

## HOLIDAY SURVIVAL GUIDE: HOW to AVOID a BELLY FULL of REGRET

1. Stick to your Healthy Routines and Eat Frequently – It's counter-intuitive but yes, don't skip meals to save up for the big one. You can't save up to later load up. It doesn't work that way. Stay in a routine when possible with meals, sleep & workouts. Let go of "all or nothing" thinking. Getting off track occasionally doesn't mean the whole season is bust!
2. Eat Slowly to 80% Full – You are not on a desert island face-to-face with your last meal! There will be plenty of other times to eat your favorite foods. The first bite is the best bite. So take small portions or tastings of decadent foods. You'll enjoy them in smaller portions this year. I use a 15-minute-delay technique in restaurants and social situations where you wait before consuming foods like chips in Mexican restaurants or treats. Mindfulness!
3. Seek out Protein + Vegetables – try to always eat protein and vegetables no matter what else you are having. Pairing these two items with other treats will minimize the blood sugar highs & lows and keep you more in control with less chance of overdoing it. Adopt a detective mindset and search out the high protein items with the high-bulk vegetables to fill you up, reduce inflammation, get your vitamins/minerals and give your gut the daily doses of necessary fiber.
4. Increase your Workout Intensity and Frequency – being active will help your body use the sugars and starches found in holiday treats rather than store them as fat. Make sure you "earn" your treat by working out BEFORE you indulge. An intense session of cardio and resistance intervals creates a post workout window of time for one treat.
5. Hydrate with Zero Calorie Beverages – Water and other zero calorie natural beverages like water, coffee and tea are encouraged. You can easily consume 1000's of calories in many of the holiday drinks on top of the meal. At gatherings, begin with a sparkling water before you consume alcohol or another high calorie beverage. Alternating water between cocktails not only saves you calories but will help you stay in control throughout the event.
6. Focus on the Social Aspects of the Event – Prioritize socializing and meeting others to help you slow down on consumption. You can tell yourself that you're going to meet a certain number of new people or have a meaningful conversation with a relative before returning to get food.
7. Keep a Lean Mean Kitchen/Home – If a food is in your house either you or someone you love will consume it (Berardi's Law). This goes for good foods as well as not so healthy foods. Make it easy on yourself and those you love by throwing out or giving away treats that find their way into your house. Mindless snacking on high calorie/unhealthy food saps your energy, increases inflammation, disrupts sleep and leads to a belly full of regret!
8. Follow the Portion Sizes— Using your hand for portion measurements is genius because your hand goes with you everywhere....the buffet, the restaurant and at home. Proteins are palm size, vegetables/fruits are fist size (have plenty), starchy carbs are cupped palm and fats are a thumb size.
9. Try Recipe Makeovers—The advent of the internet has given us an abundance of alternative healthy versions of our favorite traditional foods. Ask yourself, "how can I make this a little bit better....a little healthier?" Use less sugar and substitute real food instead of canned or processed ingredients. Know that your appetite lines up closer to your needs when you eat whole foods and remove the processed and chemical additives from your diet.

*Contact me for a nutrition coaching appointment now if you need more help or accountability. Putting your health on hold now leads to a fitness frenzy in January and makes it much harder. Break that pattern and learn the mental skills and habits to make long term lifestyle improvements during the holidays that carry on through the year. You can absolutely enjoy your indulgences with smart choices and strategies! And it can be done without sacrificing fun or your health.*

*Register now for 12-Month Online Coaching that starts week of January 9. Get on the list now to join the group for an amazing journey that is private, personally customized for your needs and creates sustainable habits for life. No appointments necessary. Program contains practical and mindset habits to master, lessons, habit and progress tracking as well as coaching guidance along the way. All you need is the internet and be "ready, willing and able" to focus on your body and mind transformation. This program has worked for 45,000 clients and for myself personally as well! If you have dieted all your life, then this program is perfect for you. Have questions about how this program might work for you? Please contact me and we'll talk! I really look forward to speaking with you!*

**Happy & Healthy Holidays!** Pam Owens, Fitness Director, [powers@royaloaksc.com](mailto:powers@royaloaksc.com)