Mystic Valley
Elder Services

www.mves.org
info@mves.org
781-324-7705

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Contact:
Shawn P. Middleton
Director of Communications
(781) 324-7705 ext. 320
smiddleton@mves.org

Mystic Valley Elder Services Offers Tips on Enjoying Healthy Holiday Eating Without Regret

(Malden, MA)— The holidays are a time to enjoy friends, family and food! And with them right around the corner, you will be barraged with lots of your favorite foods. However, how are you going to enjoy the holidays and not regret eating too much and gaining weight? Mystic Valley Elder Services Registered Dietitian Candace Quigley offers some tips on how you can still enjoy eating your favorite foods without regret.

- Weeks before the holiday arrives, be sure to get some exercise and eat healthy. As the season gets into full swing, not only will you be celebrating on that holiday but also you will most likely be attending holiday parties. Unfortunately, holiday celebrations tend to be all about food. On average, Americans gain approximately 1-2 pounds around the holidays and it tends to stick and accumulate over the years.

- No skipping breakfast. High fiber foods will satisfy hunger.

- Do not arrive at your party famished because you will be more likely to eat too much. If dinner is going to be late, then have a healthy snack before you go out.

- Most people will consume several handfuls of chips and dip, nuts, puffs, and other appetizers. Choose only one favorite item and do not graze all day until the meal starts. Do not hang around the food table; Focus on people, not the food.

- Enjoy your favorite beverage and then switch to water or a non-calorie drink. Try to stay away from punches, eggnog and mixed drinks. Try flavored sparkling water.

- When dinner is served, there are usually many choices. Choose those items that you only have on the holiday or are special to you. You could start by putting vegetables on your plate before you put the entrée on it. Survey the entire table before you take

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any food. Decide which foods are worth eating and which you can ignore and stick to that decision.

- Eat slowly and savor every bite; it takes 20 minutes before your stomach registers that you are full.

- You don't have to be a member of the clean plate club. You can leave some bites behind.

- If you plan on having seconds, wait at least 20 minutes. Even though many of the foods are healthy, they all have calories and should be enjoyed in moderation.

- Go ahead and have dessert! Just keep it a reasonable portion and eat slowly. Again, pick an item that is your favorite that you only have during the holidays.

- Say NO to food pushers. Smile and say, "Thanks for making that delicious dessert, but I am full right now. Can I take some home for later?"

- Get some physical activity—before, during or after the celebrations. Go for a walk before you leave to go to the party or maybe you will have time after dinner. Still watch your football game but get up between quarters and during ads to mobilize yourself.

Get right back on track with healthy eating and exercise the day after each holiday.

The following recipes are lighter versions of classic holiday dishes:

https://www.cookinglight.com/recipes/skillet-green-bean-casserole

https://www.cookinglight.com/recipes/apple-cranberry-pecan-stuffing

https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/recipes/turkey-gravy/rcp-20049921

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