Beware of “Hidden” Calories During the Holidays

Holiday gatherings and eating go hand in hand—that’s why most people gain about a pound between Thanksgiving and New Year’s Day. This pound often lingers past the holidays and can lead to gradual weight gain over the years.

If You’re Going to a Party ...

- Choose small, low-calorie meals earlier in the day. This will balance out the calories you’ll eat at the party. Eat a piece of fruit before the party to fill you up.
- Choose boiled shrimp or veggies and a little dip instead of cheese or fried foods. And watch your intake of fat and “empty calories” in sweets, such as eggnog and pumpkin pie. Half a cup of eggnog has 9.5 grams of fat and 171 calories, while one slice of pumpkin pie packs a whopping 14 fat grams and 316 calories. If possible, satisfy your sweet tooth with fresh fruit or angel food cake instead.
- Foods on your dinner plate may also have hidden calories. For example, half a cup of stuffing has nearly 9 grams of fat and 178 calories.
- If you drink alcohol, have only one alcoholic drink if you’re a woman, two drinks if you’re a man. Then switch to water. Alcohol is high in calories.

Sources include the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and the United States Department of Agriculture.