

Holiday FitBits™
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It's the holiday season. The smells, the music, the shopping, the decorations...the buffets...

Did you know that the average person gains 8 pounds between Thanksgiving and New Years Day? As a result, health clubs do a booming business in January due to the Yule time damage. Unfortunately, 6 out of 10 quit after the first 30 days. So here are some "buffet-busting" Fit-Bits to help you "train" for the season.

- Don't go to parties on an empty stomach. Eat a little before you go so you're not so tempted with the high calorie party goodies.
- Pace yourself. If you're on the "holiday party trail," attending 2 or 3 festivities in one evening, try indulging only in appetizers at the first event, a main course at the second event and desert at the last stop.
- Eat slowly. It takes 20 minutes for the brain to signal the stomach that you're full. It doesn't take much to tighten up your waistband. Maybe Spandex was invented for the holiday season.
- Don't socialize with the food. Mingle with the other guests.
- Control your portions. Take small amounts and go back for more instead of loading up on it in the beginning.
- Think healthy when cooking and preparing holiday foods. Substitute low-fat ingredients when you can. Vegetarians and guests with medical conditions will appreciate such thoughtfulness.
- Watch your alcohol consumption. Becoming tipsy stimulates your appetite. Try substituting lower calorie beverages such as wine coolers and diet sodas in your mixed drinks. And of course, light beer has fewer calories than regular beer.
- Remember to stay physically active during the holidays. Continue to accumulate at least 10,000 steps per day to offset the inevitable weight gain. Try walking around the neighborhood with your family to view the holiday decorations. Drive up to the mountains and enjoy the winter wonderland of sports. Grab a ball and shoot hoops in the driveway. Even building a snowman burns a few calories.
- Think about your eating and don't consume unconsciously. Ask yourself, "Am I really hungry, or am I bored, nervous, or depressed?" Eat because you're hungry.
- Have fun. Don't deprive yourself of Grandma's Famous Cookie Recipe. It's the most wonderful time of the year and you need to enjoy it. Savor the season, but remember that balance and moderation are the key ingredients.