



MAINTAIN DON'T GAINSM



'TIS THE SEASON TO LIGHTEN UP



GETTING STARTED

Tis that special time of year once again...the holiday season. We feast at Thanksgiving and share the pleasures of Hanukkah, Christmas or Kwanzaa. We fill our weekends with football parties and joyous celebrations with friends and family. We enjoy a wide array of fabulous foods and drinks that we may only get once a year. But unfortunately, many of us also find the season filled with stress, overindulgence and anxiety.

As a participant in 'Tis the Season to Lighten Up, you will receive eight weekly newsletters that contain:

1. Specific information to help you eat well
2. Great tasting good-for-you recipes for holidays and special occasions
3. Actionable suggestions for helping you stay active
4. Realistic recommendations for self-care
5. Tools and tips to help you manage your time and your stress level
6. Suggested resources to support your efforts

... and much more

Research shows that many Americans gain at least one to three pounds during the time between Thanksgiving and the New Year. A few pounds might not seem like much, but research shows that we never lose it. One pound becomes two, which becomes three, and before we know it, we've accumulated a significant amount of 'holiday weight gain' over the years. And with that extra weight comes the associated health burdens. That's why it's important to lighten up your holiday season and maintain rather than gain.

Maintain Don't Gain: 'Tis the Season to Lighten Up is an eight-week wellness campaign that can help you enjoy the highlights of the upcoming season while maintaining a lifestyle that supports good health, well-being and your weight. With delicious and wholesome recipes, plans for getting and staying active, stress management strategies and more, 'Tis the Season to Lighten Up will help you stave off the annual weight gain that never seems to go away.



The material contained in this Newsletter has been selected to provide general background and useful information regarding maintaining weight or avoiding the cumulative effects of gradual weight gain during the holiday season. It is not intended to be complete or tailored to your specific needs. You should discuss the information, facts and tips with your doctor. You should not engage in physical activity, which may have injury and health risks associated with it, until you confirm with your doctor that it is appropriate for you. If you experience any pain or discomfort, call your doctor. The material contained in this Newsletter is not designed to replace either medical advice or medical treatment.

A Season of Balance, Joy and Good Cheer: Ten Ways to Tip the Scales in Your Favor

While the holiday season brings joy to our lives, the change in seasons, the added pressures of balancing work and home and preparing for special celebrations has its share of challenges. To tip the scales toward joy, 'Tis the Season to Lighten Up will revolve around the themes of balance, joy and good cheer.

Over the next several weeks, we'll provide you with specific tools and strategies to help you maintain your weight and enhance your health. Consider these 10 general suggestions for getting started with a cheerful, healthful holiday season.

1. Be realistic.

Just as trying to lose weight during the holidays may be unrealistic, so are many other expectations we set for ourselves during this time of year. Give yourself a break and know that whatever you do is more than "good enough."

2. Set boundaries.

Healthy boundaries are key to balance and moderation. Setting boundaries on shopping, spending, eating and drinking can help you avoid some of the stressors of the season.

3. Move your body... every day.

During the holidays, daily physical activity is especially important for weight management and stress management. In fact, research shows that people who slightly increase their physical activity between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day are more successful in maintaining their weight.

4. Eat small and regular meals.

Skipping meals to save calories may sound like a good idea. However, research has proven time and time again that meal skipping is a poor strategy for weight management. Eating smaller, regularly timed meals will keep you feeling light and energized.

5. Take a break.

Give yourself the gift of down-time for at least 15 minutes each day. Read a book, take a bath, have a cup of tea, practice deep breathing, or simply close your eyes and rest. Slowing yourself down will slow everything down.

6. Drink water.

Staying hydrated is essential to maintaining a high level of energy. Beat your energy slumps with a tall glass of ice water or a sparkling soda water with a twist.

7. Sleep.

With shopping trips, school plays and work parties, the holidays are a ticket to sleep deprivation. The National Sleep Foundation reminds us that adequate sleep, at least seven hours per night, will make the holidays merrier for everyone in your family.

8. Savor your food.

Parties, celebrations and fantastic food are hallmarks of the season. While it's not necessary to be overly concerned about calories and fat, taking time to truly savor your favorite foods will result in more enjoyment and fewer calories. There are many opportunities to eat during the holiday season. Make them worthwhile.

9. Laugh often.

Humor is emotional medicine. In an instant, a bout of laughter will improve your mood, boost your immune system and reduce your blood pressure, among other benefits. Laughter is a key ingredient to balance, enjoyment and good health.

