



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Upcoming Holidays Are a Time to Enjoy Lots of Wonderful Food

(Malden, MA)— The holidays may be a bit different this year as we practice social distancing and not attend large gatherings, but we can still enjoy lots of wonderful food. But how are you going to enjoy the holidays and not regret eating too much and gaining weight? Here are some tips from Mystic Valley Elder Services Registered Dietitian Candace Quigley 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. 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.
- Don't 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 don't graze all day until the meal starts. Don't 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 a lot of 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 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 a lot of the foods are healthy, they all have calories and should be enjoyed in moderation.
- Go ahead and have dessert! Just keep it to 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>

Give us call to learn more about MVES' nutrition services at 781-324-7705 or visit us at www.mves.org.

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About Mystic Valley Elder Services

Celebrating 45 Years of helping older adults keep their independence, Mystic Valley Elder Services is a non-profit agency located in Malden, Mass., that provides essential home- and community-based care and resources to older adults, adults living with disabilities, and caregivers who reside in Chelsea, Everett, Malden, Medford, Melrose, North Reading, Reading, Revere, Stoneham, Wakefield and Winthrop, regardless of their income level. Agency services include coordination of home care, transportation, Meals on Wheels, and information and referrals. For more information, please call (781) 324-7705 or visit www.mves.org.