

NEWS RELEASE

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Have a HEALTHY and Happy Holiday Season!

It's hard to believe, but the holiday season is upon us again. There is a cool crispness in the air, leaves are falling from the trees, and suddenly there is a sweet treat around every corner. Market shelves overflow with Halloween candy. Well-meaning charities offer sweet morsels in exchange for a little spare change. School fundraisers begin tempting every family member with something special available only once a year. And then there are all the parties and special events to attend. Granted these are all part of the holiday spirit, but they can also mean sugar overload for grown-ups and kids alike.

So, does that mean not a single treat this holiday? Of course not. But by remembering a few simple tips, we can all keep the sweets in check this holiday season.

- Pack fresh or dried fruit before leaving the house. That way there is a sweet and healthy alternative waiting once you've turned down the candy cane at the grocery store.
- Leave the ½ price bags of Halloween candy on the store shelf. If you don't have sweets in the house, no one will be tempted by them later.
- Give to school fundraisers, but limit the sweet incentive. Get one box of candy and donate the money you would have spent on the second box directly to the school. The school ends up with more money and you end up with fewer empty calories.
- Bring something more healthful to holiday parties and events. This doesn't mean you need to bring carrot sticks, just choose a dish that has some nutritional merit while being tasty:
 - Chocolate dipped fruit
 - Yogurt parfaits with low-fat yogurts, fresh fruit, and some festive sprinkles on top.
 - Trail mix (made from things like dried fruits, pretzels, mini chocolate chips, and nuts)
 - Popcorn snack mix made with dried fruit, nuts, and a little chocolate drizzled on the top.
- Take small portions.
- Talk to other family members about aiming for a healthy holiday season. It is a good reminder, and things are always easier with a little support.

By limiting some of the sweet treats this year, you and your family will feel better, and serve as a role model for others. Enjoy your holiday and all the great things that go with it, in moderation. For more tips on eating healthy, contact the University of California Cooperative Extension at 530-889-7350. Or visit us online at <http://ceplacer.ucanr.edu>.

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