

Lose Weight During the Holiday Rush

For the Upper Peninsula, the holiday season starts on November 15th. Deer camp is one of the biggest challenges for the “guys” in the Healthy Weight program. Tradition is not about healthy food at most camps.

For the ladies the holidays are also a time of testing. Bazaars, special “Ladies-nights-out” events and cookie exchanges are just a few of the opportunities to indulge in calorie-laden treats.

It is possible to lose weight during the long stretch of holiday festivities. Being aware of cues to eat is the first step in taking control of your food intake. Here are some typical triggers.

- Visual cues – special seasonal treats just look so good!
- Nostalgia – remembering how good a certain novelty food is, and telling yourself “one won’t hurt”.
- Too busy – feeling overwhelmed, overscheduled often leads to overeating and mindless munching.
- Too tired – lack of sleep increases appetite and reduces physical activity.
- Accessibility – if your worksite and home are loaded with a variety of easy to grab snacks, you are likely to eat more.

Try these tips to help you navigate through the season of “plenty”.

- If you’re feeling overwhelmed, focus on what is enjoyable about your day.
- Stay connected with positive, supportive people.
- Learn to say “no” to social occasions that do not support your healthy lifestyle.
- Keep the focus on a positive mental image of yourself achieving your goal.
- Think less-than-perfect, reaching for goals is a process of self-improvement.
- Acknowledge your successes. Write them on a calendar.
- Find healthy alternatives to the foods you love. Can’t live without eggnog? Use a skim milk version and cut the calories in half.
- Little by little, shave the portions that you eat. Go for the smallest cookie on the tray, or make single servings your holiday rule.
- Stay in the drivers seat, and ask for what you want.
If a restaurant does not have a low fat choice, ask for your sandwich or entrée to be prepared without added sauce, butter, or skip the cheese.
- Break with tradition and start your own.
New healthier specialty foods are readily available. Great choices are organic dried fruits, smoked salmon, or a fresh fruit basket instead of candy.