



Built2News #5

BALANCED DIET DURING THE FESTIVE SEASON — AND WHY IT'S TOTALLY OKAY TO RELAX

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The festive season is a time to celebrate, connect, and indulge a little — and yes, you can do that *without wrecking your progress*. Let's talk about how to stay mindful while still enjoying every bite, and why taking a break won't set you back.



1. Keep It Balanced (But Not Perfect)

During the holidays, food is everywhere — and that's part of the joy! The key is not restriction, but balance.

- Think of your plate as 50% veggies/fruits, 25% protein, and 25% carbs (where possible).
- If you're having something rich (like pie, stuffing, or fried foods), enjoy it — just balance it out with lighter options where it feels right.
- Portion awareness goes a long way. You don't need to say no to anything; just listen to your hunger and fullness cues.

2. You're Allowed to Enjoy Food

Let's be real: Food is more than fuel — it's culture, comfort, and connection.

- Eating your favorite festive dishes is not a "cheat" — it's part of life.
- One or two days (or even a whole week!) of indulgent eating won't undo your hard work.
- Your body isn't that fragile — it knows how to adjust and reset.



3. No Workouts? No Problem.

Didn't hit the gym? Skipped your usual walk? That's okay.

- Rest is productive, especially during busy or emotional seasons.
- Missing a few workouts doesn't erase your progress. Consistency over time matters more than any short break.
- Sometimes skipping a workout in favor of **sleep, chill time, or laughter** is exactly what your body needs to come back stronger.
- Rest helps muscles recover, prevents burnout, and restores motivation.

4. Ditch the Guilt — It's Not Invited to the Party

Guilt doesn't belong at the table. Your worth isn't tied to how clean you eat or how often you exercise.

- Food isn't "good" or "bad" — it's just food.
- You don't need to "burn it off" later.
- Trust that one season of joy, rest, and celebration won't derail your healthy habits.

5. Return to Balance Naturally

When the celebrations wind down, your body will naturally crave balance again — lighter meals, movement, water, sleep. There's no need for punishment or detoxes. Just return to your rhythm.



References:

1. Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health – Healthy Eating Plate
2. Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics – Mindful Eating Tips
3. National Institutes of Health (NIH) – Holiday Eating
4. Cleveland Clinic – The Truth About Holiday Weight Gain
5. Psychology Today – The Power of Rest and Recovery
6. Registered Dietitians' Insights – Intuitive Eating Approaches