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NEWS RELEASE

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Yes, You Can Have That Cookie this Holiday Season

Holiday treats and “goodies” are all around us. Thanksgiving Day kicked off a six-week marathon of eating and it’s hard not to indulge in all the holiday baking and sweet treats. The holidays are about sharing time and good food with family and friends. Do participate and celebrate all the holiday season has to offer, however, make it healthy!

Being healthy around the holiday season does not mean that you cannot indulge in those cookies or treats. What it does mean is that it is important to not over indulge. Eat only one or two of the treats and remember to keep up the exercise and physical activity. The important thing to remember around the holiday season is moderation.

Here are some goals to aim for this holiday season to keep you and your family’s waistlines at bay:

- Before going to a holiday party, be sure to eat a light snack such as fruit, yogurt or cheese before you go. This will keep you from overeating and your children from getting antsy at the party.
- Don’t use the excuse of your New Year’s “diet” to overeat during the holiday. By anticipating food restriction after the New Year, you are more likely to “binge-eat” throughout the holidays, which can increase the loss of lean body mass, and slow down your metabolism. If you have the frame of mind that “you are never going to eat like this again, so you might as well enjoy it now,” you are more likely to overeat at holiday parties and gatherings, making it even more difficult to maintain or lose weight after the holiday season.
- Make a plan to be physically active each day. While at the mall doing holiday shopping, walk briskly from store to store. Take the children out for a fun walk around the neighborhood to view all the fun holiday decorations. Turn up the music and dance with your kids, outside or indoors.
- Reduce the fat in holiday recipes. Use applesauce in place of oil in holiday breads and baked goods. Use egg substitutes instead of whole eggs. Try plain nonfat yogurt in place of sour cream.
- Drink water instead of soda or eggnog. Make use of all that citrus fruit that’s in season - flavor water with lemon, lime, mandarins and oranges for variety.

Above all, have fun this holiday season and enjoy your time with your children, family and friends. Parents and child-care providers can learn more about healthy eating habits through the Nutrition BEST program at the UCCE by calling us at (530) 889-7350 or visiting us on the web at <http://ceplacer.ucdavis.edu>.

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