

THE **Code Red**

HOLIDAY SURVIVAL **GUIDE**

HOW
to Maintain or
even Lose
Weight During
the Holidays



CRISTY **"CODE RED"** NICKEL



CODE RED
— TAKE YOUR LIFE BACK —

The Code Red Holiday Survival Guide

How to Maintain (or even lose)
Weight During the Holiday Season

Cristy “Code Red” Nickel

Copyright © 2017-2022 by
Cristy "Code Red" Nickel

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law.

Published in the United States of America
Thanet House Publishing
ISBN 978-1-944602-04-8
Cover Design by: Eled Cernik

ABOUT THIS BOOK

The average person gains 10 pounds between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day.
And they feel like CRAP by the time they get through the season . . .

IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE THAT WAY!

Not again . . .

Not THIS year . . .

This year you can start a new tradition. One that has you smiling your way through the holidays, and enjoying your favorite activities (yes, even the food).

And best of all, you'll feel so proud of yourself when you reach January 1st, feeling great about your body and your health.

I've helped hundreds of people over the past 20 years to not only maintain their weight through the holidays, but actually lose weight if they want to. This book is a collection of all the tips and tricks I share with my clients.

It's not about being perfect! There's no "plan" to follow.

This is about holding steady. It's about enjoying the holidays without feeling like crap when they're over. If you indulge for a few days, enjoy them. And then employ a few of the strategies here for the rest of the week.

It's a short book because I know you're BUSY.

You've got cards to send and gifts to wrap.

I get it. And I'm right there with you.

But before you get caught up in the whirlwind of activity . . .

Do something DIFFERENT this year.

Put yourself first!

And use the tips I reveal in this book to make it through the holidays without feeling stressed out or guilt-ridden.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

What if I told you that you could lose up to 10% of your weight each month by eating REAL food and WITHOUT exercise? You'd probably think I was some weirdo or super-human, right? But I'm not, and my clients can attest to the truth of my claims because they have gotten amazing results.

My heart goes out to all the people who spend millions of dollars every year on health club memberships (that are rarely used) and diets with "specialty" foods that may allow them to lose some weight initially, but aren't sustainable for long term health and fitness.

I'm Cristy "Code Red" Nickel. Celebrity trainer. Nutritionist. And former professional boxer, named one of the "Top 3 Most Dangerous Females on the Planet" by Ring Magazine.

I've been in the health and fitness industry since 1995. While studying Exercise Science at the University of Memphis, I completed in 3 National Physique Committee Figure competitions, placing in the top 5 of each one. In order to earn money to pay bills and tuition, I began fighting as a professional boxer.

I fought in 15 pro fights over the course of 8 years, earning a title and being named one of the top 3 most dangerous women on the planet!

My success grabbed the attention of MTV producers, who then asked me to star in my own show on MTV's MADE. The exposure from my MTV show landed me a job in New York City training celebrities like Katie Couric, Ethan Hawk, and Clare Danes, as well as stock brokers, writers, and actors at a highend boxing gym on Wall Street. From there, I earned the title of "New York's Best Trainer" and was featured in Allure Magazine.

What's that to you?

It means you can trust me to give it to you straight. I'm not going to lie to you or manipulate your emotions to sell you on anything. It also means that when I say you really can maintain or even lose weight while enjoying the holiday season—I'm serious.

Over the past two decades I've helped hundreds of thousands of people lose 10% of their body weight month after month without being hungry, without exercise, and without shakes, diet pills or diet food.

I don't believe in diets. I believe in teaching people how to lose weight by eating real food.

Are you ready to make this holiday season different?

Let's rock!

1. I Can, But I Don't Want To

Recently, I was at a two-day conference and one of the treats they served was Rice Krispy bars. Let me tell you, I love Rice Krispy bars! I really do. But at this particular conference, I didn't have any. There was no "willpower" involved. I just didn't want them.

People ask me questions about my program all the time, and one of the ones I hear most often is "When can I eat the foods I want? When can I cheat? You know, when can I have the pizza? When can I have the Rice Krispy bars? When can I have the ice cream?"

The first thing I try to clarify is what exactly they're asking. If they're asking when they can "cheat," the answer is it depends on their goals. Are they in weight-loss mode? Then they can't have the ice cream or the pizza or whatever until they reach their goal weight. If they're already at their goal and just trying to maintain and live a healthy lifestyle, then I guess they can have it occasionally.

But they're missing the point.

When you eat real food, without all the added sugar and chemicals, your mind switches to where you don't want that crap anymore. I didn't turn down the Rice Krispy bar because I "had to" or because everybody was watching. I didn't eat it because I didn't want to.

I didn't want to.

I finally got myself to the point where I wasn't craving it. I wasn't thinking about it at all. And it wasn't an agonizing decision. It was a total non-issue.

