



# Catch the culprits causing weight gain

If you gain a couple of pounds every holiday season, there may be some surprising causes. Making some small lifestyle changes can help keep your weight in check all season long.

**Cause: Depriving yourself.** You might not want to completely swear off snacks this time of year, since you may be more inclined to binge when your willpower gets low.

**Instead:** To avoid feeling deprived, enjoy snacks in moderation and plan healthy meals you enjoy.

**Cause: Drinking extra calories.** Alcohol and soda have plenty of hidden calories – and sugar.

**Instead:** If you can't skip the sugary drinks, alternate them with water.

**Cause: Skipping exercise.** If you have many social obligations, you may find yourself eliminating gym visits or yoga class to make time for it all.

**Instead:** If you're seeing friends, get outside and take a walk together.

**Cause: Skipping sleep.** Sleep may feel like even more of a luxury than usual during the holidays. However, not getting enough sleep can affect your metabolism and energy.

**Instead:** Try to stick to a regular sleep schedule. It's important to also practice good sleep hygiene to help improve the quality of sleep, especially when you might be falling short on quantity. Are you always tired? Consider speaking with your doctor about possible causes.

**Cause: Stress.** The holidays are infamous for causing additional stress. Stress can affect your metabolism and lead to overeating.

**Instead:** Consider scaling back your plans, meditating, or doing exercises you enjoy.

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Source: WebMD®

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