

Enjoy the Holidays AND Manage Diabetes

Diabetes management around the holidays can be particularly daunting, especially with a myriad of food temptations everywhere. Remember, *you* have control over *your* choices; all it takes is planning. Take things one day, one event, and one meal at a time. Arm yourself with strategies to stay healthy when the holiday season arrives. Not sure where to start? Check out our holiday strategic planning tips below...

Holiday Strategic Planning Tips

- **Space your carbohydrate consumption out throughout the day.** Choose which carbohydrates to eat at a given time. For example, do not have a heaping mound of mashed potatoes with cornbread stuffing and a buttered roll. This will send your blood sugar soaring in no time. Instead, have a small portion of the mashed potatoes, turkey breast, and vegetables. Omit the stuffing and roll or enjoy them later in the day.
- **Plan ahead for a party.** Do not go to an event hungry. Eat a small, light meal beforehand to ensure that you do not go too long without eating. Eat every 3-4 hours, even at holiday times. Remember to balance meals and snacks with protein, complex carbohydrates, vegetables, and fruit. Bring a healthful entrée to the event to guarantee that some healthful food is there.
- **Be smart at buffets.** Buffets can spell portion disaster. Handle this one like a pro – do not dive into the food without first looking at what is offered. Take a smaller plate, and fill it up with fresh vegetables, lean protein, and some complex carbohydrates. Do not go back for seconds. Split dessert with a few friends.

- **Stick to MyPlate.** MyPlate has lots of tips about proper portions and proportions. Remember to fill half your plate with fruits and veggies at each meal and choose whole grains over refined ones. Portion control is important too!
- **Consider your alcohol consumption.** Festive atmospheres often include alcohol. Talk with your healthcare provider about how much alcohol you should consume. Insulin and some diabetes medications do not interact well with alcohol. Never have more than one or two drinks. A serving of alcohol equals 1 and 1/2 ounces of distilled liquor, 12 ounces of beer, or 4 ounces of wine.
- **Keep up your exercise routine.** Physical activity is key to managing blood sugar levels, keeping excess weight off, and enabling you to stay on track around the holidays. Sixty minutes most days of the week -- whether walking, jogging, biking, swimming, or even dancing -- is all you need to do, and it doesn't have to be continuous. Plan a time to get your workout in and stick to it, or set aside little 10-minute intervals for a few quick reps here or there throughout the day.

Keep Meals Consistent

- **Eat a small meal or snack every 3-4 hours, even when you're feeling rushed.**
- **Remember to balance your plate with lean protein, nonfat dairy, whole grains, vegetables, and fruit.**