10. Seek support.

Create a network of people you can turn to when you need support. If you find yourself feeling excessively stressed, overwhelmed or blue, seek support from your employee assistance program or a local mental health professional.

In addition to these suggestions, consider other ideas you can do to help you enjoy the holiday season, while remaining balanced, joyful and in good cheer. List them here.

Why Maintain?

'Tis the Season to Lighten Up promotes weight maintenance, not weight loss. In fact, some experts agree that attempts to lose weight during the holiday season may actually be counterproductive.

As with any weight-related program, awareness of your current weight is an important place to begin. Take a few moments to record today's date and your current weight.

Today's date: _____

My current weight: _____

Research shows that people who weigh themselves on a regular basis (i.e., one time per week) are more successful in managing their weight. Adopting this practice is just one valuable strategy for helping you maintain your weight between now and the New Year.

Planning Ahead for Balance, Joy and Good Cheer

With Thanksgiving just around the corner, you may already be thinking about your menu or a dish for sharing with family and friends. Planning ahead will help you enjoy the holiday, rather than feel pressure about getting a Thanksgiving meal on the table. Begin now to make a list of the items and ingredients you know you will need, and build upon it.

Motivation and Self-confidence - Keys to Success

On a scale of one to 10, how motivated are you to maintain your weight between now and the beginning of the New Year?

(0 = not motivated at all, and 10 = very motivated)

On the same scale, how confident do you feel that you can maintain your weight during this time period?

If you rated yourself as "7" or higher on either of these scales, you have what it takes to succeed. List the things here that help you feel motivated and confident, (i.e., I've done it in the past; I'm physically active, etc.).

If you rated your confidence or motivation as "6" or less, you're not quite sure about your ability to maintain your weight. In this case, think about what it would take for you to boost your "status for success" and record it here, (i.e., support from a friend, walk each day during lunch, participate in 'Tis the Season to Lighten Up, etc.)

Take a moment on a regular basis to reflect on the factors that motivate you to make healthy choices and feel confident to succeed!

Physical Activity: Your Ticket to Maintaining

Regular physical activity is vital to building a foundation of balance, enjoyment and good health. In addition to countless other benefits, research shows that the people who are most successful in maintaining their weight between Thanksgiving and the New Year are consistent about regular exercise.

10 Minutes, Three Times a Day

The holiday season poses a number of barriers to staying active — mainly finding time. For this reason, planning for physical activity is especially important. While 30 minutes of daily moderate-intensity exercise is recommended, it doesn't have to be 30 minutes all at once — it can be broken up into shorter bouts throughout your day.

Consider the ways you are (or will be) physically active and list them here.

HOLIDAY RECIPES LIGHTENED UP

Aunt Barb's Spinach Mashed Potatoes

Number of Servings: 8

- 8 medium all-purpose potatoes
- 1 cup reduced fat-sour cream
- 3 tablespoons trans fat-free margarine
- 1 teaspoon dried chives
- 1 teaspoon dried dill
- 1 (10-ounce) box frozen chopped spinach, thawed and drained well
- 3/4 cup shredded 2% milk extra-sharp Cheddar cheese

1. Wash and scrub potatoes and remove blemishes.
2. Place in boiling water, cover and cook until tender – about 25 minutes. Peel, if desired, and mash with a potato masher.
3. In a medium bowl, combine sour cream, margarine, chives, dill and drained spinach. Swirl through mashed potatoes.
4. Place potatoes in casserole dish coated with nonstick cooking spray. Top with cheese.
5. Bake at 350 degrees F for 30 to 40 minutes or until hot.

Nutrition Facts Per Serving: 145 calories, 5.5g total fat, 3g dietary fiber, 6.5g protein, 17g carbohydrate, 130mg sodium

Honey-Roasted Root Vegetables

Number of Servings: 8

- 1 large sweet potato, scrubbed and cut into cubes
- 2 medium turnips, scrubbed, peeled and cut into cubes
- 2 medium parsnips, scrubbed, peeled and cut into cubes
- 3 medium carrots, scrubbed and cut into cubes
- 2 medium sweet onions, cut into cubes
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper

1. Combine all ingredients in a large bowl and toss to coat.
2. Place vegetable mixture on a jelly-roll pan or shallow baking pan coated with nonstick cooking spray.
3. Bake at 450 degrees F for 35 minutes or until vegetables are tender and begin to brown. Stir every 15 minutes.

