

Holidays Put On Pounds

Question: Every year I gain seven pounds over the Holidays. How can I avoid this?

A good way to keep your weight under control is to keep a food and exercise journal.

Weight management is simply burn as many calories as you take in. Or burn excess calories to lose weight. However, this statement may not be true for those with a thyroid condition.

Weight-loss researchers have found that people often fail because they lose track of what they are eating. It is too easy to have a little snack here or there and easily add a few hundred calories per day. This results in weight gain.

One study monitored a group of obese patients closely. This group was eating an average of 47% more calories than it claimed. They were also exercising 51% less than they thought.

Another study from Northwestern University looked at eating habits over the holidays. On average, people gained 500% more in holiday weeks than in other weeks. It's no wonder when you think about all the parties, snacks and drinks you consume during this time.

A simple, yet effective technique is to keep a food diary. This means writing down everything you eat during the day. Even though this is quite tedious, it works.

A New York study showed that the more days a person records the food he or she eats, the greater the weight loss. These dieters lost weight during the holidays, simply by recording intake.

The National Weight Control Registry is a registry of successful dieters that have lost 30 pounds or more and kept it off for at least one year. They found successful dieters frequently keep track of what they eat as well as how much they weigh.

Other studies have shown that long-term weight management requires regular exercise. Several years ago, I lost 30 pounds through dieting and exercise. Although I have gained 10 pounds back, I have maintained my weight simply by running 3 times/week.

Bowling Green State University researchers showed keeping track of your exercise increases your weight-loss success. You will learn how hard it is to work off calories when you keep track.

It takes about 100 calories to walk or run one mile. If you get on the treadmill, it may take you up to one hour to burn off 400-500 calories. You will think twice about eating that piece of cake when you know how much work it takes to burn it up.

In summary, keep track of three things – your weight, your food intake and your exercise. In this way, you will manage to avoid those seven pounds. Happy Holidays!

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