



# ALEXANDRA COACHING

## Start Getting Unstuck

*By* **Alexandra Paul**

Celebrate the Holiday Season  
**Without Gaining a Pound**





**T**he holidays are here and you have sworn once again to not gain a pound. You are right to be worried: The average American adult gains an average of 1lb a year, and it is during the holidays that we gain most of that weight. 1lb doesn't sound like much, until you realize that means that means being 30 pounds heavier in your 50s than you were in your 20s!





## How can we maintain our weight during the holidays? I have some tips for you:

- Keep to your regular exercise routine! Don't let holiday festivities derail your workouts. Schedule them in your calendar. If you are visiting family or friends, make sure you tell everyone ahead of time when you are not available so there is no miscommunication. Maybe others will want to join you! Walks are great ways to spend quality time with relatives you have not seen in a while. There is no reason to toss your workouts to the wind just because of a celebratory season. (Remember that most holidays are just one day, not several months, by the way).
- Don't go to a party starving. When your blood sugar is low, this impairs your impulse control. Eat a little bit so you are not starving when you arrive. And remember...
- Holidays are about people, not about food. We often forget this and it is probably the key to not overindulging. Try paying more attention to the people at the party than you do the food and get your nourishment from the personal interaction. If you go to the party with the intention to have quality conversations instead of anticipating the food you are going to eat, you will eat less and have more fun.
- Be careful with what you bring to the party – When I bake my awesome chocolate chip cookies for your party, I end up eating way too much a) cookie dough b) chocolate chips c) warm gooey cookies before I have even left my house! Now I offer up fruit salad or a treat that doesn't tempt me. If you do have to have enticing ingredients in the house, buy them as close to the party as possible, which will minimise the chances of you indulging.
- Decide beforehand what you are going to eat at a holiday dinner or at parties. Set boundaries and keep to them. I stick to eating just the vegetables, but maybe you want to try a bit of everything. In that case, make sure it is a little bit of everything, or pledge not to go back for seconds. Hint: choosing a smaller plate, eating slowly and chewing more will help you feel fuller on less.
- Avoid those office treats. There are always goodies around the office at holidays and eating them throughout the workday means by 5pm you have ingested way too many empty, unhealthy calories. There are several ways to help yourself here: bring your own snacks to work so you don't feel deprived (make sure they are yummy but healthier and not as alluring), avoid the kitchen area completely so you are not tempted and set firm boundaries beforehand on how much you are going to eat. Pledge that last in writing and share it with someone else for added accountability!





- Stay away from the liquids – If it feels more comfortable to have a drink in your hand at a party, opt for sparkling water and lemon. Egg nog, juices and alcohol add unnecessary calories and they won't satiate your hunger. If you do drink, savour it (we often eat and drink mindlessly in festive settings, which is less satisfying and causes us to overdo) and stick with just one glass.
- See #1 again. It bears repeating: do not chuck your healthy routines to the wind just because it is the holiday season. Continue your workouts and your healthy eating routines, with just occasional indulgences along the way.

The holiday season is even more wonderful when we see that we can have a good time AND take care of our health at the same time. Focus on the people with whom you are celebrating instead of the food and drink, and you will see that you can have just as much holiday cheer - and even more fun.



*Alexandra is a health coach with clients all over the world. Her expertise includes certification from*

*Wellcoaches School and Cornell University's plant based nutrition course. She was a certified EMT for 23 years. As an actress, Alexandra starred in over 75 films and television shows, and is internationally recognized for her role on the TV series "Baywatch."*

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