



December 23, 2009 – Grand Rapids, MI

## Three Strategies

The rest of this week, most of us are going to have multiple opportunities to overeat. I'm asking you to think about it today and decide what you're going to do. Here are the three strategies for holiday eating:

### **Stay the Course at Every Meal**

If you're on an eating plan to lose weight, you can decide the holiday is just another day. On Thanksgiving, several people I know who are committed to losing weight stuck with their program—they sampled some of the holiday foods but kept track of everything they ate. That's a great way to do things if you're absolutely committed to your goal as they are. That goes along with what I've always said: you can eat anything you want as long as you control the amount—that includes Christmas dinner.

### **Eat What You Want, but Eat Reasonable Portions**

This is similar to the first strategy but for those of you who are not on a specific program. Eat a reasonable portion of your favorite foods and then no more. And when presented with a new treat, take a tiny portion to determine whether it's worth the calories rather than taking a normal-size helping and finish it because you'd be embarrassed not to or simply eat it without thinking. Make sure you also watch what you drink—there are plenty of calories in drinks with alcohol.

### **Eat What You Want and Then Eat Less the Rest of the Time**

This is the riskiest but probably the most realistic approach. If you stuff yourself at your holiday meal, if you go crazy nuts and eat every piece of peanut brittle you can find—it's one meal at one moment in time and it's over. Eat less than you usually do for the next few days and try to move more—take the stairs, go for a walk, or catch up on snowblowing or yardwork.

Every strategy will work as long as you think about it. Mindless eating will be your downfall—you'll eat more between now and the New Year, and then you'll have gained several pounds. So choose a strategy and stick with it, and when the New Year rolls around, you'll be glad you thought before you ate.

What are you prepared to do today?

Paula and I would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your family a Merry Christmas and Happy Holiday season. We're grateful to have you in our lives.

*Dr. Chet*

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