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The Health Advisor

By Ruchi Mathur

Have a Happy *and Healthy* Holiday Season This Year

Fall marks the joyous beginning of the holiday season – a time to celebrate with family and friends over food. But often times we do it with too much food! Overeating is an American tradition right next to turkey and pumpkin pie, but not all traditions are healthy ones. The average American gains weight during the holiday season and we often never lose this weight.

Over time, holiday weight gain can contribute to overweight and obesity, which will put many of us at risk for diabetes and heart disease. November is not only the month during which we mark Thanksgiving, but it is also *National Diabetes month* - a great reason to celebrate the many ways we can improve our health!

Here are some small things we can do this Thanksgiving season to keep from packing on those extra pounds:

- **Eat a healthy breakfast and lunch.** Don't "save your calories" for the thanksgiving feast. This will slow you down during the day and then cause you to overeat at dinner time.
- **Don't pick at food** while you are cooking or hanging around the kitchen.
- **Include plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables** on your holiday menu.
- **Avoid mindless munching.** If you are a big snacker, stay away from the bowls of chips and popcorn.
- **Some is good, more is not!** Plan ahead to consciously watch your portion sizes. Try a little bit of everything you like and then keep your self from going back for seconds and thirds! Enjoy the delicious meal, without letting it get out of control.
- **Switch from regular to diet soda,** or better yet, drink water or seltzer water!
- **Walk off the calories.** Instead of plopping down in front of the television after your meal, take the entire family out for a walk. This will be a great way to spend time with your family while keeping everyone healthy!

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