



## Live Deliciously and Healthy through the Holidays

by Nicole Cormier, RD, LDN

The average person gains five pounds during the holiday season. On a special holiday, many Americans eat an average of 8,000 calories and 400 grams of fat. That's close to 2-3 times the recommended intake for an adult.

We've crossed the starting mark for the Holiday Season. Ready, set, go!

Unfortunately, many individuals are well on their way to gaining the average 5-pound weight gain this year. Maybe it's from the lack of exercise they get from busy holiday schedules or the average 8,000 calories consumed on those special days. Maybe both?

The reality is we are bombarded with calories over the entire season. The hard truth is that the finish line isn't until after the New Year! Can you survive this year without the extra coat? Many would answer "absolutely" to that question.

Each year the holiday season bombards us with "empty" calories. The results often poke that extra hole in your belt, lower your energy levels, and increase your risk for catching colds.

Many people who've previously started making positive lifestyle changes often feel overwhelmed with sustaining their healthy behaviors with family traditions.

Being successful through the season can be tricky. However, if you put in a little effort, you can give the gift of health to yourself and others this year!

Start by asking yourself, "What are my goals for weight and health?" Maybe you would like to maintain the weight you're at, get a jumpstart to your New Year's resolutions, have more energy, or keep those colds away?

Everyone can enjoy the holidays this year with more energy and less weight gain by focusing on fruits and vegetables. The simple act of filling half your plate with vegetables before you load the higher calorie dense foods can save you hundreds of calories.

Once you set your goals for the season, the next step is to understand what you're up against. There are many stressors throughout the season with traffic, to-do lists, shopping, and social gatherings. All of these can move your health down a few notches on your own priority list.

You should have a survival guide that includes six main goals to help you stay focused and healthy. For example, your six goals could include:

1. *Eat breakfast everyday with a lean protein, fruit and whole grain.*
2. *Drink more than 64 ounces of water per day.*
3. *Eat more than 5 full cups of vegetables and fruits per day.*
4. *Move at least 30 minutes per day.*
5. *Eat a snack before you go holiday parties.*
6. *Bring a healthier appetizer or dish to the party.*

Even if you achieve only some of these goals, you will have success towards improving your health.

It is important to give yourself credit for each small step you make when it comes to practicing healthier choices. Focus on the positives and leave the word "cheating" out of your vocabulary. And enjoy the holiday season!

### 5 Simple Rules for Surviving Holiday Parties:

#### RULE #1:

Limit yourself to 2 toothpicks. Consider each toothpick at your holiday party to equal 100 calories.

**RULE #2:**

Go "every other" with the alcoholic beverages. Try a sparkling water with a lime in between. Since one shot or drink equals 130 calories, you'll eliminate hundreds this way.

**RULE #3:**

Fill half your dinner plate with vegetables first, then add the other foods. This way you still have a full plate, and cut your calories in half.

**RULE #4:**

Make a plan for the next day. The most common mistake is to get stuck eating the same foods for days after a holiday.

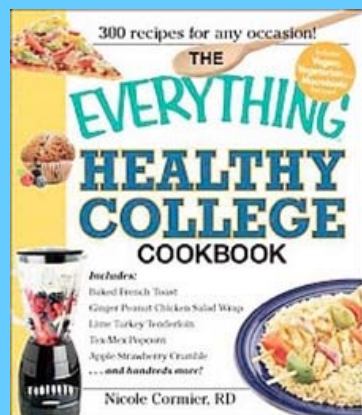
**RULE #5:**

Try not to stand directly next to a spread of appetizers while socializing. If you try to make your way around the room, you will be less likely to mindlessly consume empty calories.

## 10 Gifts that Keep Giving

Give someone you love the gift of health or put these items on your own wish list. Here are several ideas for gifts that keep the focus on healthy behaviors.

1. *Magazine Subscriptions: EatingWell, Nutrition Action, Cooking Light, and Health.*
2. *Sneakers*
3. *iPod or MP3 Player*
4. *Walking DVDs (Leslie Sansone - Walk Away the Pounds is great!)*
5. *Fleece or Winter Jacket*
6. *Mittens and Hats*
7. *Silk Long Underwear*
8. *Books: The Secret or Dr. Shapiro's Picture Perfect Weight-loss*
9. *Fitness Center or Yoga Class gift certificate*
10. *Home Fitness Equipment (Elliptical, bike, rowing machine, or treadmill)*



Available at bookstores  
& online [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)



Nicole Cormier, RD, LDN is a registered dietitian and owner of the nutrition counseling company Delicious Living Nutrition.

She is certified in adult weight management from the Commission of Dietetic Registration, and the author of *The Everything Healthy College Cookbook* and co-author of *The Everything Juicing Book*.

Cormier earned her bachelor's of science degree in human nutrition from the University of Massachusetts in Amherst and completed her dietetic internship at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston.

She specializes in weight-loss, diabetes, high cholesterol, family health, gastrointestinal issues, food intolerances and allergies, pediatric nutrition, sports performance, balanced healthy eating and fatigue.

She offers a variety of services that include coming into your home for nutritional counseling. Individuals can also visit her office located at 29 Lewis Bay Road in Hyannis, across from Cape Cod Hospital.

Additional services include Workshops, Grocery Tours, Pantry Make-overs, BodyGem® Metabolism Tests, Personalized Cleanses, and Menu Consulting. She is available to speak at colleges, sports teams, wellness centers, small offices, fitness centers and corporations that are interested in providing employee wellness.

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