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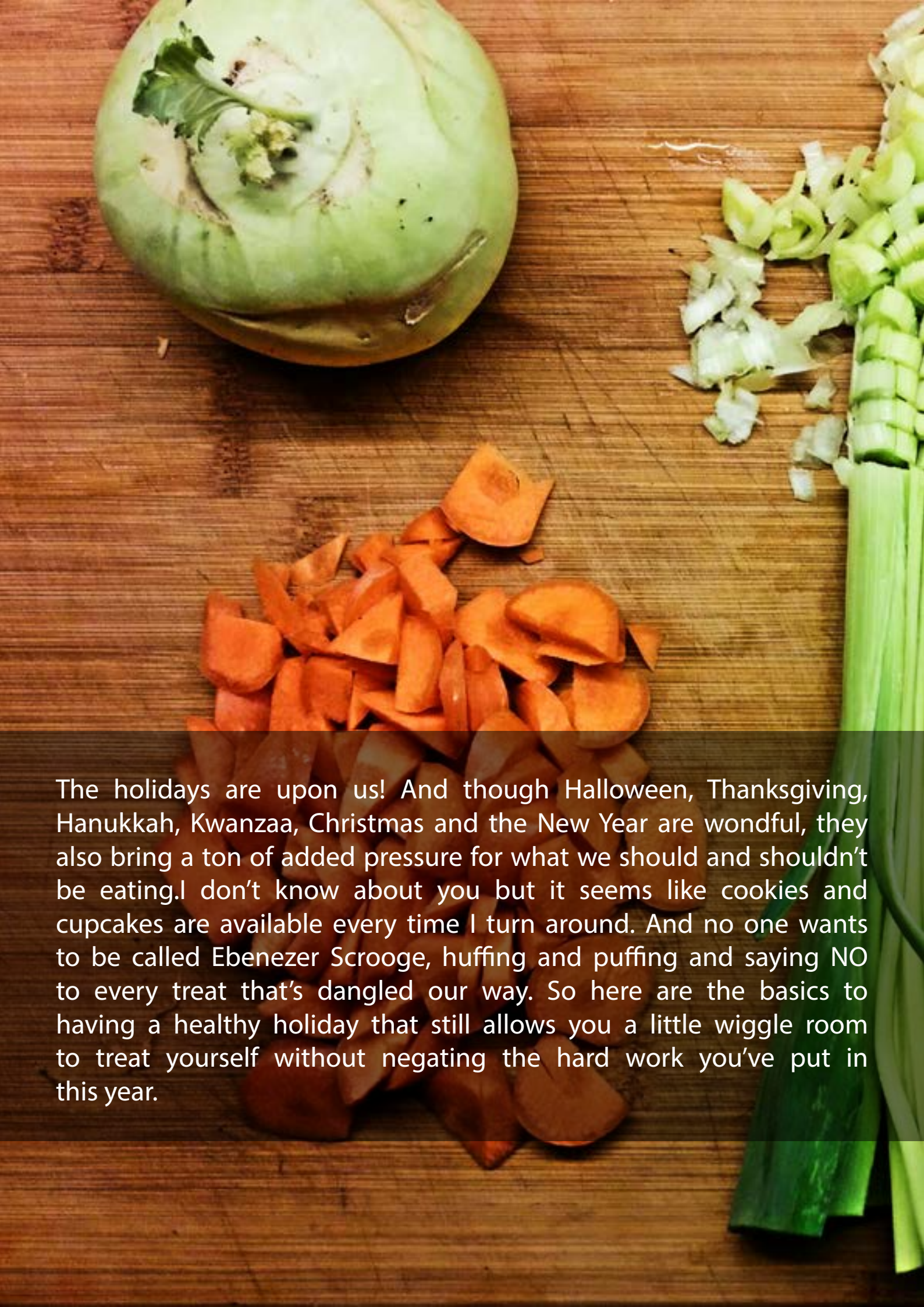
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HAVE YOURSELF A **HEALTHY HOLIDAY**

Tips and tricks for choosing your seasonal fare



A top-down view of a wooden cutting board. In the upper left is a whole green kohlrabi with its stem. In the center is a pile of sliced orange carrots. On the right is a pile of sliced green onions. A semi-transparent text box is overlaid on the bottom half of the image.

The holidays are upon us! And though Halloween, Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Christmas and the New Year are wonderful, they also bring a ton of added pressure for what we should and shouldn't be eating. I don't know about you but it seems like cookies and cupcakes are available every time I turn around. And no one wants to be called Ebenezer Scrooge, huffing and puffing and saying NO to every treat that's dangled our way. So here are the basics to having a healthy holiday that still allows you a little wiggle room to treat yourself without negating the hard work you've put in this year.



