

Don't let holidays jinx fitness plans

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Does the threat of Halloween and later holiday weight gain have you shrieking already?

There are a few ways to be sure the holiday season does not throw you completely off track of your fitness and weight-loss goals.

It seems that candy grows on trees or desks or any flat surface during the holiday season. Many times, you find yourself facing a bowl full of holiday-appropriate mini candy bars or Hershey kisses in the workplace.

While candy in small doses is not evil, an entire bowl disappearing by the end of the work-

day is a problem. One sure way to combat this issue is to not put a candy dish on your desk. If the dish is sitting close at hand, you are more likely to mindlessly eat from it.

Place the candy in a central office location such as a break room or the front counter where both employees and customers can benefit. If someone gives you a gift of candy, share.

Do you have one person in the office that loves to bring in baked goods during the season? If possible, ask them to tone down how much they bring in, or perhaps they only bring in baked goods on one certain day of the week.

If this does not work, then place the goods in a central location where everyone can benefit;

it also becomes more work for you to go and get a piece. If the cake is in the middle of everyone's viewpoint, you are also less likely to go for additional helpings.

And, be sure at the end of the day to dispose of the extras. If you are the one who feels that you must bake or the holiday season is not complete without extra goodies, try new recipes for lower-calorie items or give what you bake to others.

Wrap the cookies up for a neighbor or good friend, and then you can bake without the temptation of eating.

Holiday parties are a fun tradition for everyone; most people are invited to several. This does not mean you have to eat the entire buffet provided.

Before going, eat a reasonable meal at home. This way, you can still try the special foods, but do not feel like you need to sample everything. Also, set yourself to be the designated driver, as many calories are wasted on alcoholic drinks.

If you are hosting a party, offer some healthier fare next to the traditional holiday foods. Put out a veggie tray, offer water as a beverage, and purchase smaller plates. People tend to eat less with a smaller plate as they simply fill up available space on the plate they are using.

Most importantly, don't let your exercise be sacrificed by the holiday travel season. Use the time visiting with family to take walks together or play a rousing

game of basketball.

Check out the local gym and see if there are reciprocal programs through your fitness center in other locations.

Even if you miss your scheduled Zumba class at home due to travel, this doesn't mean you have to forgo a full workout. For example, many YMCAs allow members from out of town to work out for free while visiting. And, if necessary, schedule time with a personal trainer for a session before travel; the advanced planning may pay off for your fitness goals.

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