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Savor the holidays, beware the calories

RACHEL GALLEGOS • IOWA CITY PRESS-CITIZEN • DECEMBER 20, 2009

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It's the season of giving.



But it's also the season of holiday parties, tables full of food and plenty of cookies and sweets.

To enjoy all the tasty parts of the holiday but not regret it when New Year's resolutions roll around, there are a couple things to keep in mind, dietician Kym Wroble said. Wroble is the dietician at the Hy-Vee on Waterfront Drive.

"My theory is it's the holiday, give yourself a little room to indulge," she said.

The trick is to decide what you specifically want to indulge in, Wroble said.

"Don't just mindlessly munch," Wroble said. "Pay attention to what you are eating and enjoy it-- savor the holidays."

Some people try to skip eating all day to have calories to splurge once they get to a cocktail or holiday party, she said. But that just leaves you in a bad mood, hungry and likely to go overboard, she said.

"Don't save your calories. Eat sensibly throughout the day," Wroble said.

Donna Peitz, registered dietician at University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics, suggests a small amount of foods higher in protein before heading to a party to help control your hunger, like a slice of cheese with a couple low-fat crackers.

At the party, Wroble suggests surveying the food beforehand so you know what your options are.

She also recommends trying to bring a healthier dish yourself, especially for those with food restrictions or those trying to watch their weight.

There's more to bring than just a vegetable tray. Add whole grains to baked goods or use replacements, such as substituting Splenda for sugar, Wroble said.

She likes to visit the Web site www.CookingLight.com for recipe ideas. There people can find tips for healthy eating and ways to convert a recipe.

The Hy-Vee Web site, www.hy-vee.com, also has recipes, including those for special diets, she said. The Waterfront Drive store Web site has a calendar of monthly events, including classes to register for, she said.

For fewer calories, Peitz recommends a dry wine instead of beer or making mixed alcoholic drinks with diet instead of regular sodas.

She also encourages people to remember to stay well hydrated and continue to exercise.

"I think sometimes people just have the impression I'll eat anything I want over the holidays and then start my diet in January," she said. "People who eat healthy throughout the year will do fairly well throughout the holidays."

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According to HealthCastle.com, an online nutrition community run by registered dieticians, here are some common holiday foods and their calories:

- 6 ounces roasted turkey, untrimmed mixed meat: 350 calories.
- 1 cup stuffing: 340 calories.
- ¼ cup turkey gravy: 375 calories.
- 1 cup mashed potatoes: 240 calories.
- ¾ cup candied sweet potatoes: 365 calories.
- 1 cup green bean casserole: 180 calories.
- ½ cup cranberry sauce: 210 calories.
- 1 roll with butter: 120 calories.
- 2 glasses wine, punch or cider: 200-250 calories.
- 1 slice pumpkin pie with whipped cream: 500 calories.
- 1 slice pecan pie: 500 calories.
- 1 cup eggnog: 400 calories.

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