

How to not bring home extra *(body)* baggage from your December holiday



Are you asking yourself 'How can I avoid Christmas weight gain? If so you are not alone.

Anyone who is conscious of their weight cannot avoid viewing Christmas with some anxiety. Traditionally, Christmas is a time of indulgence, so how can you enjoy yourself AND avoid weight gain, which undo all your good work from the rest of the year?


NutriFundi

"Let your Lifestyle be your Legacy..."

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1. Don't skip breakfast, (or any meal for that matter):

It is very easy to skip breakfast when we are on holiday, because we are not in our normal routine anymore and our sleep patterns are definitely not the same. Do not skip breakfast, as this is the only way that you can “wake-up” your metabolism. It is also very important to not skip any other meals in order to “bank” some calories for later, unfortunately our bodies don't work like that. Continue to eat small, frequent meals even if you are away for the holidays.

2. Try to stick to your portions:

Stay away from “portion distortion”. You don't need to add an extra to your meal at the restaurant, you don't need to order a starter, main and dessert and you don't need to fill your whole plate with food when eating with family and friends.

3. Stay active:

Do some fun activities with your friends and family such as hiking. Try and exercise in the mornings, before your day gets too busy and before you can think of excuses. Rather walk to the restaurant, beach or shop than taking the car.

Remember: Half a workout is still much better than no workout!

4. Stay away from the empty calories:

Empty calories are sugar and alcohol. Try to not consume too much extra sugar and alcohol.

5. Read your labels and make healthy decisions:

We all are going to eat ice-cream over the festive period and we are all going to buy snacks and foods that we don't normally eat. Always read your food labels. If you are going to have an ice-cream, rather have the water-based option than the milk-based option. Read your labels and look out for foods that are high in carbohydrates (sugar) and fats. Always compare the labels of different foods to make sure that you are opting for the best option.

6. Take your weight (not every day, but regularly):

Try not to become obsessive about your weight, but still step on the scale once or twice a week, just to make sure that you are still on the right track.



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7. Don't drink your calories:

This is very difficult, especially during the festive season.

- Try and opt for cold drinks that don't have sugar in (for instance coke zero etc.).
- Do not add sugar to your coffee and tea
- Do not drink sachet cappuccinos (rather save them for a special occasion)
- Alternate your alcoholic beverages with a glass of water
- Dilute your alcoholic drink, by adding more non-sugar containing cold drink or water
- Do not drink fruit juice, rather make your own fruit-infused water

8. Check out the options first:

Do a walkabout around the table if you are eating with friends and family so that you don't dish up food that you don't like that much.

9. One good meal vs One bad meal:

Always remember that one healthy meal doesn't make you healthy and one unhealthy meal doesn't make you unhealthy.

10. Know when you have been bad:

Know when you are going to eat too much, and then make sure that you don't consume any liquid calories with that meal.

11. Support team:

Have a support team – tell at least one person that you are trying to not gain weight over the festive season and ask them to help you.

12. Increase your protein; decrease your carbs:

Try to rather eat more protein than increasing your carbohydrate portions. Protein keeps us fuller for longer and often they have less fat and sugar added to them as carbohydrates.

13. Veggies should dominate that plate:

Never ever skip your veggies... make sure that you fill up your plate with at least 50% of veggies. Choose the veggies that doesn't have cream, sugar etc added to it.

14. Hydrate, Hydrate, Hydrate and Hydrate:

Make sure that you drink enough water during the festive periods. In South-Africa, December is one of our hottest months which could lead to dehydration. Many times our bodies get confused between hunger and thirst.



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15. Leave the bad-things for later:

Always eat the healthy food on the table and on your plate first, leave the energy-dense foods for last.

16. Pick protein:

If you have to snack on something – pick protein!

17. Eat and chew slowly:

Enjoy all the food over the festive season, enjoy the flavours and the tastes! Do not eat while you are watching TV, rather savour each bite and chew slowly.

18. Fill up on fiber:

Eat foods that are higher in fiber such as brown rice instead of white rice, fruits and veggies. Fiber helps us to stay fuller for longer.

19. Use smaller plates:

Use smaller plates when dishing up. Remember we eat with our eyes!

20. Try not to go for seconds:

Try not to go for a second round of food – although this is VERY difficult, usually we aren't hungry anymore. Listen to your body!





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