

Exclusive

Beat-the-Fat-Season Diet

Enjoy the festivities and still **lose weight.**



If you made it through Thanksgiving without gaining an ounce, hold on to your waistband. The true season for diet disaster is now. To get you through the holidays without looking like Santa's sister, we've devised a game plan. This diet makes it easy to stick to your calorie budget—while still enjoying all those seasonal treats. Each day, choose a breakfast, lunch and dinner from the three columns. Since we've included choices for eating at home, in the mall's food court or at a dinner party, you can vary your menu according to your schedule. And here's the best part: You even get to pick a daily 300-calorie treat from the bonus box. Giving yourself permission to enjoy special foods like cookies, eggnog and, oh yeah, fruitcake, is critical to the success of any diet this time of year, according to Sue Moores, R.D., a spokesperson for the American Dietetic Association. "Deprivation will only lead to overindulgence," says Moores.

Your total calorie intake will be about 1,800 a day—enough for an active 130-pound woman to keep holiday pudge at bay. If you're trying to lose weight, simply omit the optional items in the menu lists to shave about 250 calories from your daily total. You'll lose about a half a pound per week while *still* enjoying your favorite foods! For faster weight loss, simply up your exercise routine.

by Heidi Reichenberger McIndoo, R.D. ✦ photographs by Jacqueline Millen

Breakfast

- 1 ½ cup oatmeal prepared with 8 ounces 1 percent milk
2 tablespoons dried cranberries
Optional: Sprinkle oatmeal with 3 tablespoons sliced almonds.
(Total calories: 386)
- 2 1 hard- or soft-boiled egg
1 piece whole-wheat toast
1 teaspoon margarine
4 ounces low-fat fruit yogurt
4 ounces orange juice
Optional: Add another boiled egg.
(Total calories: 432)
- 3 Smoothie: Blend ½ cup low-fat vanilla yogurt, 4 ounces cranberry juice, half a medium banana and ½ cup frozen raspberries until smooth.
Optional: Have 1 tablespoon cashews on the side.
(Total calories: 407)
- 4 ¾-inch-thick slice Fig and Walnut Bread (see recipe, page 131)
8 ounces skim milk
½ cup melon
Optional: Spread the bread with 2 teaspoons reduced-fat cream cheese.
(Total calories: 410)
- 5 1 small whole-wheat tortilla
1½ tablespoons peanut butter
4 ounces low-fat fruit yogurt
Optional: Wrap tortilla around a small banana.
(Total calories: 417)
- 6 1 cup raisin bran cereal with 8 ounces skim milk sprinkled with 1 tablespoon dried cherries
Optional: Increase the amount of cherries to ¼ cup.
(Total calories: 414)
- 7 McDonald's:
1 order scrambled eggs
1 snack-size yogurt parfait
Optional: Add 6 ounces orange juice.
(Total calories: 390)



Lunch

- 1 Spread one 8-inch flour tortilla with 2 tablespoons cranberry sauce. Add 2 or 3 leaves lettuce, 3 ounces turkey and half an apple, thinly sliced. Roll up.
10 baby carrots
1 fat-free pudding cup
Optional: Add 1½ ounces low-fat cheddar cheese to wrap.
(Total calories: 563)
- 2 Pizza Hut:
2 slices hand-tossed Veggie Lover's pizza
Optional: Add a salad made with 1 cup romaine; half a tomato, diced; half a cucumber, sliced; 3 black olives and 1 tablespoon fat-free French dressing.
(Total calories: 514)
- 3 3½ ounces grilled salmon
¾ cup cooked jasmine rice
Salad made with 1½ cups baby spinach, ½ cup mandarin oranges and 2 tablespoons fat-free vinaigrette
Optional: Sprinkle salad with 2 tablespoons chopped walnuts.
(Total calories: 578)
- 4 Shred one 3-ounce breast from a rotisserie chicken, mix with ¼ cup barbecue sauce, and serve on a whole-wheat sandwich roll.
Salad made with one chopped apple, ¼ cup halved grapes and 1½ tablespoons salad dressing
Optional: Add 1½ tablespoons pecans to salad.
(Total calories: 564)
- 5 Subway:
One 6-inch roast beef sandwich
1 cup black bean soup
Optional: Have 1 small Peach Pizazz Fruizle.
(Total calories: 570)
- 6 Wendy's:
Spring Mix Salad (no pecans) with fat-free French dressing
Small chili with two crackers
Optional: Add shredded cheese.
(Total calories: 555)
- 7 Mix 3 ounces water-packed tuna with ½ cup shredded carrot and ½ cup chopped pepper. Pile on an English muffin; top with 2 slices tomato and cheese.
1 orange
Optional: Add 2 tablespoons light dressing to tuna.
(Total calories: 554)