That's what I want for you. I want you to get to the point where you can, but you just don't want to.

Do I eat foods that aren't great for me? Sure. Once in a great while. My husband, Miles, and I go out for a date night once a month. And we just don't eat out unless it's date night. It's just a lifestyle we've developed. We'd rather eat in.

And you know what? It physically hurts me when I eat crap. It hurts my tummy. And it's a slippery slope when I eat carbs and sugar. It makes me crave more carbs and sugar, and I just don't want to go down that path again. At all. I've been heavy before. I don't ever want to go back there. I don't want to because getting six-pack abs means more to me. Not feeling sick all night means more to me.

You might not care about having six-pack abs. Maybe you just want to get off prescription medication. Or you want your skin to clear up. Or you just want to play outside with your kids without feeling like you're gonna have a heart attack. You get to decide that those things mean more than a bowl of ice cream or half a pizza.

You are worth more than that. You deserve more than that. Treat yourself like royalty. Feed your body and soul only the very best. Because you deserve it.

It all starts in the mind. You have to decide you're worth it. Then after a little while, your body falls in line. It's a little like magic. When you stop eating carbs and sugar. When you stop putting chemicals into your body. You get used to it. Your body stops craving the junk and starts craving the good stuff.

I get it. It's the holidays. And there are traditional food and drinks that we've consumed this time of year since we were tiny children. I'm not telling you that you can't have those things. I'm offering you a choice. If you stick with me, eventually you will come to a point where you don't want them.

The less you eat the crap. The less you'll want it.

In the short term, get into the habit of talking to yourself before you eat or drink anything. (You can do it silently, so people don't look at you funny.) When you get home after a long day of holiday shopping and you just want to order a pizza—or when you're at that party and you're faced with rum-spiked egg nog or pecan pie or whatever, say this...

I can have that _____ if I really want it.

Right now, my body feels _____.

If I decide to eat/drink that, my body will feel _____.

Tomorrow morning, I will feel _____.

Do I really want it?

Then make a decision. And let me give you a hint. We all have different voices. Chances are there's a big voice that says, "It's a special occasion. Go ahead...eat it!"

If you really pay attention, there's probably also a smaller voice. One that's quietly saying, "The last time you ate that, you were sick all night. Remember? Your stomach was cramping and you felt like crap the next day. Maybe it's best to skip it." Or maybe it's saying, "But you promised this year it would be different..."

The rest of this book will give you strategies and tactics to "survive" this wonderful season of food, drink, and merriment without gaining the typical 10 pounds. The cool thing is if you follow these strategies, chances are pretty good that you'll come out on the other side of this season already adapted.

You'll be amazed how much easier it will be to say, "I don't want it" for the rest of the year. Listen to the little voice. It's smart. It's you. The more you listen to it, the louder and bolder it will grow. You can have it. But you don't have to want it.

Your choice.

2. The Number One Way to Maintain (or Lose) Weight This Holiday

What if I told you the one secret to losing weight and keeping it off? What if I told you it wasn't exercise?

What if I told you it wasn't shakes and pills. It wasn't a diet? What if I told you it was free? It was available to you right now, and that you could start seeing results and feeling better immediately?

What if I told you that? Would you believe me?

I've been in this industry since 1994. I competed in three figure competitions, placing in the top five in each show.

While studying exercise physiology at the University of Memphis, I took up professional boxing as a way to pay for books and tuition. I ended up having 15 professional fights all over the world.

And I was named as one of the top three most dangerous females on the planet. I've written thousands of nutrition programs for people all over North America.

So yeah. I know what I'm talking about when it comes to nutrition and losing weight. And I want you to hear the truth.

You ready for my secret?

Water.

Let me say that again.

Water.

Drink at least a gallon of water every day.

It sounds simple, doesn't it? It sounds too good to be true, I know. It's not. Try it!

There are so many positive correlations between water consumption and good health. Not only does it help your hair and nails grow, but it also helps you sleep.

It helps regulate hormones. It gives you energy. It's going to keep you full and satiated for long periods of time.

Water consumption is absolutely key to weight loss and keeping your weight down. Try it. You won't want to have caramel macchiatos. You won't want the candy canes, the pecan pie, or the other holiday treats you normally crave.

Here's the deal--when you're thirsty, your body sends signals that it's hungry. So you eat instead of drinking anything. Nine times of out 10 you're not hungry. You are just dehydrated and thirsty.

Here are some of the main benefits of drinking a gallon of water a day:

You'll feel satiated (full). There won't be room in your tummy for the junk.

Your body will flush out toxins. Your kidneys eliminate toxins and waste products from the blood and urine, and process water-soluble toxins from the liver. If you don't drink enough water, your kidneys won't have enough fluid to function properly.

