

## Winning the Holiday Battle of the Bulge

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DENVER, CO — There is a common misconception that the average person will put on five pounds during the holiday season. The good news is, studies show the average person actually tacks on only about one-half pound during the holidays. Only 10 percent of people gain five pounds or more. The bad news is, that extra weight tends to stay on for good. Over a lifetime the holiday pounds add up, leading to large weight gain and long-term health effects.

The holidays are a great time to celebrate with friends, family and co-workers, but all that celebrating can make it difficult to eat healthily. National Jewish Health pulmonologist [David Beuther, MD](#), offers the following tips on how to stave off extra holiday weight.

**Pay attention to portion sizes.** Use small plates and bowls, especially at a party or buffet-style meal. We tend to fill our plates. The smaller the plate, the less you can put on it. Choose smaller portions of high-calorie foods like dips, fried foods and desserts, and larger portions of low calorie foods like fresh fruit and vegetables.

**Plan ahead.** If you know you are going to a party later in the day, eat less than normal before the event. Drinking a large glass of water before a party can help you feel full and make you less likely to overindulge.

**Limit intake of high-calorie beverages.** Choose to drink water, coffee, or unsweetened tea instead of sweetened beverages like juice and soda. Alcoholic beverages are also loaded with sugar. Limit intake of high-fat beverages like eggnog.

**Focus on nutrients.** Pack holiday dishes full of whole grains, vegetables, and low-fat dairy products. Adjust recipes to make them lower in calories.

**Bring a healthy dish to a party.** Help others eat healthy. If you are going to a pot-luck or throwing a party yourself, make a healthy dish like fruit salad or fresh vegetables.

**Make a pact with your co-workers to keep holiday treats to a minimum at the office.** Chances are most people in your office want to avoid weight gain during the holidays. Decide as a group to bring in only healthy treats or no treats at all.

**Keep your exercise routine.** The holidays are a busy time and often the first thing we cut is our daily exercise. Exercise can help maintain weight and manage stress. Make sure to carve out time during the holidays to maintain your exercise routine. You'll thank yourself when the holidays are over.

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Our team is available to arrange interviews, discuss events and story ideas.

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