

Holiday Giving

How to **avoid** weight gain this holiday season

The average person gains 10 pounds between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day. With so many temptations gracing our holiday tables, from greasy meats and high-fat side-dishes to sugar-filled sweets which top up over-stuffed bellies, how do we stick to our healthy eating goals and keep the scale where we want it? Here are the top tips I share with my patients.

Take a healthy dish to every holiday party.

This will help ensure there is always something available for you to nibble on.

Remember the 80-20 rule.

Eat well 80% of the time and allow yourself a little indulgence 20% of the time. A small (keep it small) treat will actually keep you on track because you won't feel deprived.

Don't drink your calories!

There can be a staggering amount of calories in some



Allana Polo

alcoholic drinks. Stay away from "sweet" and try a dry red wine instead. Because alcohol dehydrates the body, you need to counteract each glass with some water. We often mistake hunger for thirst.

Remember what really matters!

Holiday parties and family gatherings are for socializing, not lingering at the buffet table!

Eat a small protein-rich snack before heading to a holiday party.

This will help ensure you don't overindulge out of hunger. You should be eating every 3-4 hours every day to maintain blood sugar—the key

to avoiding cravings.

Don't skip your workout.

Maintaining your regular workout will not only keep weight gain at bay, it will contribute to decreased stress levels (a bonus because we often eat when we're under stress).

Get plenty of sleep.

You may be extra busy, but don't allow your sleep to suffer. Studies show that we consume more calories when we are sleep-deprived.

And when you need a little accountability, **try recording your food consumption** in a food diary, challenging friends or working with a Naturopath or Nutritionist to set healthy eating goals.

Dr. Allana Polo is a Naturopathic Doctor. Dr. Polo opens her own health clinic at 711 Columbia St., New Westminster on December 1.
