



15 Tips to Lose Annoying Holiday Pounds!

**Finally, Getting Rid of Those
Annoying Holiday Pounds
Just Becomes Easier!**



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It is estimated that the average person puts on 10 pounds during the holiday season. We eat more often and we eat much richer foods during the holidays, so it is easy to put on pounds without realizing it.

We also tend to drink larger amounts of alcohol, sodas and punch, which contain empty calories. Top that off with festivities that include cakes, cookies and other sweets and you can easily put on 10 pounds or more.

If that describes you, then you need to carefully read over our next 15 tips for taking off those holiday pounds.

1. Do Not Skip Breakfast!

The first thing that you need to do is make sure that you do not skip breakfast. Eating a healthy breakfast helps to make sure your metabolism gets revved up in the mornings, and it will also help keep you from overeating later in the day.

If you skip breakfast in an attempt to cut calories, it will often backfire, because it will result in a dramatic drop in blood sugar levels. This drop in blood sugar levels will cause you to overeat in order to overcompensate.

Breakfast should be much more than just a donut and coffee! You need to have a healthy balance of fruit, proteins and grains. Eat whole grains instead of the white breads or refined cereals for added health benefits. Protein will help you stay full for longer, as well.

2. Set Realistic Weight Loss Goals!

The next thing you need to do is to set a reasonable goal for your weight loss. There is no way that you are going to lose 20 pounds in one week and be healthy. A reasonable goal is to aim to lose one to 2 pounds each week. It is possible to lose a little bit more in your first week, but that is usually water weight and not weight that will stay off.

Do not try to lose too much weight too soon. If you try to aim for a large amount of weight loss in a short amount of time, you will most likely have your efforts backfire.

A good plan is to cut your daily intake of calories by about 500 each day and then add at least 20 to 30 minutes of exercise each day. The exercise does not have to be too strenuous, but it does need to be enough to raise your heart rate and to make you break a sweat.

By using these two parts of a weight loss regimen together, you will have the most effective combination.

3. Do Not Use a Crash Diet!

Do not use a crash diet in order to try to lose weight quickly. If you cut your calories too much, then your body will go into what is called "starvation mode." This will mean that your body will actually go into a state where it tries its hardest to conserve every calorie it can because it believes that there is a shortage of food.

This is not necessarily a bad thing, and it is very handy if you are stranded out on a deserted island somewhere, but it is a pain when you are trying to lose the pounds you gained from eating 10 different turkey dishes between Thanksgiving and Christmas.

4. Follow a Sensible Eating Plan

A sensible eating plan means that you do not abstain from entire food groups (such as on high protein diets) or simply eat one food (such as with the Cabbage Soup Diet).

Your best bet is to use a sensible eating plan and make sure you have a well-balanced (but moderate) diet. Eat a healthy balance of protein, carbohydrates, and (healthy) fats – such as the ones found in nuts and fish oils.

5. Incorporate Regular Exercises in Your Daily Routine!

Make sure you add regular exercise into your weight loss plan. Not only will it help you feel better, add muscle mass, and lose weight faster – but it will also help keep your body from slipping into “survival mode” by keeping your metabolism high.

Walking is one of the best exercises you can do. It is very easy to start, and you do not need any expensive equipment. All you need is a pair of shoes (suitable for walking – with good traction and support) and a place to walk.

You can also start very simply and then increase your exercise level easily by walking longer distances or across a different type of terrain (such as over hills or up an incline).

You should build up to walking 4 miles per day. This will be about one hour of exercise; however, do not feel like you have to start off walking one hour to begin with. If all you can do is walk for a few minutes at first, then just walk for the few minutes.

Gradually increase the amount of time you walk each day. Do not strain yourself! If you try to do too much too soon, you will sabotage your efforts.

Walking with a friend makes exercise easier and more pleasant. Walking and socializing at the same time is a lot more fun than simply walking by yourself. It also makes you less likely to skip exercising.

If you know that you are supposed to meet someone each day at a certain time, and that person is counting on you, then you are much less likely to "play hooky."

Sometimes simply knowing that you would have to make the phone call to your friend and not go will give you the incentive to exercise. (Of course, it helps when your friend is motivated to walk, too!)

Don't let the weather give you an excuse for not exercising. While it's great to be able to walk outside and get some fresh air, walking indoors is perfectly acceptable.

Just make sure that you can find somewhere that will let you be out of the elements but where you can also get up a pretty good speed for walking. Enclosed malls and school/health club gymnasiums work very well. Some health clubs have an indoor track for this purpose.

6. Join a Weight Loss Support Group!

Join a weight loss support group of some type, whether it is online or offline. Having a support system in place has been shown to increase the likelihood of success and also to help keep your weight off.

