



Cancelling Holiday Calories

December 2007

Be free to indulge in holiday festivities without compromising your fitness goals

Imagine starting the New Year in BETTER shape than you are now while still having the perfect holiday season.

Cheat to win

Consistently controlling appetite during the holiday season is difficult at best, so I don't even try when confronted with a holiday party. Now I know this may sound strange but I actually tell people to set a small weight/fat loss goal starting in early November. I ask them to cast aside all previous "dieting knowledge", books and ideas and simply make the calorie connection, which is the fact that **any calorie burned cancels any calorie consumed**, period. End of story. And the reverse is true: any calorie NOT consumed is one that won't be burned, thus forcing your body to burn its stored calories/fat. In other words, when it comes to weight management it's not WHEN or WHAT you eat and do, but HOW MUCH you eat and move over any GIVEN TIMEFRAME, which in our upcoming example will be the month of December. So "cheating" is not cheating as long as you make it up – and that's easy when you know what you're doing.

Manage the AVERAGE daily deficit

There is a certain daily caloric deficit a person must average in order to lose a specific amount of body fat in a designated timeframe. Your weekly weight change, visible as pounds and/or body fat percentage, validates the size of your deficit regardless of your personal food recording.

The key during the holidays is to focus on the *average deficit* rather than your daily deficit. This is because you most likely will not be able to reach your goal deficit on your festive days, but you can compensate for it on other days in order to stay perfectly on target. Let's look at our holiday plan.

Goal: Lose 2 LBS in December

One pound of fat equals 3500 calories. Therefore, for the month of December, you will have to burn 7000 calories more than you eat in order to lose two pounds. And guess what? We don't care how you do it.

The basic formula

Time period = 30 days; goal of 2lb loss = average daily deficit of 230 calories (30 days x 230 = approx. 7000 calories or 2 pounds). Since I am a typical working parent,

we will use me as an example: At 180 lbs with a sedentary job and exercising 30 minutes, 3 days a week, my average daily calorie burn is 2700 calories (and of course I know this because I never take my bodybugg® off). Using the 2 pound loss goal, I can choose not to do anything different in my daily activities, which means my average daily calorie intake will have to be 2400 calories – and remember, whether I record my food intake or not, my weekly weight/fat trends will validate my success.

Let's say during a festive day I really let go and consume 5000 calories (of course some of those would have been connected with alcohol, which is generally the factor that results in excess calorie consumption). Theoretically I can make it up in one day by not eating (this is not advisable), or by adding 2300 calories of movement, which might be tough after a big party night. Instead, a better strategy might be to alter two days in order to stay on track.

Two-day remedy

As long as you know you are going to blow it ahead of time, always prepare by cutting the previous day's calorie consumption in half. In this case, I would consume 4 meals totaling 1200 calories the day before the event (see sidebar for sample menu). I would then consume 5000 calories the day of the event, and then repeat the 1200 calorie menu the following day. This brings my **three-day calorie intake** to 7400. Assuming I burned my 2700cals/day average, my **three-day calorie output would total 8100** and I am virtually back on track, especially if I participated in a function that went well into the night, resulting in more calories burned than if I had stayed home and gone to bed (by myself).

In summary, my *three-day calorie deficit total was 700* (8100 calories burned minus 7400 calories consumed) or an *average daily deficit of 230 calories*. I'm back on track and had a heck of a good time! And remember, I did this all by manipulating food intake. Plus, every calorie I burn over 2700 during these three days can be added to the number of calories I can consume and still lose weight. For instance, if I had gone for a walk while on a phone call or pattered around the garden for an hour, I would have burned 300 calories more than normal, which allows me to consume 1500 total calories on one of the two 1200 calorie days, or I can have 5300 calories on the big night. You get the picture – the more you move, the more you get to eat (and that applies all the time). Additionally, you can choose to make up the deficit over a longer period of time such as 10 days averaging a 560 calorie deficit. I just like my "pain" quick and done, which also allows more frequent "fun days".

