

“Tips For The Holiday Season”

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With the holiday season coming up, don't let all of the parties, food, and booze ruin all of the work you have put in at the gym since the start of the New Year. Here are five simple tips you can follow that will allow minimal damage during to your fitness during this time of year:

1. Before you drink, drink water.

Drinking water throughout the day before heading to festive parties in the evening will help your body metabolize the toxins of alcohol more efficiently. In turn, if you drink water in between your drink of choice in the evening you will consume less alcohol altogether.

2. Eat before you leave.

Before you head out to the parties for the evening, take three minutes to fix yourself a quick and healthy snack. This can be as simple as a meat sandwich, Greek yogurt with berries and almonds, a smoothie, or peanut butter and bananas in pita bread. Leaving your house with something in your stomach will help reduce the temptation of all the sweets and deserts brought on by the holidays.

3. Have a 2:1 ratio.

When it does come time for dinner, try to have a minimum of a 2:1 ratio on your plate between non-carbs and carbs. This means, at the very least, 2/3 of your plate should be salad or meat and the other 1/3 can be potatoes, stuffing, etc. I'm not going to preach that carbohydrates are bad, but when over consumed they most certainly can be a deterrent to reaching your fitness goals.

4. Put down the silverware and breathe twice.

I don't know about you all, but I LOVE to eat. And when I eat, I eat fast. Well, I should say I *used* to eat fast. Maybe you don't have that problem because you like to talk during meals, but not me. My head is down and I'm cutting up my next piece of food before I have begun to chew the piece that's in my mouth. People have always told me to slow down, but I couldn't ever figure out a way to do so. Now, however, I eat much slower because I put my silverware down after each bite and breathe twice after I swallow. This technique not only makes my meals last longer, but I eat less food and feel more satiated than I did before.

5. The 20-minute rule.

Before you go back for seconds, wait twenty minutes after you finish your first plate. This will allow your brain to receive the signals from your stomach that say you are satiated. After 20 minutes if you are still feeling like you have some extra room, then by all means help yourself, but at least give your body the chance to tell you that it is full before you do so.

So there are five simple guidelines you can follow to make this holiday season a lot less detrimental to your health. Let's be serious, the holidays only come

once a year so I'm not telling you to not enjoy them, just to be smarter in how you do so. Here's to faith, strength, and passion.

Get big or die tryin'.

Charlie Cates
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