

# Leyla Weighs In: Don't sweat the holidays

Sometimes the best way to stick to a diet plan is to break all the rules. Yes, I did just say that. The holidays are a perfect time to help you stick to your diet. You just have to follow this simple rule: For that particular holiday meal or occasion, you will eat whatever you like. The very next day, you get right back on your program as if nothing ever happened. No guilt or remorse permitted.

Since you will be "allowed" to eat these special-occasion foods (holiday goose, pumpkin pie, Christmas cookies, etc.), you won't feel deprived. Feeling deprived is what increases the reward value of the food you're missing. This strategy takes care of that.



Makes sense, right? We also do away with this negative self-talk: "I just completely blew my diet so I might as well continue to gorge." You're not blowing it. You're having a holiday meal. That's all. No drama here.

If you are hosting, have your guests bring Tupperware or any other suitable containers so they can carry away all those tempting goodies. Make sure every last nibble goes out the door. Out of sight, out of mind! This way, your sumptuous holiday meal doesn't turn into an all weekend feast.

Are you receiving a lot of sweet treats as gifts (chocolates, fruitcake, etc.)? You don't have to eat them to show your love and appreciation. Pay it forward. Make donations to your local food bank or soup kitchen. They will really appreciate it, and your waistline will thank you, too!

Now go enjoy your holiday meals and treats, and the very next day, get right back on program. Breaking the rules on occasion is good for the soul.

Wishing you a Joyous Holiday Season!