



NEWS RELEASE

Defense Commissary Agency

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‘Tis the season to indulge while watching the waistline

*By Lt. Col. Karen E. Hawkins,
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FORT LEE, Va. –The holidays are here and it is the season to indulge with food everywhere along with an almost endless number of events and things to do. It’s the time of year when we often mindlessly eat all those delicious foods showing up at parties, the office and our homes. On top of that, most of us are so busy trying to fit all the activities in during this time of year that we forget to take time to take care of ourselves. Yet, this is one of the most important times to take care of yourself due to the extra stressors and demands on your time. Knowing it can be challenging to manage how much you eat while trying to squeeze in a few extra minutes of exercise, here are some ideas:

Keep moving

- Park the car at the back of the parking lot. Walking extra steps burns extra calories, which can really help when you just don’t have time to go to the gym.
- Pencil in time on your calendar to walk at least 30 minutes during the day. Break it down to 10-minute sessions to make it fit your schedule.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator or the escalator. A 150-pound person can burn about 90 calories in 10 minutes by taking the stairs instead of the elevator. Walking down the stairs you can burn about 20 calories in 10 minutes.
- Don’t wait for the annual New Year’s resolution to decide to exercise. Get a jump on it during the holidays and you will be ahead of the game when the calendar flips to 2010.

Go for the nutrient-dense foods first

- Buy fresh fruits and vegetables at savings of 30 percent or more at your commissary and prepare your own fruit and vegetable trays.
- Make a low-calorie dip using Greek yogurt or low-fat sour cream, taco seasoning, salsa, or use a low-fat ranch dressing. Using Greek yogurt to make a dip provides some extra protein, which helps to satisfy your appetite for a while.
- For an easy fruit dip, try vanilla-flavored yogurt mixed with cinnamon. Eating fruits and vegetables first at the party can save you from eating lots of hidden calories in all the other foods.
- Make a holiday punch with sugar-free ginger ale, seltzer water or club soda; and light cranberry or white grape juice.
- Drink water before and during eating as it helps fill you up.
- When shopping at the commissary, choose lean meats such as turkey, ham, chicken and roast beef. Use these meats and thinly sliced breads, along with spicy mustard instead of mayo, to make sandwiches. You will save up to 100 calories per sandwich. Add some lettuce, tomato, cucumber or avocado slices to make a filling, colorful sandwich.

At the end of the day

How about kicking back and relaxing with a steaming, hot cup of decaffeinated green tea? It's a wonderful, calorie-free, stress reliever that can sooth nerves, calm the stomach, and add healthy antioxidants to your body. We at the commissary hope you enjoy one of the best gifts of all during this holiday season – good health.

For more information about making healthy choices, visit Ask the Dietitian on <http://www.commissaries.com> and post your questions on the DeCA Dietitian Forum. Be sure to look for other useful information in the Dietitian's Voice archive. Sign up with the DeCA Dietitian on www.twitter.com and get messages sent to your cell phone today. For delicious recipes, check out Kay's Kitchen. And to enjoy all your commissary has to offer, sign up for the *Commissary Connection*.

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About DeCA: *The Defense Commissary Agency operates a worldwide chain of commissaries providing groceries to military personnel, retirees and their families in a safe and*

secure shopping environment. Authorized patrons purchase items at cost plus a 5-percent surcharge, which covers the costs of building new commissaries and modernizing existing ones. Shoppers save an average of more than 30 percent on their purchases compared to commercial prices – savings worth about \$3,300 annually for a family of four. A core military family support element, and a valued part of military pay and benefits, commissaries contribute to family readiness, enhance the quality of life for America’s military and their families, and help recruit and retain the best and brightest men and women to serve their country.