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Fight the party flab

A perfect shape during New Year when booze and parties go hand in hand seems to be a paradox. You give and receive chocolates as gifts and they certainly aren't low in calories! Keeping fit is also difficult because shopping trips, traffic, and the ensuing fatigue disrupt your regular fitness routine.

Does this mean you should give up and resign yourself to gaining on the average, seven pounds by the time New Year rolls out? No, if you consider these suggestions for a healthy and guilt-free party season...

Eat what you enjoy

Traditionally, in any celebration, food is a major point of attraction. This festive season too has its own epicurean specialities, which willy-nilly are high on calorie count. It would be miserable to have to gnaw on carrot sticks and see everyone else descend on the food-laden family table. Let yourself go and join in the festivities. However, limit yourself to eating only those foods you really enjoy. Do not use the season as an excuse to over-indulge in everything else.

Use the same control when it comes to all those food goodies you receive as gifts.



If you don't really like cakes, you don't have to eat them. Give them away at the office or to charitable institutions. Enjoy only that what you can really relish. Don't waste those calories on yourself.



Watch out for emotional eating

This is the time to party and enjoy, but at the same time, stress can be a spin-off of this joviality. Those of us for whom the food factor is a big de-stressing ingredient of life, the anxiety of adding those much feared bulges is not groundless. Avoid the bulimic tendency of stuffing yourself and use other means to relax like a soothing massage, lighting aroma candles, decorating the house, etc.



Get enough sleep

Sleeping sleep to attend one more party isn't followed by circadian pangs. But believe it or not, some studies have shown that when people are short on sleep, they eat more. It's as

Keeping fit during hectic party season sounds unrealistic. Does it? Well don't worry about it this time. Simply blend a daily routine of exercise, some conscious eating and then party till you drop. Your fitness need would be taken care of.

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though the body is trying to obtain energy from food that was meant to come from adequate rest.

Have realistic expectations

Year-end is not the time to try and lose weight. Consider yourself lucky if you manage to maintain your weight. Nor should a pound here and there give you a sense of guilt, they can be easily taken care of when your schedule gets back to normal in January.



Frenzied shopping and chaotic traffic it can be very difficult to maintain your regular fitness routine as you make new beginnings.

Beware of all-or-nothing attitude

It can be deadly if you have the 'all-or-nothing' attitude towards food. "What's the use? I overate during the office party. I might as well stop watching what I eat and go all the way," you convince yourself. Going all the way means giving up all control, eating every fattening morsel that comes your way, feeling terribly guilty, eating some more. So what if you succumbed to the Chocolate Cake? It's not the end of the world. You can always eat a light low-calorie dinner to balance it out. Excuses for eating binge are aplenty!



Customise your calorie

If you are interested in exercising your culinary skills, consider modifying some of your favourite recipes to make them lower in total calorie content. For example, lessen the amount of sugar that you use in any of your recipe by one fourth. Most people will not even notice



the difference. Use loosely packed brown sugar. This way you will use fewer calories. Or when the recipe calls for milk, use skimmed milk instead of full cream. It's worth experimenting because the calorie cut-down will make a difference in the long run.

Balance calorie intake

To really enjoy all the rich food that is served at parties without worrying about your weight, eat low-calorie meals at home and thus balance the extras. For eating high-calorie meals without these sensible breaks will spell a disaster on the scale when the day of reckoning comes.

Modify fitness routine

New Year brings with it surprise gifts. And everyone remembers what a chocolate-lover you are. KNOCK KNOCK! Come calories knocking at your door. A big reason for you to cross-check your scale. And exercise is the easy way out if you really



want to savour those melt-in-your-mouth chocolates. The problem is that because of frenzied shopping and chaotic traffic it can be very difficult to maintain your regular fitness routine as you make new beginnings.

Rather than giving up exercises, try modifying your usual routine by cutting down on either the frequency or the duration of your workouts. If you are used to daily workouts, try cutting it down to two to three times a week. You don't need to stick to your one-hour exercise regime; you can change it to thirty minutes. The whole point is that stretch-outs are a must, you can only reschedule the whole thing. Not only will it ensure that you are perfectly fit and fine, but it will also help calm your frazzled nerves.

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