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MCHD HEALTH BLOG

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HOLIDAY TIPS FOR DIABETICS

With the winter holidays just around the corner, you may be wondering how you're going to manage your diabetes. Indulgent foods, late-night parties, and travel make the holidays festive but can quickly throw off a diabetic's daily routine.

Here are 5 tips from the CDC about how to keep your health on track this holiday season:

1. **Holiday-proof your plan!** Since it's hard to control what you'll be served at a party, make a plan beforehand. Try your best to eat at your normal meal times, or have a small snack if you will be having a late dinner. If you're heading to a holiday party, offer to bring a healthy side dish. If you plan to enjoy a sweet treat, cut back on other carbs (like bread and potatoes) during your meal. Finally, don't skip meals so you can feast. This can make it harder to manage your blood sugar and you'll be more likely to overeat.
2. **Outsmart the buffet!** It can be tempting to see a long table of food and pile your plate high. Instead, start with a small plate of foods you like best, including vegetables. Eat your veggies first – they'll help you feel fuller sooner. Eat slowly, since it can take about 20 minutes to realize that you feel full. Avoid or limit alcohol. Alcohol may lower your blood sugar and can negatively interact with your diabetes medication.
3. **Fit in favorites!** If you want to enjoy an indulgent treat that you can't get any other time of the year, make sure you keep track of it in your meal plan. Try to keep to a small serving and savor every bite!
4. **Keep moving!** Being active is your secret holiday weapon; it can help make up for eating more than usual and reduce stress, too. Get moving with friends and family, such as taking a walk after a holiday meal.
5. **Get your Zzz's.** Sleep loss can lead to more fluctuations in your blood sugar. When we're tired we tend to reach for fatty, sugary foods too. Aim for 7-8 hours of sleep every night to help maintain your blood sugar levels and avoid mindless eating.

As a diabetic, more indulgent foods, stress, and tiredness can greatly affect your blood sugar. Check your levels more often during the holidays and talk to your provider about a plan for how to stay healthy during this season. Most importantly, remember what the season is about—celebrating and connecting with the people you care about. When you focus more on the fun, it's easier to focus less on the food. Want to learn more about diabetes? Visit <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes>