

## Holiday Struggles

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Typically, I would stray from my strict eating plan between Thanksgiving and New Years. I would convince myself by rationalizing that it was all about moderation and not deprivation. Each year I would struggle to get back on track after the holidays ended. Some years I would accomplish this during January and other years I would battle to get back into my eating plan for four to six months, having experienced weight gain and frustration in the process.

This year I stayed focused until the last two weeks of the year when I got weak and had small helpings of deserts on three occasions. That was all that it took. I am now struggling to stop the cravings and variations in my eating habits that leave me feeling uncomfortable. The "hungry horrors" have driven my usual 1900 to 2100 daily calorie consumption to 2300 to 2800 per day. That means I've put on a few pounds and I look and feel softer.

As usual it was the sugar that got me started. On one occasion I had some chocolate covered pretzels, on another it was a very small piece of apple pie and one other time it was three bites of cake with frosting. I was also having more bread than usual and adding snacks more often because the cravings were calling for more junk food. The impact of these trigger foods is immediate. They sabotage my efforts to eat clean and stay on track. First of all these trigger foods do not satisfy my appetite and, more importantly, they interfere with the signals that indicate that I am full.

I am not capable of putting the brakes on without difficulty. I am struggling right now to regain the strict clean eating program that I was on before the holidays. I was completely focused for six months before this hiccup. I will get back on track. I am just concerned about the damage I may do before I am back in control. Do you have the same problem? If so, please share with us how you deal with it.

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