


Say Yes to the Feast!

How Not to Dread Your Holiday Dinner



Make Peace with Food this Holiday Season with Intuitive Eating

Ladies. Let's face it. We all know once the holidays come around the scales come back out along with our inner conscience nitpicking our every move. You might hear voices in your head saying, "Eew, seriously? Look how much mayonnaise is in that!" Or, "No I mustn't. I have to stay faithful to my diet!" Or the time-old classic, "Gosh that looks so good, but I shouldn't."

We all do it, and it's getting in the way of our holiday experience! So how about letting your body do the talking this holiday season? Try a different approach - intuitive eating.

Intuitive eating is a non-diet approach focusing on your inner cues of hunger and satiety (fullness). It is a fairly new concept to the weight conscious individual and can at first seem pretty scary.

Many dieticians are adopting and promoting the new behavior nationwide. "More people should do it," said Michelle Morris, dietician and professor at California State University, Chico. Morris believes that we tend to unlearn how to eat intuitively and that we should help people relearn it.

"There are so many influences that work against eating intuitively, such as being stressed and overcommitted. Multitasking and eating can lead to overeating which can turn in to depriving yourself, which leads again to binge eating; and the cycle continues," said Morris.

Your body knows when it's hungry, and has great ways of telling you (stomach growls, irritability, weakness). Your body also

5 Tips to Eating Intuitively during the Holidays

- Recognize physical hunger
- Decide what you really want
- Plan ahead to be hungry, but don't over-starve
- Eat slowly
- Pay attention to satisfaction



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knows what it wants. Depriving your body of something it's craving will most likely result in overeating of that same food later on.

So when you see grandma's buttered up mashed potatoes being passed around, don't be afraid to have some. Chances are, when the leftovers are packed up and you're finally alone at home by yourself you will gorge into the savory deliciousness and overeat more than you would have if you just had a serving at dinner.

"Decide what you really want. Allow yourself to taste the food, feel the texture, and let the taste fade away with each bite." said Deb McCafferty, dietician and co-owner of *The Body Within You*. It is important to take time with your meals and pay attention to when you become satisfied so you don't become uncomfortably full. "If you do become full, don't worry. Allow yourself to feel it," said McCafferty.

This doesn't mean that holiday meals should be a free for all. "Intuitive Eating is highly misunderstood," said McCafferty. Focus in on what your body wants and needs and you will find that you will not need to eat as much to feel satisfied.

The holidays can be a stressful and emotional time for people. Emotional eating can definitely be triggered around the holidays," said Morris. Heightened emotions around your family can lead some people to eat and overeat as a form of comfort. If this happens to you, take a step back and decide where those feelings are coming from and what you're really wanting. Some people may feel very apprehensive to try intuitive eating during the holidays and that is natural! "Trying to enjoy my Thanksgiving while making sure I'm not packing on my winter coat is hard," said college student Lauren Wagner.

Many people may think that intuitive eating is an excuse to overindulge because it's what your body "wants." If you really tune into your hunger and satisfaction from food, you'll find that intuitive eating works. You won't have to feel so guilty after your meal and you can start enjoying the holidays how they were intended.