You'll have great energy. The number one reason for daytime fatigue is dehydration. So staying hydrated may help you have more energy. And since your brain is mostly water, staying hydrated helps you think, focus, and be more alert.

You'll sleep better. Staying hydrated allows your brains to work at its best, even when "working" means "resting". A well-hydrated brain lets you enjoy a good night's sleep and lets you wake feeling rejuvenated and ready for the day ahead.

Your skin will clear up. Drinking water keeps your skin moisturized, fresh, soft, glowing and smooth.

(Psst! Good hydration also helps get rid of wrinkles.)

Your hair will be healthier. If your hair follicles lack water, your hair will become dry and brittle. This gradually slows down and even stops the growth of your hair.

Now, a gallon of water is a lot to drink if you're not used to it. And some people just don't like the taste of it. I hear that from my clients all the time. There are a few good ways to get all those ounces down easier. One simple way is to use a straw. Straws make you drink faster. (Why do you think restaurants give you straws? So you'll finish the first drink quickly and order another one.)

You can also add sugar-free flavorings to improve the flavor. Here's what you can use without adding sugar to your water: lemon slices or lemon juice, lime slices or lime juice, or orange slices. DO NOT use orange juice—too much sugar.

Don't be tempted to turn your water into Kool-Aid. Even the sugar-free additives are so full of chemicals that you're not doing your body any favors. Personally, I like to use Mio water flavoring drops.

They come in lots of flavors, you can get them at the grocery store, and they taste really good. You only need a tiny bit to make your water taste better.

Want go into the New Year ahead of the game instead of having to lose that 10 pounds everyone seems to gain over the holidays? That doesn't have to be you this year. You can choose a different path. It's simple. It's free. It's available. It starts working immediately.

Drink a gallon of water between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day. I promise you will thank me for it.

3. Visions of Sugar Plums

I'm not even sure what a sugar plum is, except I think there's a fairy involved somehow...

But I do know about sugar. Sugar is hands-down the biggest cause of our sickness, diseases, and cancers in today's society. It has been proven time and time again.

There's a safe sugar threshold for humans, just like there's a safe threshold of anything—even arsenic. The average American gets about 150 grams of sugar per day, which is just astonishing. That's just a mind-blowing amount of sugar.

Across the board, nutritionists agree that we should get no more than about 25 grams of sugar per day, which is roughly six teaspoons. Most people consume more than that within a couple of hours of waking up. So, if it has a package, a box, a wrapper, or a TV commercial—check the label for sugar content. Or better yet, just don't eat it at all. The less you eat out of packages, the better.

Fruits and vegetables have natural sugars. If you're in weight loss mode trying to stay below 25g of sugar total, fruits are pretty much out until you reach your goal. Sugar content in most vegetables is so low; I don't worry about those—with the exception of below-ground starchy vegetables like potatoes. I use a great app called Lose It! to figure out naturally occurring sugars.

It's really not hard to keep your sugar down once you become aware of how much sugar is in everything. So, the food industry has gotten really tricky. They've figured out how to call sugar by other names to fool you—61 other names, to be exact. If you see words like these on your food labels, you're looking at sugar: dextrose, brown sugar, cane crystals, cane sugar, corn sweetener, corn syrup, corn syrup solids, crystal dextrose, evaporated cane juice, fructose sweetener, fruit juice.

Now, you're not going to know how much sugar you're getting unless you track your food. You've got to log your food at least for a little while to find out where your sugar's coming from and where you need to improve. What foods do you need to cut out? What foods do you need to add in? I can throw out all these numbers to you, but that's not going to mean anything until you actually start tracking.

For the holidays, you might not want to be super-strict all the time. But just keeping that 25g number in your head and tracking what you're eating can help keep you from going overboard more than a few times during the holiday season. If your goal is to maintain your current weight, that might be enough. If you want to lose weight, I strongly recommend tracking everything you put into your mouth down to the last lick of a candy cane.

4. Escape the "Fat-Free" Label Trap

The fat-free craze that has taken over our society since the 1970s is a major cause of our obesity epidemic.

When the food industry had to take the fat out of processed foods, they added sugar and carbs back in to make it taste good.

Technically, a bag of pure cane sugar could legally display the label "fat free." It is. There's no fat in there.

BUT that label would be incredibly misleading because people have been taught to think fat-free means healthy. It doesn't.

Consuming that product would make you fat, even though it contains no fat.

Food labels are more about advertising than health. That same bag of sugar can also claim it's "gluten-free" and even "all-natural" under the right circumstances. That doesn't mean it's healthy.

Don't pay attention to the front of the package. Pay attention to the label on the back or the side. Read the actual ingredients.

