



"Primary Care Naturally"

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Staying Trim While You Trim the Turkey

By Dr. Michelle Torrance, ND, LAc

Holidays, and the celebratory eating that goes with them, can be difficult to navigate, especially if you are trying to lose weight.

What to do?

You have three options when you are on a plan to handle a holiday feast successfully, and here they are:

1. Stay on Plan

Tough as this is, it is the most efficient way to maintain your weight-loss momentum. Now this doesn't mean that you can't have the yummy foods commonly associated with your holiday meal, but it does mean that you will have to modify where you can, prepare or bring your own foods to eat along with your family and friends, and possibly just say "no" to dessert.

2. Modify

This is the hardest way to manage a holiday dinner, but it can also be the most satisfying. Although you will be going off plan, you are moderating the damage done. What do I mean?

Stick to plan as best as possible, but with allowances for this one day. For example, instead of your lean chicken breast or cut of pork, you go ahead and have a modest portion of the ham. Another example: eat a devilled egg, but get most of the filling out (or better yet, make them yourself without all the mayo, etc.), leaving just a taste of it. The egg white portion, of course, is good to go.

3. Enjoy the Meal & Get Back on Track

Really, I mean it. Eat as you normally do around the holiday table, and tomorrow, jump back on that weight-loss train with 100% effort! Here is where folks can go wrong: don't eat the leftovers, don't snack on the carrots tomorrow, and don't nibble on the cake/jello/biscuits/etc. Leave them alone. If you are hosting dinner, great! Send the guests home with goody bags!

Will this holiday eating affect your weight loss for the week? Yes, of course it will. However, it is a good lesson in weight maintenance. Remember, maintaining your weight after you lose it is more important than losing it in the first place. This principle of weight maintenance is that you should "eat clean" 80% of the time, so that you can have the flexibility to absorb higher calorie days like holiday celebrations the other 20%!