



## Nutrition Nibbles

### Battle that Holiday Bulge

The holiday season is upon us. Are you worried about gaining weight during this time of festivities? Well, I have some good news for you. According to one study of 200 people, the average amount of weight gained between Thanksgiving and New Year's was just less than one pound. The bad news? If a person was already overweight, he or she was more likely to gain over 5 pounds and that weight stayed around until the following holiday season. However, with some thought and planning, you can maintain your current weight through the end of the year. Here are some tips to help you battle the holiday bulge:

- \* **Eat breakfast daily and eat on a regular basis.** Skipping meals or going long time periods without eating can lead to overeating and poor food choices later in the day. Starting your day off with breakfast (your momma was right—it is the most important meal) and eating every 3-5 hours keeps your metabolism running at full speed.
- \* **Stay well-hydrated.** Fill up on low calorie or no calorie beverages like water. This can help cut down on mindless snacking as the body sometimes confuses hunger and thirst signals.
- \* **Schedule exercise into your holiday season.** This is NOT the time to take a vacation from your exercise routine. Every bit of physical activity counts when it comes to calorie burning and stress relief.
- \* **Do not arrive at your holiday parties hungry.** Make sure to eat a balanced snack before attending any seasonal gathering. "Saving up" for the party will only lead to overeating, followed by guilt.

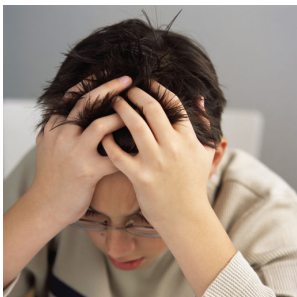
[More Details on page 2](#)



### Favorite Food

Everyone always asks me "So, what does a dietitian eat?" Cranberries are available in grocery stores for a limited time. Ocean-spray calls them the "wonderberry" as cranberries are full of anti-oxidants that promote heart health, as well as contain proanthocyanidins (or PACs) that promote urinary tract, oral, and digestive health. I love to add fresh cranberries to my steaming oatmeal, dried cranberries to my salads and stuffing or bake up a batch of fresh cranberry applesauce muffins. Freeze a few extra bags of these wonderberries to enjoy all year long!

### College Corner: Study Smart This Season!



Before enjoying the season of holiday cheer, most college students need to study for final exams first. Just the thought of long hours spent studying can be exhausting! Take a break and read on for some smart tips to keep your energy levels up, your mind focused, and your body stress-free this studying season:

- ✓ **Eat Small, Frequent Meals.** Eating mini-meals every few hours will help you stay focused without the sleepiness that often accompanies large, heavy meals.
- ✓ **Keep Your Kitchen Stocked with Quick, Healthy Foods.** This makes meal and snack preparation a snap. Plan a trip to the store with your friends to pick-up items such as fresh fruit, pre-cut veggies, whole wheat tortillas or whole grain bread, beans, low-sodium soups, lunchmeat, cereal and milk; you get the idea. This way you are prepared when hunger strikes!
- ✓ **Avoid Sweets and Sugary Treats.** It may be tempting to boost your energy with a shot of sugar. Warning: this can leave you feeling more lethargic than before!
- ✓ **Do Not Overdose on Caffeine.** Students often turn to caffeinated beverages and high-octane pills (It is called NoDoze for a reason) but these things can leave you feeling jittery and unfocused instead. Keep your caffeine intake to no more than 2 cups each day.

[More Details on page 2](#)

## Battle That Holiday Bulge continued...



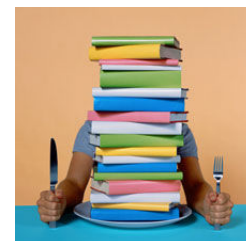
- ❄ **BYOF (Bring your own food) to the party.** This ensures that there is at least one tasty, healthy, light food for you to enjoy that won't do your waistline in.
- ❄ **Drink wisely.** Did you know that 1 cup of eggnog can have up to 350 calories? A festive pomegranate martini packs in 225 calories. Steaming apple cider contains 120 calories per cup. The calories in beverages can add up quickly to a bulging waistline. Alcohol is a double whammy when it comes to calorie control because it increases your appetite *and* lowers your inhibitions—both can lead to festive feasting. To assert some calorie control, alternate your drinks with water.
- ❄ **Modify your favorite recipes.** Think of ways to decrease the calories, fat, sugar, or salt in your usual holiday recipes. Experiment with new versions of your favorites by checking out the holiday recipes at [www.cookinglight.com](http://www.cookinglight.com) or [www.eatingwell.com](http://www.eatingwell.com).
- ❄ **Change your gift-giving strategy.** Rather than give away boxes of candy, bottles of wine, plates of cookies or other tempting goodies, gift others with non-food items. Ideas include ornaments, plants, candles, and donations to charity. Your friends and family will be pleased to keep their waistlines and you will keep temptation out of your own house and mouth.

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## Study Smart This Season! continued...

- ✓ **Remember the 8 x 8 Rule: 8 Hours of Sleep Each Night and at Least 8 Cups of Water Each Day.** These two things in combination will help keep you energized and feeling healthy.
- ✓ **Make Time for Exercise.** Final exams are no excuse for skipping your daily physical activity. Walking, jogging, dancing, biking, or aerobics will keep you awake and stress-free during long cram sessions.
- ✓ **Use Non-Food Stress Busters to Relax.** Eat only when hungry, not because you want to legitimize a study break. Instead, schedule regular study breaks and do something to pamper yourself. Try listening to music, painting your toenails, practicing some yoga poses, or sitting quietly and taking some deep breaths.

Remember that final exams are short-lived and only show-up every few months. By planning ahead and using these easy tips, you will survive to enjoy the holiday season in no time! Good luck!



*Dear Readers,*

*It has been one year since I started writing **Nutrition Nibbles**. I hope you have enjoyed reading this newsletter as much as I have enjoyed creating it. I wish you a healthy and happy holiday season—may you feast on joy and nibble on tasty morsels in 2008!*

*In Health,*

*Mary*

*P.S. Have an idea or nutrition question for a future edition?  
Email me—I would love to hear from you!*

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