

## **SURVIVING HOLIDAY EATING**

Josie Lodrigue, RD, LD/N

Holidays are a time of joy, spending time with family, enjoying the good moments of life, and of course, the endless food and desserts. It's no wonder we tend to have higher stress levels during the holidays, especially when we are watching our weight or trying to stay healthy. Holidays should not be dreaded because of the food. Nor should the holidays be a time of deprivation. We can still eat the foods we like, along with enjoying the closeness of family and maintaining our waistlines.

First off, holidays are never the time to begin a "diet." Restricting ourselves during this time is only setting us up for failure and binging. If anything, focus on weight maintenance rather than weight loss. It is okay splurge on good food during the holidays; as long as we don't overindulge. Keep in mind that we should still balance our calories with physical activity. Use these other tips to help survive the holidays as well:

- Do not show up hungry. Have something small to avoid overeating or temptation (such as an apple, baby carrots, or glass of water).
- Wear fitted clothing to avoid "extra room" for more food.
- Explore the food and decide what you will have before serving your plate. This way you don't have to take everything just because it is there.
- If you do want to sample, choose a taste of those items, not an entire serving.
- Fill up on healthier options like veggies or lean meats before going for the higher calorie foods.
- If you are hosting or bringing in food, reduce the fat in recipes and have healthier options.
- Do not sit near the food table.
- Pop a stick of gum in your mouth after eating and sip on water to avoid the urge to binge.
- Limit alcohol consumption or choose "lite" versions of beer or choose mixed drinks lower in calories and sugar.
- Enjoy the environment. Focus on reuniting with family and friends.
- Do not beat yourself up if you do overindulge. Remember each moment is an opportunity to get back on track.

Try this healthy alternative to mashed potatoes:

### **WHIPPED CAULIFLOWER**

#### **INGREDIENTS**

- 1 medium head cauliflower, cut into florets
- 1/4 cup fat-free milk
- 2 tablespoons canola oil
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon white pepper

#### **DIRECTIONS**

1. Place cauliflower in a steamer basket; place in a saucepan over 1 in. of water. Bring to a boil; cover and steam for 8-10 minutes or until tender. Cool slightly.
2. Place the milk and oil in a blender or food processor. Add the cauliflower, salt and pepper; cover and process until blended. Transfer to a bowl. Serve immediately.

#### **FOOTNOTE**

- Makes 4 servings. Nutritional Analysis: 1/2 cup equals 105 calories, 7 g fat (1 g saturated fat), 1 mg cholesterol, 199 mg sodium, 8 g carbohydrate, 4 g fiber, 3 g protein. Diabetic Exchanges: 1-1/2 fat, 1 vegetable.