Use the formula anytime you wander off course

Best of all you can repeat the above process anytime you need to – just plug in the numbers and/or control portion sizes on makeup days. It is not uncommon for successful dieters to have a “cheat-day” once weekly during much of the year.

Using bodybugg® during the holidays makes this game easy and puts you in control on a daily basis because your average daily deficit is always visible. This allows you to make the decision to move more or eat less at any time. But for those who don't use bodybugg, prefer not to record foods, or have no idea how many calories are in unmarked foods, simply eat what you want on the festive days and cut all normal meals in half on makeup days.

So there you have it: no appetite constraint when you don't want it because it comes down to a very simple equation – no magic, no guessing, just the facts using the undisputable laws of energy.

Holiday helpers

No matter how you choose to navigate holiday gastronomical temptations, make life easy for yourself and use Apex Fast Fitness Foods during the “catch-up” and “save up” periods. These foods are more satiating than most other foods of equal caloric value and more importantly, packaged Apex foods allow you to accurately count your calories, leaving no room for error.

Life and weight management is easy when you understand and use only facts. And it doesn't get much simpler than calories in and out. You are now free to control your body composition – anytime. This is probably your most valuable tip for the holidays.

Attached are the additional boring tips I give you every year that sound good but are sometimes difficult to act on – but hey – some of you may find them useful.

Have a great holiday and start the New Year WITHOUT having to make a *fitness resolution!* **-Neal**

Sample 1200-calorie menu

7:00 a.m. Meal 1:

Apex Breakfast Square – 220 calories with multivitamin

11:30 a.m. Meal 2:

400 calories: meat of choice sandwich or large salad with favorite protein

4:00 p.m. Meal 3:

400 calories of chicken, starch of choice and salad with multivitamin

8:00 p.m. Meal 4:

Apex cookie – 160 calories with multi
Any choice of non-caloric fluids

Tips to Get Through the Holidays

1. Exercise an hour a day, 4-5 days a week during the holidays. You can even exercise 10 minutes at a time, several times a day. A brisk walk, run or bike-ride will burn calories, relieve stress, and elevate your endorphins and mood. If you have to miss a workout, simply increase your daily activities. Be sure not to snack during this time.
2. Do not avoid eating fat. Eating moderate amounts of fat at a meal can help you feel full sooner and keep you full longer, just don't overdue it.
3. Don't skip meals. Eat small snacks if you are saving up calories. Skipping meals leads to hunger, low energy levels and improper food choices.
4. Don't pass up favorite foods or deprive yourself completely. Moderate consumption is the key.
5. Don't tempt yourself by keeping trigger foods or comfort foods around the house. If you have them, it increases the likelihood that you will overeat.
6. Plan meals by keeping in mind the demands you'll have on your schedule that day.
7. Don't go to a party starving. Before you leave home, eat something light or drink a meal replacement shake. Also, drink a great deal of water the day of the party.
8. When you attend holiday festivities, station yourself away from the buffet table. Make a clear-cut decision to distance yourself from all goodies.
9. Alcoholic beverages pack on the calories so if you're drinking alcohol, stick to light beer or a champagne spritzer. Watch out for the eggnog, it is high in calories and fat.
10. If you do find yourself feeling depressed, soothe your spirit with a massage, manicure, pedicure, or facial. Men can enjoy this too!
11. When you shop, eat before you leave home so you won't resort to cookie breaks.
12. To satisfy your sweet tooth, set limits. For example, you might allow yourself two decadent desserts per week and then move more the next day.
13. Just because it is the holidays doesn't mean you should give yourself the license to eat everything that passes by. Factor in the little extras into your daily intake.
14. Help out by saving fat and calories when it's feasting time. Make or buy wild rice stuffing, baked sweet potatoes, whole-grain rolls and angel-food cake with fruit.
15. Enjoy the season, not just the food!