



WEIGHT LOSS
& LIFESTYLE MEDICINE CENTER

Holiday to Holiday Challenge

December 2025

Week TWO

You survived the First Week!

Week 1 of the Holiday Challenge is in the books - Congratulations! We hope you are finding the daily tips and challenges helpful. Eat smart and stay strong by making thoughtful choices as you entertain and go to parties over the next few weeks. You **CAN** do it!

Holiday Challenge Guidelines

The overall goal is for participants to maintain their current weight for the year and to continue their progress towards their health goals.

- **Weigh yourself each week.** Tracking weight is a proven weight management strategy. It is important to know your starting weight as it will keep you motivated and allow you to track your progress.
- **Track what you eat and drink.** By tracking what you consume each day, you can make sure that you are eating within calorie goals to maintain your weight.
- **Track your activity.** Stay motivated by tracking activity each day. Every little bit adds up and seeing how much you have done can encourage you to do more.
- **Make a Plan.** Figure out what works best for you. Use the tips and strategies provided to help you navigate the season.



Daily Tip: Cooking meals at home and eating out less can improve your health by providing more control over the ingredients and portion sizes. Judge YOUR cooking success by whether the food tastes, smells and looks good to YOU—not by whether it matches a styled and staged photo.



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Week #2 Challenge

Focus on Fruits and Vegetables



The USDA's Dietary Guidelines suggest filling at least half of your plate with fruit and vegetables for every meal and snack. This week, challenge yourself to focus on fruit and vegetables. Visualize your plate and make sure you have lots of **fruits** and **vegetables**. This can be easier than just counting servings. Fruits and vegetables are nutrient powerhouses that are low in calories and high in fiber, so they keep you fuller for longer. The benefits add up over time, bite by bite.

There are many ways to "sneak" fruits and vegetables into your daily eating routine.

- Try substituting a handful of carrots for a bag of chips or an apple instead of a cereal bar.
- Add a handful of spinach to your morning fruit smoothie
- Add bell peppers and onions into an omelet to start the day with vegetables.
- Instead of meat sauce with pasta, try adding eggplant, mushrooms, or squash with the marinara sauce and serve over whole-grain noodles.

If possible, opt for in-season fruits and vegetables. These will be more flavorful and oftentimes less expensive than out-of-season produce. Look for winter squash, brussel sprouts, apples, citrus and cranberries to be in season this time of year.

1.www.dietaryguidelines.gov

It's a brand new week!
Eat smart and move more

Daily Challenge: Every step is a stride toward a healthier, happier you. Lace up and step into your potential.



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WHATS COOKING?

Mexican Chicken Salad Lettuce Wrap

10 oz rotisserie or Grilled Chicken breast

2 cups diced cucumbers

1 cup diced radish

5 chopped green onions

1 cup chopped cilantro

1 jalapeno seeded and diced

1/2 cup avocado diced

1/2 cup low fat cottage cheese

1/4 cup plain greek yogurt

2 TBSP lime juice

1 tsp salt

1 tsp chili powder

1/4 tsp cracked black pepper

1/2 tsp garlic salt

1/2 tsp cumin

Lettuce

Cut or shred the chicken then add remaining ingredients.
Serve inside lettuce leaves





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TOP HEALTHY INGREDIENT SUBSTITUTIONS

Original Ingredient	Healthy Substitute
Beef, 70%-85% lean ground or chuck	92% or leaner ground beef, 92% or leaner ground turkey (check the label!), Replace half of the beef with sautéed mushrooms or cooked lentils
Bread crumbs (as breading to mix with meat)	Unprocessed, crushed bran flakes mixed with oat flour, oatmeal or almond meal (or another nut flour)
Butter, as a topping	Olive oil, nut butters, avocado
Butter, in baking	Applesauce, avocado, pumpkin puree, Greek yogurt
Butter, in cooking	Olive oil or other vegetable oil (canola, peanut)
Buttermilk	Kefir, 1 Tbsp lemon juice + 15 Tbsp skim milk, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup unsweetened yogurt + $\frac{1}{4}$ water (varies depending on yogurt thickness), Reduced fat buttermilk
Cheese, regular	Low-fat/non-fat cheese, part skim
Chicken, whole bird or dark meat	Boneless, skinless chicken or turkey breast (white meat)
Chocolate chips	>85% cocoa chips, dried fruit, carob chips,
Coconut, shredded	1 tsp coconut extract (per 1 c. shredded), crushed nuts or almond slivers
Cream cheese	Light cream cheese, Neufchatel cheese, Greek yogurt
Cream, heavy	Equal parts half and half + fat-free evaporated milk; Baking, light cream or Half and Half; Soups/casseroles, evaporated skim milk
Egg, 1 Large whole ($\frac{1}{4}$ cup)	2 large egg whites, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup egg whites or egg substitute, 1 Tbsp ground flax seed + 3 Tbsp water, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup pureed silken tofu, $\frac{1}{2}$ banana mashed + $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp baking powder
Evaporated whole milk	Evaporated skim milk; Baking, skim milk + 1 Tbsp cornstarch
Flour, white	Oat flour, 100% whole wheat flour, soy flour, ancient grain flours (quinoa, barley, spelt), almond flour
Fruit canned in syrup	Fruit canned in water or juices, frozen fruit, fresh fruit
Fruit-flavored yogurt	Fat-free plain yogurt or Greek yogurt mixed with fresh or frozen fruit
Gravy	Thin with water to au jus consistency or cool and skim fat off surface
Juice or Kool-Aid	Iced herbal tea, Crystal Light, sugar free Kool-Aid or lemon water
Mayonnaise or creamy salad dressing	Light or non-fat mayonnaise, hummus, mustard, pesto, mashed avocado, Greek yogurt, tzatziki (yogurt + cucumber), vinegar-based salad dressing, olive oil + balsamic vinegar (or other vinegar)
Milk, 2% or whole	Skim, or 1% milk,
Nuts, 1 cup chopped	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup nuts, toasted to bring out the flavor, toasted oats, pumpkin or sunflower seeds, dried fruit
Oatmeal, flavored packets	Rolled/old fashioned oats and chopped or dried fruit or sugar free preserves



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Daily Tip: Adjust Goals for Travel

Whether you are traveling for the holidays or work, sticking to your goals may be more difficult when you are out of your routine. That's normal and that's okay! In these times, you want to adopt flexible thinking and make good decisions, not necessarily perfect ones. Plan for success, even if that's an adjusted version of success. How you plan and adjust will depend on your goals, and some behaviors will be easier to maintain during travel than others.

- **Shift the Time** - Look for another time you could fit in your goal-aligned behavior. If an evening walk doesn't fit into your schedule, maybe a morning one will.
- **Shrink the behavior:** Along the good, not perfect principle, engage in your healthy behavior, but create a reduced, travel-friendly version. If a 30-minute walk is not doable, aim for a 10-minute one.
- **Invite others:** Ask friends, family or co-workers to join you for a walk, workout or other activity.
- **Ask questions:** Ask your hosts or hotel staff questions. Would your host be okay if you brought a few healthy breakfasts to store in the fridge? Does your hotel room have a fridge and microwave, or could you be transferred to a room with one? You may be able to bring some healthy snacks or meals with you.

When are you traveling next? Think about how you can adjust your goals around your travel. At the end of the day, it's not going to be perfect. Plan and choose to make good choices in alignment with your goals.