Dinner

- 1 3 ounces grilled chicken breast
1 cup carrots
1 cup cooked wild rice
½ cup applesauce
Optional: Glaze carrots with 2 teaspoons butter and 1 teaspoon brown sugar.
(Total calories: 532)
- 2 3 ounces lean roast beef
¾ cup cooked couscous with chopped scallion and lemon zest
1 cup steamed broccoli
Salad made with 1 cup lettuce, 2 tablespoons shredded carrot and 4 cherry tomatoes drizzled with 1 tablespoon vinaigrette
Optional: Add 3 tablespoons golden raisins to couscous.
(Total calories: 564)
- 3 4 ounces turkey kielbasa cooked in 1 tablespoon each orange juice, butter and brown sugar
½ cup steamed spinach
1 baked sweet potato
Optional: Have 4 ounces wine.
(Total calories: 546)
- 4 One 4-ounce breast from a rotisserie chicken
1 cup steamed cauliflower
¾ cup fat-free baked beans mixed with ½ cup pineapple
1 small tomato, sliced and drizzled with 1 teaspoon olive oil
Optional: Add 1 small piece bread.
(Total calories: 578)
- 5 3 ounces lean pork chop
1 baked potato with 1 teaspoon butter and 1 tablespoon reduced-fat sour cream
½ cup steamed green beans
1 cup skim milk
Optional: Add ½ cup peach slices.
(Total calories: 538)
- 6 One piece vegetable lasagna
Salad made with 1½ cups greens, ½ cup roasted peppers, 2 tablespoons crumbled feta and 2 tablespoons low-fat dressing
1 bread stick
Optional: Add 8 ounces skim milk.
(Total calories: 540)
- 7 3 ounces roast turkey breast
½ cup mashed potatoes
¾ cup carrots
2 tablespoons gravy
1 small piece gingerbread
Optional: Have ½ cup cranberry sauce.
(Total calories: 564)

Bonus Treats

- 1 One Cinnabon Minibon
(300 calories)
- 2 One piece Stollen (see recipe, page 130)
8 ounces skim milk
(252 calories)
- 3 4 ounces Skinny Nog (see recipe, below)
Small cranberry nut muffin
(290 calories)
- 4 Two snickerdoodle cookies
8 ounces sugar-free hot cocoa prepared with 1 percent milk
(285 calories)
- 5 1 ounce each potato and tortilla chips with 1 tablespoon each onion dip and salsa
(325 calories)
- 6 Three Buffalo chicken wings with 6 celery sticks and 2 tablespoons blue cheese dressing
(312 calories)
- 7 Half a cup of superpremium ice cream (such as Häagen-Dazs)
(270 calories)
- 8 One piece Chocolate Eggnog Pie (see recipe, page 131)
(284 calories)
- 9 Two Gingerbread Cookies (see recipe, page 130)
8 ounces sugar-free hot cocoa prepared with 1 percent milk
(263 calories)
- 10 One peppermint cream cheese brownie
8 ounces 1 percent milk
(282 calories)

Skinny Nog

- 1½ cups egg substitute
- 1 cup reduced-fat (1 percent) milk
- 1 cup fat-free half-and-half
- ½ cup white sugar
- 1½ teaspoons freshly grated nutmeg
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract

In a blender, combine all ingredients until smooth and creamy. Garnish with a cinnamon stick, if desired.

Makes eight 4-ounce servings.

Nutritional information per serving: 129 calories, 7 g protein, 18 g carbohydrate, 2 g fat, 0 g fiber.



Party On Without Packing It On

Never leave for a holiday gathering with an empty stomach. Otherwise, you'll be easily swayed from your weight-maintenance goals by the variety of treats offered. Instead, have a piece of fruit or half a sandwich on your way out the door. You'll be better able to resist the temptation to overeat.

Keep tabs on your alcohol consumption. Every glass of wine, beer or spirit is about 100 calories, while every mixed cocktail is twice that. Worse, alcohol weakens your willpower and can reinforce your cravings for fatty, salty snacks.

At a party, focus more on your fellow guests and less on the food. "Parties are really about having fun and enjoying family and friends, not eating," says Cynthia Sass, R.D., a spokesperson for the American Dietetic Association.

Don't trade your gym time for daily trips to the mall. A regular exercise routine will not only keep your waistline under control but also help you keep your sanity. Studies show that low-intensity exercise is one of the best ways to improve your mood.

If you've received more than your fill of food gifts, donate some to soup kitchens or neighborhood shelters. Sharing with those less fortunate than you is a wonderful way to spread around a few calories—not to mention holiday cheer.