

# Leyla Weighs In: Holiday eating done right!



Sometimes the best way to stick to a diet plan is to break all the rules. Yes, that's just what I said. 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 (or meal), 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 with all the trimmings, fruit cake, egg nog, 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. Discard the drama.

If you are hosting, have your guests bring a suitable storage container they can carry away all those tempting goodies with. 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 a weeklong feast.

You can also repurpose your leftover meats and veggies into new, healthier meal ideas. A Christmas turkey can become a great base for homemade turkey soup, and ham or roast beef can be diced up and added to hearty salads or incorporated into a breakfast hash using leftover potatoes.

Are you receiving a lot of sweet treats as gifts—like boxes of chocolates? 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 those holiday indulgences! *And the very next day, get right back on program.* Breaking the rules on special occasions is good for the soul and can help restore your willpower.

Remember: the perfect is the enemy of the good. Life is not about living in extremes. Enjoy these special times with your loved ones. Be present, engaged, and have fun!

To your health!

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