine in the morning and evening or go for a 10-minute walk twice daily.

SET UP A HOLIDAY STEP CHALLENGE WITH YOUR FAMILY OR WORK COLLEAGUES

Sometimes a little competition is all it takes to keep us motivated to move. Most of us have smart phones and tracking devices that count the steps you take during the day. You can challenge family members or friends to a steps challenge. Set a fun prize for the winner and let the games begin!

ADD “NON-EXERCISE” PHYSICAL ACTIVITY TO YOUR DAILY ROUTINE

Staying physically active doesn't always have to mean that you hit the gym or even put your workout clothes on. Try to incorporate some of the following activities to your daily routine:

- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Select a parking space further away for the buildings entrance.
- Walk to places close by instead of taking the car.
- Take 5 minutes every hour to stand up and walk around.



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SELF-CARE DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON



The holidays are full of exciting events and lovely get-togethers, and while this can be a great thing, it can also be stressful.

And while self-care is always important, it's even more essential during this time of the year.

So, remember to take some time for yourself!

5 RULES ABOUT SELF CARE

1. It should not add stress to your life

While it is important to make time for self-care, it shouldn't turn into a chore that ultimately adds more stress to your life. You can take simple actions, like enjoying a cup of tea or coffee without any distractions.

2. It does not have to cost a lot of money

Self-care is not about buying expensive things. It's about finding moments and activities that bring you joy and recharge your batteries.

3. It should be realistic for you

We all enjoy different things. Some of us need solitude to relax and recharge, others enjoy the company of a good friend. Some of us enjoy a walk in nature, others love to sit in the middle of the city and watch the hustle and bustle.

4. It is not selfish

Practicing regular self-care will make you a better person for everybody around you. Self-care is necessary, not selfish.

5. It takes time to find what works for you

Experiment! Try different things! Maybe it's playing golf, reading a book, getting a facial or playing with your kids. Maybe what really charges your batteries is working on your car or going to see a baseball game.

Find what makes you happy.

