

"During the holidays,  
remember your  
commitment to make your  
health a priority!"



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## Healthy Habits for the Holidays

Ah, the joys of the holiday season! The lights, company of family and friends, festive events, shopping, and of course the food! However, for many there is also an increase in stress, which makes it easy to deviate from our healthy habits and to pack on some extra weight over the holidays! So, here are some tips to combat the extra calories associated with decadent holiday treats!

### Six Healthy Holidays Substitutions

#### Heavy Cream:

For creamy soup dishes, like tomato bisque or pumpkin stews, switch out the heavy cream for coconut milk (one-to-one ratio) and "you'll get the same creamy taste and texture for about half the calories—and no, the coconut taste won't dominate the soup..."<sup>1</sup>

#### Eggs:

Looking for egg's binding ability, but without almost 190 mg of cholesterol in 1 large egg? Well, look no further than the plant-based option of a flax seed egg! "Make a flax egg by mixing 1 tablespoon ground flaxseed with 3 tablespoons of water. Allow it to thicken for about 5 minutes. Add to recipe."<sup>4</sup>

#### Fats:

Applesauce is a great substitute for fats and is particularly helpful for keeping your baked goodies moist and yummy. Plus, applesauce contains no fat and is packed with vitamin C and fiber!<sup>3</sup> This "...fat-free puree can be used cup for cup in breads, muffins, and even boxed mixes for brownies and cakes."<sup>1</sup>

#### Sugar:

Try experimenting with a calorie-free sweetener, like stevia. Stevia is great "sweetener that does not affect blood sugar levels." It is important to note that the "conversion from sugar to stevia ...may vary based on brand...[a] general rule is that 1 tsp. sugar is equivalent to 1/16-1/8 tsp. powdered stevia or 2-5 drops liquid stevia."<sup>4</sup>

#### Cheese:

Nutritional yeast flakes are a great option to use because it offers a cheeselike flavor. It is rich in "...B vitamins, fiber and protein, but without any fat and cholesterol. Nutritional yeast flakes are a wonderful addition to mashed potatoes, roasted vegetables, rice and pasta dishes, and casseroles."<sup>4</sup>

#### Gravy:

Most gravies start with creating a roux by browning flour with butter. However, for a lower fat (but still creamy) gravy, "...use a thickener like sweet rice flour and add water with the ratio of 1 tablespoon of starch to 2 tablespoons of water to make a thickened creamy sauce to which you can add flavorings."<sup>4</sup>

#### References:

- [1 https://www.glamour.com/gallery/7-healthy-holiday-cooking-substitutes-to-try-in-your-favorite-christmas-recipes](https://www.glamour.com/gallery/7-healthy-holiday-cooking-substitutes-to-try-in-your-favorite-christmas-recipes)
- [2 https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/sour-cream-substitutes](https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/sour-cream-substitutes)
- [3 https://www.livestrong.com/article/521472-health-benefits-of-applesauce/](https://www.livestrong.com/article/521472-health-benefits-of-applesauce/)
- [4 https://www.ornish.com/zine/healthy-ingredient-swaps-to-make-your-holidays-more-nourishing/](https://www.ornish.com/zine/healthy-ingredient-swaps-to-make-your-holidays-more-nourishing/)