HOLIDAY PRESSURES

You may have heard that you gain about 5 to 7 pounds over the holidays on average. This isn't exactly true. The National Institute of Health studied the time period between Thanksgiving and the New Year and found that people on average only gained between one and two pounds over the holiday season. The bad part though? Adults weren't losing the pound they gained meaning they accumulated a lot of extra pounds over the course of a few holiday seasons. So how can you make sure you dodge the buffet table and still feel like you've treated yourself? With a lot of planning ahead and some smart tips and tricks, you'll be able to navigate going healthy this holiday season. You might even lose a pound or two.

You gain about a pound
each holiday season

Most adults aren't losing that
pound and it's accumulating
over time

Learn tips and tricks for
navigating the holiday
season



Drinking beverages with hidden calories can be the fastest way to pack-on pounds without even knowing you're doing it. Egg Nog can have double the calories of milk, and hot chocolate can add up to an extra meal with 230 calories and 12 grams of fat. When you're out shopping for the holidays, you can't ignore the calories you get from that Starbucks Venti or that coffee and roll from the Cinnabon. To make holiday beverages healthier, try using skim milk instead and getting skinny lattes. Alcoholic beverages are plentiful during the holiday season but they can be full of added sugar. Too much sugar in the diet has been linked to obesity, heart disease and diabetes. Instead of the usual mix and pour packages, try to use club soda in your mixed alcoholic beverages. If you're pregnant, try creating a mommy mocktail by using frozen fruit mixed with sparkling grape juice, so you'll still feel festive but you'll still be drinking for two.

Add fruit to your cold beverages and your water to give it a nice, zesty flavor

Go natural and use vanilla, almond and peppermint to flavor your coffee, cappuccinos and hot chocolate.

Heavy cream and whole milk can have a lot of calories. Instead try using fruit to flavor your cold beverages and vanilla, almond and peppermint to naturally flavor your coffee, cappuccinos and hot chocolate.

THE BUFFET TABLE

If you're trying to stay healthy, the plethora of buffet choices that you're about to be tempted with is overwhelming. It starts with Halloween and goes all the way to New Years. Everyone likes a good pumpkin roll and what about grandma's signature toffee candy? Well, you don't have to give up these delicious treats all together, you just need to be able to plan ahead so that you make healthy choices while you're there. Here's what to do. When you're approached about bringing something for the party, volunteer for something healthy, that way you'll know they'll be something yummy you can eat. On the day of the party, plan ahead by packing nutritious meals for breakfast and lunch that will fill you up but that aren't high in calories. Right before the party, snack on almonds or other nuts until you feel satisfied. That way you won't gorge yourself when you hit the buffet table. When you first arrive, try to spend a little time introducing yourself and mingling before heading straight to the buffet. Try to take the focus off of the food and put the emphasis in your brain on social interaction.





At your family parties, try bringing along a fun craft idea to make with the kids at the party or volunteer to wrap Auntie Mae's presents before everyone gets there. That way, you have a purpose to be there that doesn't involve eating. When it is time to try the buffet, make a note of the healthy versus non-healthy food and make a plan. You want to load your plate with the healthiest items first and then leave a little room for something delicious (It is the holiday, after all!). When your plate is full, you'll want to sit down and really spend time savoring the food. Make each bite count. Don't eat so fast that you don't give yourself a chance to appreciate the flavors. When you're finished remove yourself far away from the food. Being right near the table encourages snacking which can add calories fast. A lot of attention is placed on the snacks and treats of the holiday season. By skipping those and just enjoying your big holiday meal, you're getting more nutrition than you expect. Your Thanksgiving meal is actually packed with a ton of benefits. Turkey is packed full of amino acids and protein. If you ditch the skin, it's actually low in calories. And turkey also contains tryptophan, which can help your body lull off to sleep quicker. Side items like sweet potatoes, green beans and cranberries also sport benefits like vitamins and antioxidants, all of which are great for your body. Let's take a closer look at the benefits.



TURKEY

contains amino acids, protein and tryptophan



WHOLE-WHEAT ROLLS

contain fiber



CRANBERRIES

contain antioxidants and vitamin C



SWEET POTATOES

contain Potassium, B-Vitamins and carotene



GREEN BEANS

contain protein, vitamin K and iron



STUFFING

contains anti-inflammatory properties that help stabilize your blood sugar



PUMPKING PIE

contains Vitamin A which aids in eyesight development and function

MEAL TIME BENEFITS:
Thanksgiving



GLAZED HAM

contains protein and iron



GOAT-CHEESE SALAD

contains sodium, vitamins, minerals, calcium and protein



BRUSSEL SPROUTS

contain Vitamin C, folate and fiber



BUTTERNUT SQUASH

contains Vitamin B6 and Potassium

MEAL TIME BENEFITS:
Christmas Dinner



BREAD PUDDING

contains Lutein if made with eggs, antioxidants from added fruit and benefits from various spices



POTATOES AU GRATIN

contains vitamin C and more potassium than a banana!