Nutrition Facts Per Serving: 125 calories, 4g total fat, 5g dietary fiber, 2g protein, 23g carbohydrate, 170mg sodium

HOLIDAY RECIPES LIGHTENED UP

Cool & Creamy Pumpkin Pie

Number of Servings: 9

- 2 cups unsweetened canned pumpkin
- 3-1/2 cups lite frozen whipped topping, thawed, divided
- 1 small package instant vanilla pudding mix, sugar-free
- 1-1/4 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice
- 1 prepared graham cracker pie crust

1. In a large bowl, combine pumpkin, 2-1/2 cups whipped topping, pudding and spices.
2. Beat with an electric mixer at low speed for 1 to 2 minutes or until well blended.
3. Spread evenly into graham cracker crust and top with remaining 1 cup whipped topping.
4. Quick chill in the freezer for 10 minutes or until ready to serve. Store in the refrigerator.

Nutrition Facts Per Serving: 172 calories, 4g total fat, 2g protein, 32g carbohydrate

Cranberry Orange Bread

Number of Servings: 12

- 1-3/4 cups white whole wheat flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup chopped fresh cranberries
- 1/4 cup finely chopped walnuts
- 2 tablespoons canola oil
- 1/2 cup low-fat buttermilk
- 1/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup egg substitute
- 1 tablespoon grated orange rind
- 1 cup unsweetened orange juice

1. Combine flour, baking powder, soda and salt in a medium bowl; fold in cranberries and walnuts. Make a well in the center; set aside.
2. Combine oil and buttermilk in a large bowl; gradually add sugar, whisking until well combined. Whisk in egg substitute, orange rind and orange juice.
3. Pour buttermilk mixture into flour mixture and stir just until blended.
4. Pour batter into a 9-inch loaf pan coated with nonstick cooking spray.
5. Bake at 350 degrees F for 50 to 55 minutes or until toothpick inserted into center comes out clean. Cool in pan 10 minutes; remove and cool completely before slicing. Makes 1 loaf.

Nutrition Facts Per Serving: 128 calories, 3.5g total fat, 3g dietary fiber, 4g protein, 17g carbohydrate, 221mg sodium

HOLIDAY RECIPES LIGHTENED UP

Cheese Tortellini with Pumpkin Sauce

Number of Servings: 9

2 (16-ounce) bags frozen cheese tortellini (look for the lowest fat brand available)

1 (15-ounce) can 100% pure pumpkin

2 cups vegetable broth

2 tablespoons dark brown sugar

1 tablespoon butter or trans fat-free margarine

1/2 teaspoon ground ginger

1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg

1/2 teaspoon ground white pepper

1/4 cup reduced-fat sour cream, optional

1. Cook tortellini in a large stockpot in boiling water, according to package directions. Drain and set aside.
2. Meanwhile, combine the pumpkin, broth, sugar, butter, ginger, cinnamon, nutmeg and pepper in a medium saucepan, stirring to combine.
3. Place pumpkin mixture over medium heat and bring to a simmer, stirring occasionally until the butter melts and the mixture is heated through.
4. Just before serving, stir sour cream into the pumpkin sauce, if desired. To serve, place the tortellini on individual plates and top with pumpkin sauce.

Nutritional Facts Per Serving: 342 calories, 5g total fat, 3g dietary fiber, 12g protein, 59g carbohydrate, 839mg sodium

Blond French Onion Soup

Number of Servings: 8

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

4 large onions, chopped

2 tablespoons all-purpose flour

1/2 teaspoon sea salt, or to taste

1/2 teaspoon black pepper, or to taste

2 cloves crushed garlic

8 cups chicken or vegetable broth (reduced sodium)

1 cup dry white wine

8 slices French bread

8 slices reduced-fat provolone cheese

1. Coat a large saucepot with nonstick cooking spray. Add oil and heat over medium heat. Cook onions in oil until caramelized — about 20 minutes.
2. Add flour, salt, pepper and garlic to cooked onions and combine well. Stir in stock and wine.
3. Simmer for 45 minutes. To serve, place a slice of bread and cheese in 8 soup bowls. Ladle soup in each bowl and serve.

Nutrition Facts Per Serving: 257 calories, 9g total fat, 2g dietary fiber, 22g protein, 24g carbohydrate, 977mg sodium