

Have fun at the holiday party and remain healthy

Keep a few cheat-sheet notes at hand for the holiday parties

By Fred Sassani
Special to the Pflag

Remember that kid in school who scored so well on tests that everyone got a little suspicious?

Then one day during a big exam – Bam! – the teacher pulled a cheat-sheet out of the kid's pocket. It was game over for that kid and the rest of the class was able to breathe a little easier knowing that those perfect scores weren't real.

A cheat-sheet gives you an unfair advantage – it supplies you with what you need to get ahead.

How would you like a cheat-sheet for getting through holiday parties without putting on a single pound?

What if this cheat-sheet could also help you lose a few

pounds before New Year's?

You're in luck, because below I have outlined the five shortcuts you need to avoid gaining holiday party pounds.

Your Holiday Party Cheat-Sheet

Short Cut No. 1: Eat a sensible meal before the party.

You should always arrive at parties with a full stomach. I realize that this goes against the popular trend of starving yourself before a party, and that's exactly why most people gain weight. Since your stomach will be full, you'll have the clarity to pick and choose the treats that you really want, rather than stuffing yourself with everything in sight.

Short Cut No. 2: Bring a

healthy dish to share.

Don't worry if the party that you're going to isn't a potluck – the hostess will love you for being so thoughtful, and you'll have a healthy option to enjoy.

Short Cut No. 3: Never drink calories.

Do you realize how quickly calories add up when you're slurping them out of a cup? Alcoholic beverages and sweet holiday drinks are simply packed with calories. These calories don't take up much room in your stomach so you're left wide open for even more calories.

Your best strategy is to avoid these beverages altogether, and stick with water. Aim to drink 2-3 glasses of water at the party.

Short Cut No. 4: Fill your plate, but only once.

I'm certainly not going to tell you that you shouldn't eat anything at the party. By all means, go and fill up your plate. But only once.

That's right, you heard me. No going back for seconds. Since you've already eaten a sensible meal before arriving, this rule is going to be easier to keep than you think.

Short Cut No. 5: Taste dessert, just a taste.

The holidays are all about sweet treats, so go ahead and partake. But just a taste. Look at desserts as something to savor, not something to fill up on.

And since you ate a sensible meal before you came, then you filled up your dinner plate once, you're probably going to be pretty full at this point anyway.

That's it – all you need to know to not gain a single pound at holiday parties.

But what about the rest of the year?

Wouldn't you love to make 2011 the year that you transform your body?

Wouldn't it feel great to throw out all of your fat clothes? To look forward to

bathing suit season? To be given a clean bill of health from your doctor? And to be showered with compliments by family, friends and that special someone?

It's all more possible than you think, but you'll need to take massive action.

Start today, because it's the only day that is guaranteed!

Fred Sassani is founder of Bodies By Design Personal Training Services, a nationally certified personal trainer and nutrition specialist in Pflugerville. For comments or questions you can reach Fred at getfit@trainerfred.com or visit his website at trainerfred.com.

Sinus issues arise this time of year

By Tonya Kerr
Special to the Pflag



WHAT'S GOING AROUND

This week I checked in with Dr. Robert A. Skjonsby at St. David's Urgent Care in Pflugerville.

Dr. Skjonsby said that due to the weather and as typical during this season, he's seen a number of sinusitis cases recently.

"Sinusitis is usually caused by secondary infections from allergies or upper respiratory infections and that means that the nasal cavities have been blocked by inflammation," said Dr. Skjonsby. "Anytime you block these little holes, your sinuses can't drain and the buildup is susceptible to bacteria buildup, which then causes sinus pressure."

Skjonsby said sinusitis symptoms include a stuffy or runny nose, ear aches, sore throat, fever and pressure around your forehead and sinus areas.

"Our treatment goal is to open the cavities hole and help everything drain," said Skjonsby. "Some treatments include antibiotics, steroids

[shots or pills]. We sometimes recommend nasal washes or the use of a vaporizer."

According to Skjonsby, if the infection is caused by a regular cold, the symptoms will usually last 10 days to two weeks.

"If your sinuses are bothering you and you think there might be build up, it's best to stay well hydrated," said Skjonsby. "If you're hydrated, your mucus is thinner, and that should help with drainage."

Skjonsby said that if you plan to travel by air during the holidays, remember that it can be a very painful experience to fly because the change in air pressure can put intense pressure on sinuses which are already blocked. He said try to alleviate any cold symptoms with decongestants and drink plenty of water before getting on a plane.

Ball Four

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