



NEWS RELEASE

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Eight Tips for Exercising Off the Holiday Season Weight

Here comes the holidays and with them the battle of managing your weight. The good news is that it's a myth that people gain an average of 5 - 10 pounds over the holidays. According to Weight Watchers, most people gain only a pound or two. But the bad news is that even those one to two pounds can add up. But should we just concede that gaining even one to two pounds is inevitable?

If you do, it becomes a sort of self-fulfilling prophecy. If you expect to give in to the temptation of all those homemade baked goods, you will. If you're sure it's not an option to turn down your mother's offer of seconds, you'll be right. But if you want to start the New Year without the extra baggage, the first thing you need is a positive attitude. The second thing you need? A plan!

You *can* keep the extra weight off and keep and you can even do it without passing up all of the holiday season goodies.

- **Tip #1 *Add more physical movement into your daily life.***
You don't have to join a gym. You can simply decide to move more. For example, if you're going to indulge in some holiday treats, take a walk to get them (in other words, don't keep them on your desk).
- **Tip #2 *For every extra calorie you consume during the holiday season, add 20 steps to your day.***
The equivalent of a mile is roughly 2,000 steps. For most people, walking one mile expends 100 to 150 calories, depending on body weight. At 100 calories per mile, walking 500 extra steps would compensate for 25 calories, approximately the number of calories contained in half a typical holiday cookie.
- **Tip #3 *Take the stairs instead of the elevator or escalator while holiday shopping.***
Walking up a set of stairs can burn 5 to 10 calories, depending on your weight and the number of stairs. Going down stairs typically expends one-third as much energy.
- **Tip #4 *Walk up and down the shopping mall an extra time or two, carrying all of your bags.***
Adding the extra mileage, especially when carrying some additional weight, will help you burn more calories while accomplishing your errands. You can also avoid holiday parking lot hassles by parking as far away as possible and walking.
- **Tip #5 *If you let your fingers do the shopping, take the time you saved and exercise instead.***
If you are buying your gifts online or by phone, compensate for your lack of mall walking by taking the dog out for a walk around the block. Go to your local fitness club or other exercise facility and participate in an aerobics group, a yoga class or a t'ai chi session.
- **Tip #6 *Grab some weights and lift them as many times as you can.***
Building muscle mass with weightlifting will help you burn more calories around the clock. You don't need a set of weights—try a heavy book or that uneaten fruitcake. For a greater challenge, you can always try lifting your children, grandchildren, nieces or nephews. (However, you should be cautious about lifting weights if you have any medical or physical condition.)
- **Tip #7 *Exercise your willpower and pass on some of the goodies.***
Use your strength to push yourself away from the table before you are totally stuffed. Another helpful practice is to wait 10 to 20 minutes before helping yourself to "seconds," to allow adequate time for your first helping to settle in your stomach.
- **Tip #8 *Apply any or all of these tips to the rest of the year as well.***
Remember, Santa Claus didn't get as big as he is just by overeating during the holidays!

Source: Sheri R. Colberg, PhD Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia