



Mindful eating and smart swaps during the Holidays

Introduction:

- Welcome! *“What’s your favorite holiday dish?”*
 - Purpose of the class:
“Today, we’re learning how to enjoy holiday foods mindfully without sacrificing flavor or fun!”
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2. Fun Facts About Holiday Eating

- **Did You Know?:**
 - The average person consumes 3,000+ calories during a single holiday meal.
 - Overeating can leave us feeling sluggish and uncomfortable.

Surprising Food Facts:

- Cranberry Sauce: A single serving of store-bought cranberry sauce can have as much sugar as a candy bar! *Try making your own with honey or maple syrup.*
- Pecan Pie: While delicious, one slice can have over 500 calories—that’s more than two glazed donuts!
- Eggnog: Just one cup has up to 350 calories and 20 grams of sugar. *Swap it for a spiced almond milk latte.*
- **Positive Note:**
“Small swaps and mindful choices can help you feel great during the holidays!”

3. Tips & Tricks for Healthy Holiday Eating

1. Start Smart:

- Eat a small, healthy snack (like an apple, a handful of nuts, or a boiled egg) before attending holiday meals to avoid showing up starving.
- Drink a glass of water before and during meals—it helps you feel fuller and aids digestion.
- Bonus Tip: Stay active before big meals—take a walk or do light exercise to boost your metabolism.

2. Build a Better Plate:

- Follow the 50/25/25 Rule: 50% veggies, 25% lean protein, 25% carbs.
- Start with a veggie-heavy appetizer: A salad, roasted veggies, or a broth-based soup can help curb hunger.
- Choose lean proteins: turkey without the skin, baked salmon, or roasted chicken instead of fried or heavy options.

3. Portion Control:

- Use a smaller plate—it tricks your brain into thinking you have more food.
- Stick to the "Two Tablespoon Rule" for rich or indulgent dishes like stuffing, casseroles, or desserts. *You get a taste without overdoing it!*
- Sit farther from the buffet or serving area to avoid mindlessly reaching for seconds.

4. Mindful Eating:

- Eat slowly to savor the flavors. *"It takes 20 minutes for your brain to register that you're full!"*
- Put your fork down between bites—it naturally slows your pace.
- Avoid "eating distractions" like phones or TVs. Focus on the people and food in front of you.

5. Choose Your Indulgence:

- Pick one or two special holiday treats you absolutely love and enjoy them guilt-free. Skip the ones you don't care about as much.
- For desserts, try the Three-Bite Rule: The first bite is the best, the second satisfies, and the third is the perfect finish!

6. Healthy Beverage Choices:

- Swap sugary drinks for sparkling water with a splash of fruit juice or citrus.
- Alternate alcoholic drinks with water to stay hydrated and reduce overall intake.

7. Move After Meals:

- Take a 10-15 minute walk after a big meal—it aids digestion, lowers blood sugar, and helps you feel energized.
 - Make it social: *“Let’s take a walk and enjoy the holiday lights!”*
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4. Healthy Holiday Food Swaps

Traditional Dish	Healthy Swap
Mashed Potatoes with Cream	Mashed cauliflower or whipped sweet potatoes (lightly buttered)
Heavy Stuffing	Wild rice or quinoa stuffing with veggies & fresh herbs
Creamy Green Bean Casserole	Roasted green beans with olive oil, garlic, and sliced almonds
Cheese & Crackers	Hummus with whole grain crackers, sliced cucumber, or bell peppers
Sugary Desserts	Fruit skewers, baked apples with cinnamon, or dark chocolate bites
Eggnog	Sparkling water with a splash of cranberry & orange (festive garnish!)
Candied Yams with Marshmallows	Roasted sweet potatoes with cinnamon and a drizzle of pure maple syrup
Macaroni and Cheese	Baked cauliflower "mac" with a light cheese sauce

Gravy with Heavy Cream	Turkey gravy made with low-sodium broth and a splash of almond milk
Dinner Rolls	Whole grain rolls or almond flour biscuits
Cranberry Sauce (Sugary)	Homemade cranberry sauce with fresh cranberries, orange zest, and honey
Potato Chips	Baked sweet potato or beet chips
Pumpkin Pie with Whipped Cream	Crustless pumpkin custard with a dollop of Greek yogurt
Fried Appetizers	Baked zucchini fries, stuffed mushrooms, or air-fried veggie bites
Creamy Dips (Spinach, Artichoke)	Greek yogurt-based dips with herbs and spices
Breaded Fried Turkey	Roasted or air-fried turkey breast with herbs and spices

Fun “Build-Your-Own” Ideas for a Healthier Holiday Table

1. **DIY Salad Bar**
 - Offer a variety of leafy greens, colorful veggies, nuts, seeds, and vinaigrettes.
 - Add protein options like grilled chicken, chickpeas, or hard-boiled eggs.
2. **Healthy Dip Station**
 - Base dips: hummus, guacamole, tzatziki, Greek yogurt ranch.
 - Dippers: whole-grain crackers, cucumber slices, bell pepper strips, and baked pita chips.
3. **Make-Your-Own Veggie Wraps**
 - Whole grain or spinach tortillas, grilled veggies, shredded turkey/chicken, and hummus spreads.
4. **DIY Fruit Dessert Platter**
 - Offer fruits like strawberries, pineapple, melon, and grapes with a yogurt dip or dark chocolate drizzle.
5. **Hot Beverage Bar**
 - Swap sugary drinks for:
 - Herbal teas with cinnamon sticks.

- Hot cocoa made with almond milk and a dusting of cocoa powder.
- Festive sparkling water with fresh cranberries, mint, and orange slices.

5. Holiday Recipe Spotlight

- Recipe idea:
Example: Sweet Potato Bites
 - Slice sweet potatoes into rounds, bake with a light drizzle of olive oil, and top with a bit of goat cheese and pomegranate seeds. *“Delicious, festive, and nutrient-packed!”*
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6. Q&A and Closing

- Questions or swap ideas from the class.
- Fun reminder:
“Healthy eating during the holidays isn’t about perfection—it’s about balance, enjoyment, and feeling good!”

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