BRISKET

packed with protein and healthy fats



LATKES SWEET POTATOES

contain Potassium, B Vitamins and Carotene



NOODLE KUGEL

contains Magnesium and Riboflavin, which aids in energy production



CHALLAH FRENCH TOAST

contains a ton of fiber

MEAL TIME BENEFITS: Hannukah

The Festival of Lights is known for its yummy, fragrant foods but some of them are actually great for your health.



So when you're browsing the buffet table, how will you know what foods to actually eat? It's easier than you might think and most of your staple holiday meals are quite packed with nutritional benefits and filling calories. The trouble comes when extras like sauces, gravy and sugars are added to your meal. To prepare these items in a healthier way, skim the fat off the top of the gravy and discard. Cook your meats in low fat broth and switch out any ingredients you can with actual vegetables instead of vegetable soups. At the buffet table, you'll want to look for fruits and vegetables, protein and good carbs, like whole wheat rolls. If you want to up the ante, you may want to try going green or organic for your meal. Try making a deal ahead of time with a farm near your home to supply you with a turkey or meat straight from the farm. There are also organic options available at your local grocery store.



GOING ORGANIC FOR THE HOLIDAYS

- Choosing to eat organic limits your exposure to toxins
- The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) only certifies products that are made of agricultural ingredients
- Organic and Natural are not the same thing
- Try shopping at a Farmer's Market or enter a farm co-op relationship

THE DIRTY DOZEN

- The Dirty Dozen is a group of 12 fruits and vegetables that when tested contained the most number of pesticides.
- Fruits and veggies in the ground soak up additional pesticides
- Some have porous skin that doesn't protect from the pesticides
- Others are sprayed heavily with pesticides so they'll grow into harvest
- 47 percent of these fruits and veggies had at least 17 detectable pesticides on them

THE DIRTY DOZEN



Peaches



Apples



SweetBellPeppers



Celery



Nectarines



Strawberries



Cherries



Pears



ImportedGrapes



Spinach



Lettuce



Potatoes

THE CLEAN 15



FrozenSweetCorn



Avocado



Kiwi Fruit



Cabbage



Broccoli



Pineapples



Mango



Onions



Paypaya



FrozenSweetPeas



Asparagus



Bananas

LOOK FOR HEALTHY DISHES

- Most holiday meats and side dishes have nutritional value
- Extra sauces, gravy and sugars can up your calorie count
- Look for fruits and vegetables, proteins and good carbs on the buffet
- Go organic for a totally sustainable holiday table

SEASONAL FOODS TO AVOID

- If it looks buttery, it probably is
- Choose fruit over creamy treats
- Don't deprive yourself of a treat
- Portion control is key
- Change the way you bake

HOLIDAY EXERCISE PLAN

- Try sledding
- Go ice skating or skiing
- Shovel snow or build a snowman
- Hit the gym
- Exercise helps battle those extra calories

If you want to stay healthy this holiday season, there are a lot of items you need to limit or avoid altogether. If a casserole looks buttery and delicious, it probably is. Try to look for fruity options with less cream and sugar. You should allow yourself the opportunity to try a sweet treat over the holidays, just make sure you don't go crazy. Sit down and savor your piece of pie. The key is portion control so you may want to share half of your dessert with your partner. While baking, use skim milk instead of whole milk and think about using low calorie sugar in some of your treats. You can also use egg whites in your baking to cut back on some of the fat. The American Heart Association also encourages you to watch your salt intake, especially if you have high blood pressure. Think about who you're cooking for and balance accordingly.

The winter time is the best time for trying some fun activities that feel a lot more like fun and a lot less like what they really are---exercising! Try going sledding, ice skating or skiing to have a blast and burn off extra calories. You may also want to shovel snow, which burns a lot of calories, or build a snowman. If it's too cold to be outside, try signing up for a gym and walking a few times a week. Exercise helps burn calories and keeps you healthy overall. Then you won't feel so bad about trying your aunt's apple pie.

CONCLUSION: HAVE A HEALTHY HOLIDAY

Staying healthy over the holiday season is all about choosing the right activities and foods to try

Making these choices now can lead to a lifetime of health benefits

Have a healthy and happy holiday season!



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