

## Holiday Health

Here's how to make your holiday season eating and drinking healthy...

Fill up on fibre!

If you think the holiday season and healthy eating don't go together, think again. Just because you're surrounded delicious mouth watering tasty treats at every turn doesn't mean you have to sacrifice your waistline for a little indulgence. In fact, simply filling up on fibre before you head to the next party can go a long way toward getting through the next month or so with your dress size intact.

The secret of high-fibre foods is their ability to act as natural appetite suppressants. Research has shown that fibre stimulates the release of cholecystokinin (CCK), a powerful anti-hunger hormone that sends a message to your brain that you are full. And because fibre works in the body to promote and prolong the elevation of CCK in the blood, you're able to feel full longer after each meal.

Foods that are high in fibre also have a very low energy density (the number of calories in a particular volume of food), so eating them allows you to eat a larger amount of food without consuming a lot of calories. The result? High-fibre meals help keep cravings to a minimum by creating volume in your stomach, and that means less munching on unhealthy snacks and sweets.

Finally, fibre-rich foods promote healthy blood sugar levels by slowing down the time it takes food to leave the stomach and delaying the absorption of glucose (blood sugar) from a meal. Because your food is digested more slowly, it is converted to glucose at a gradual pace. This ensures a steady supply of energy for the body and reduces the spikes in blood sugar that lead to adverse cravings.

So What Should I Eat?

Raw fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts and seeds are all excellent sources of fibre, and they're perfect for a quick fibre fix before leaving the house. There are also some great natural fibre supplements if you wish to add more fibre this way.

If you aren't used to eating a lot of fibre, start slowly and gradually begin to add more fibre to your diet. I recommend eating at least 35 grams every day for weight management and overall health, so try to make that your goal. So now when the next party invitation arrives, you can RSVP with confidence knowing you've got fibre on your side to help you beat the holiday bulge!

In addition to eating plenty of healthful, high-fibre foods, the following tips can help you manage your hunger and avoid gorging on goodies during the holiday season.

- Eat Frequently. It may sound crazy, but eating several small meals every 2 to 3 hours throughout the day is the trick to keeping your cravings under control. That's because frequent eating helps boost your metabolic rate and keeps your body's calorie-burning process constantly fuelled.

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- Say Yes to Water. The more water you drink, the more your metabolism increases, and the faster your body will burn calories. Alcohol, on the other hand, causes the dramatic spikes in your blood sugar that can trigger unhealthy cravings.
  - Get Active. 'Tis the season for temptation, so sticking to a regular exercise routine is more important than ever to help you maintain your healthy lifestyle. Take a half hour walk, run, swim or bike ride every day, and add to that at least one hour of whatever other physical exercise you enjoy 3-4 days per week.
  - Don't Deprive Yourself. Simply because you made a commitment to healthy eating doesn't mean you can't indulge in a little sweet treat or a glass of wine every now and then. Just remember to use moderation!

Have an absolutely wonderful Christmas season filled with joy, love, and fabulous food!

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