Holiday Tips for Bariatric Patients

Holidays and food go hand in hand, and can be a challenging and stressful time for preventing weight gain for many people, including bariatric patients. The good news is, however, with some careful planning and remembering the basic guidelines, holiday weight gain is not inevitable! Here are some suggestions to help during the holiday season:

**Don’t skip meals and arrive at a party famished.** This will help you to control portions and not overeat.

**Drink water and non-caloric beverages; avoid drinking your calories.** (Avoid the eggnog!)

**Eat protein foods first.** The holidays are no exception. Since small amounts are tolerated, this helps overeating as well.

**Socialize.** Put the emphasis on family and friends, not food.

**Bring a healthy dish to the gathering.** Revise a standard recipe or bring a fruit or vegetable tray.

**Maintain your exercise routine.** Keep up with activities that can be implemented into your daily life (stairs, parking your car further away, etc.). Or start a new tradition like walking or playing a sport after dinner.

**Chew slowly.** Eating too quickly decreases the release of hormones in the gut that induce feelings of being full, resulting in eating more.

**Sit far away from the food display or kitchen.** That way it won’t be so easy to refill your plate or engage in “mindless eating”.

**Chew sugar free gum.** This can satisfy an oral fixation and curb your appetite.

**Don’t be unrealistic.** Do enjoy yourself and set realistic goals. If you do end up overindulging, get right back on track. Move forward and make staying healthy a positive New Year’s Resolution!