Having a support group will help you do several things: get tips, share recipes, and talk about triumphs and struggles. It is inspiring to see others who have lost weight and also encouraging when you see others who have had moments of weakness (just like you will).

While traditional weight loss or groups have been in-person meetings, they are now groups available online. Online weight loss support groups are a great alternative if you cannot make a weekly meeting. You can get the same type of encouragement and support that you can in person.

One benefit to being involved with an online weight loss support group is that you can actually check in several times per week or even per day. This means that you do not have to wait and be connected to your support system only once a week.

Many online weight loss support groups also have systems that will help you to track your daily calorie counts and to plan menus. Many of them also have ways to keep track of the amount of weight that you have lost and the amount of weight that you have left to lose.

7. Don't Go Overboard!

Make sure that you don't overdo it. You don't want to make so many dramatic changes that it is a shock to your system and difficult to maintain. You want to introduce changes to your routine gradually.

8. Get Enough Sleep!

You need to make sure that you get enough sleep each night. Your body needs time to rest, both mentally and physically. This is especially true if you have cut your calories and you have added an exercise regimen.

When you exercise or do strength training, you can actually damage your muscle tissue. This is quite normal, but you need to have periods of rest so that your body can heal properly. If you are tired, that is your body telling you that you need to rest.

9. Eat Slowly

Your body actually takes about 20 minutes to realize that it is full, no matter how fast you eat or how much you consume. If you shovel food into your mouth quickly for those first 20 minutes, you are very likely to overeat - and then you will feel miserable later after your body realizes that it's too full.

In order to make sure that you do not overeat in those first 20 minutes, try to consume half of what is on your plate and then wait about five or 10 minutes until you start to eat anything else. If you are still hungry, then continue eating. If not, then don't eat anything else.

10. Eat your snacks

No, this does not contradict #9. Snacking between meals can actually be a great weight loss aid. Remember, if you let your blood sugar levels get too low you will tend to overeat.

Small meals that are eaten at regular intervals throughout the day are enough to keep you satisfied and that way you are not hungry. By letting your body not go hungry, you will also make sure that your body does not think that it is being starved. This will also help prevent the starvation mode from kicking in.

11. Change Your Cooking Oil!

Use a high quality olive oil instead of using butter or margarine.

Nonstick cooking sprays are not necessary a healthy alternative. Cooking sprays can contain propellants and other chemicals – which are not the best choice.

12. Increase Your Fiber Intake

Consume more fiber. Fiber will help in several ways.

First, it will help you to feel full. This will make sure that you do not eat too much. A second benefit is that it will help keep you from being constipated. A third benefit is that eating the right amount of fiber each day could possibly help to lower your risk of colon cancer.

While obtaining fiber from the foods you consume is ideal, it is not necessary. There are plenty of fiber supplements that you can use. There are chewable wafers and also pills you can take.

13. Avoid Junk Foods!

Running through the drive-through at your local fast food restaurant is a sure way to sabotage your weight loss efforts. You need to try to avoid fast food restaurants if at all possible. If you absolutely must eat at a fast food

restaurant, then try to choose some type of salad as your main course.

14. Drink Plenty of Water

Drinking enough water has several benefits when you're trying to lose weight. It helps to fill you up so that you don't eat as much during meals

Because water has no calories, it is an excellent choice for a beverage when you are on a reduced calorie diet.

Unlike other calorie-free drinks, water does not have any of the negative ingredients (like caffeine, no-calorie sweeteners, carbonic acid, artificial colors or flavors, etc.) that can be found in things such as diet sodas. Just because a drink does not have any calories does not necessarily mean that it is good for you.

Water can also help to keep you hydrated. Hydration is very important when you are trying to lose weight. Hydration will help keep you feeling well, plus it will also help keep your energy levels up so that you can exercise.

Being well-hydrated helps to keep your metabolism higher, which in turn helps you burn calories faster! Diet sodas and other drinks that contain caffeine can actually cause you to lose precious fluids because caffeine is a diuretic.

15. Avoid White Bread and Pasta

White bread is not good for you. It disrupts your blood sugar levels and also helps promote belly fat. Eating refined pasta will do the same. Eating whole grains will help to not affect your blood sugar levels and will help you lose weight because they will help you to stay full longer and they will also increase your fiber intake.

Barilla makes a brand of whole wheat pasta that is very similar in taste to regular pasta. The whole wheat version is much higher in fiber and is packed with more nutrients.

If you truly dislike the taste of whole wheat bread, Sara Lee makes a whole wheat bread that is very similar to the white bread version.

Just because you gain some weight during the holidays does not mean you have to keep it forever. By following these 15 weight loss tips, you will be able to use those holiday pounds quickly and keep them off – at least until next year.

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