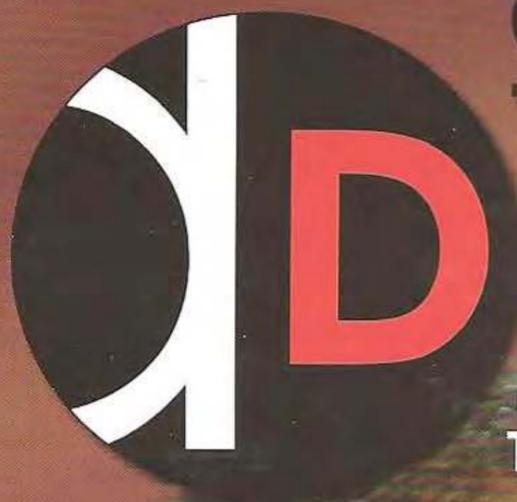


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Fall 2009

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Party Hearty

(and Healthy)

WRITTEN BY VALERIE MENARD

DECISIVE'S FITNESS EXPERT'S TIPS FOR
KEEPING POUNDS OFF AT THE HOLIDAYS

CHRISTMAS MAY BE THE SEASON TO BE JOLLY BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN WE HAVE TO LOOK LIKE SANTA TO GET INTO THE SPIRIT.

UNDOUBTEDLY, MUCH OF THE FUN OF THE SEASON INCLUDES CONSUMING THE DELECTABLE GOODIES OF THE SEASON, MANY TIMES MADE WITH SUCH CARE THAT THEY'RE RESERVED FOR THE HOLIDAYS ONLY. BUT THE DOWNSIDE IS THAT THE WEIGHT GAINED AT THIS TIME, APPROXIMATELY FIVE—SEVEN POUNDS, CAN NOT ONLY BECOME PERMANENT, IT WILL CERTAINLY ADD UP OVER TIME.

“There’s a lot of emotional eating at Christmas, from happiness as well as stress,” says **DECISIVE** fitness guru Wendy Ida. “Then on January 1, we make a resolution to get healthy and lose the weight — year after year.”

Wendy counters, however, that there is a way to celebrate the season and not gain weight.

The solution is simple, and familiar—diet and exercise.

The holiday menu, including proverbial favorites like mac-and-cheese or string bean casserole, doesn’t help. Wendy suggests taking these dishes, one at a time, and remaking them in a healthier fashion. Rather than string bean casserole, just prepare steamed green beans with lemon. This way the family can acclimate to the new recipes.

“There will definitely be resistance, my family was no exception, but they will get used to it and some may even prefer the lighter menu,” Wendy offers.

Putting a modern spin on traditional recipes may be more natural than we think. Many families have already converted the preparation of collard greens. Instead of using ham

hocks to season them, smoked turkey is now more common, and healthier.

While many calorie-laden foods announce their bad intentions, some foods can be deceptive. Considered an essential beverage with some meals, especially dessert, coffee can actually encourage overeating, says Wendy, and alcohol is loaded with calories. “Switch to green tea,” she advises. “It’s filled with antioxidants that are essential to good health.”

There are better alternatives to all that we eat at the holidays, even dessert. Wendy says pumpkin and sweet potato pie can be prepared with less fat if you use low fat evaporated and sweetened condensed milk. They are also good sources of fiber and antioxidants, making them one of the healthier desserts of the season.

Menu is part one of the key to staving off the pounds. Staying active, one of the most important aspects of a healthy lifestyle, is part two. While preparing the menu, Wendy suggests planning activities for after dinner too. “Instead of sitting in front of the TV, go for a walk in the neighborhood or play catch in the yard. Physical activity helps the digestive process and burns calories. 🍎



WENDY'S TIPS ON AVOIDING HOLIDAY WEIGHT GAIN:

1. Reduce oils, butter and sugar & replace with healthy alternatives
2. Buy smaller plates & eat smaller portions
3. Start working out early and increase exercise intensity.
4. Workout before & after dinner.
5. Introduce one to two healthy low fat dishes each year.
6. Reduce your coffee and alcohol intake and drink green tea instead.

Known as the “Fitness Warrior,” Wendy Ida is a 57 year old Fitness Pro and owner of Wendy Ida Fitness in Los Angeles, CA. She is a Nationally Certified Master Trainer and Nutrition Specialist who specializes in helping women over age 40 to achieve fitness results. You’ll find Wendy online at wendyidafitness.com.