

Enjoying Food Over the Holidays

Supports: Building Block 14 — Holidays and Social Events

Why It Matters

Holidays, birthdays, weddings, and celebrations of all kinds usually center on food, and that is part of what makes them special. Eating well over the holidays is not about restriction or willpower; it is about enjoying the foods and the people you love while staying tuned into how you feel. A few simple strategies can help you savor the season without guilt or that overly stuffed, autopilot feeling. You can absolutely enjoy the table and feel good afterward.

What to Know

Come to the table fueled

Skipping meals to save up for a big dinner tends to backfire, leaving you so hungry that eating feels out of control. Keep your body fueled through the day so you arrive ready to enjoy the meal rather than ravenous. Before the event, take a quick check-in: how are you feeling, and how do you want to feel afterward?

Savor your favorites

Holiday food is worth enjoying, so make it count. These small habits help you get real pleasure from the meal.

- Be selective and put foods you genuinely love on your plate, not just what is there
- Slow down and truly taste the flavors, textures, and aromas
- Pause midway to notice your hunger and fullness, and keep eating or ease off based on how you feel
- Skip the pressure to clean your plate; eat the amount that satisfies you

No earning, no making up for it

There is no such thing as a food you have to earn beforehand or burn off afterward. Foods are not good or bad, and holiday eating is not a debt to repay. All foods can fit at your table. Trust yourself around the spread, and let go of the guilt so you can actually be present with the people around you.

Progress, not perfection. Eating well over the holidays is a practice, not a performance. If a choice does not sit right, learn from it and move on. Every meal is a fresh chance.

Try This

Think ahead to your next holiday or gathering. A little reflection now can help you show up ready to enjoy the food and the company without second-guessing yourself.

- ? How do you want to feel physically and emotionally after a holiday meal?
- ? Which favorite foods do you most want to savor this season?
- ? What is one guilt or pressure around holiday eating you would like to set down?