The fewer the ingredients, the better. Keep the artificial chemicals to a minimum, and avoid sugar whenever you can.

Watching your fat intake is not going to make any difference to your weight loss.

The right fats like avocados, olives, and naturally occurring oils can actually aid weight loss. (As long as you're very careful with the calorie content of those fats.)

Fat doesn't make you fat.

Sugar. Sugar makes you fat.

Control how much sugar and carbs you're consuming and you'll be well on your way.

Let's make it easy on you. If it says "fat free" on the front label. Put it down. Don't eat it.

Seriously, you're better off eating the full-fat version, if you eat it at all.

5. Eat, Drink, and Be Merry (The Truth About Wine and Cheese)

Let's talk about wine for a minute, shall we?

The medical community recommends that a woman should have one glass of wine per day. Men can have two.

(I know, it hardly seems fair, right? We birth the babies, and they get to have more wine!)

Here's the catch, though. Those recommendations are based on a four to five-ounce glass. When someone comes to me for a consultation, I ask them if they drink any alcohol.

Most people say yes. Then I ask them how much. They say, "Oh, just one glass."

What they mean by "just one glass" is about 12 ounces. Which is actually three glasses according to the recommendations.

Go ahead. Pour yourself a "normal" glass of wine, then pour it into a measuring cup and see for yourself! You'll be shocked, I know.

It doesn't look like much. Just a typical amount. But it's three times more than is recommended.

And wine is full of sugar, especially whites and blushes.

Don't get me wrong here. I'm not judging how much alcohol you choose to drink. If you choose to drink three times the daily limit or a bottle a night, that's your business. You can live your life however you want.

But, just don't lie to yourself about it. Be honest with yourself, and fully understand what and how much you're putting into your body.

I see so many people beating themselves up because they can't lose weight. They blame themselves.

They think there's something wrong with them. They even start to hate their bodies. It breaks my heart.

Because there's nothing wrong with them. Their bodies are working just fine. The problem is the math.

They are consuming three times more calories than they think they are.

The math is keeping you fat. The math is making you feel crappy.

So, be honest with yourself. Make sure that you truly know how much you are drinking and what that's doing to your weight loss efforts.

Cheese is Tricky.

As long as we're talking about honesty—let's consider cheese for a minute. It's got no sugar, no carbs, it's a great source of fat. So we ought to be able to roll around in a huge tub of Brie this time of year, right?

Theoretically, yes. BUT cheese is extremely calorie dense. That means there are a LOT of calories packed into one little ounce the stuff. (One ounce is roughly 100 grams, for you metric folks.)

Different cheeses have different calorie counts, but in general one ounce of hard cheese is 110 calories. Just like with wine, there's really no way to know what one ounce actually is unless you slice it and weigh it.

So one day I did that. I sliced it. I weighed it, and I found out that it's not very big at all. You could easily go back for a second, third, fourth, fifth slice of cheese.

Heck, it's easy to polish off half a block without even thinking about it. Pretty soon, you've packed on 500 to 1000 extra calories, and you have no idea why you're gaining weight.

And hey, when cheese is melted all ooey-gooey in a spinach dip or on a pizza—exactly how much are you eating? It's really hard to tell!

Once again, it's the math that might be keeping you fat. Be honest with yourself, that's all I ask.

6. Not a Creature was Stirring (The Cake Batter) (Holiday Baking Tips)

Do holidays and baking go hand-in-hand for you? If so, you're not alone.

It's the baking-est time of the year!

Chances are you are going to be using ingredients that might not be the best thing for you to be snacking on. Be honest, do half the chocolate chips in the bag wind up in your mouth? Do you sneak the cinnamon drops or crushed peppermints while you're waiting for the next batch of cookies to come out of the oven? Do you lick the beaters?

If you're worried about eating while you are baking, I've got a great tip for you. Bleach your teeth.

Yeah, bleach your teeth. Put the bleach in the trays, put your trays in your mouth, and bleach your teeth while you're baking. You cannot eat or drink anything while the bleaching trays are in your mouth. It takes about an hour to do it. That's about as long as it will take you to bake something start to finish. If you are worried about nibbling, this is a really good deterrent.

You can also keep your mouth occupied with a stick of gum. Or maybe even a toothpick. Just put something else in there that will keep you from nibbling while you bake. (I know, you're just "testing it," right?)

How Do You Measure Up?

Another problem with baking, and cooking in general is measuring. Don't get complacent with your measuring. For butter, oil, or anything else.

Use a measuring device and level it off. One level tablespoon of butter is not the same as a heaping tablespoon that you just cut right off the stick.

There may not be a big difference in how your recipes turn out, but there's a HUGE difference in calorie counts.

I've seen it over and over with my clients. They completely sabotage their efforts because they're doubling or tripling their calories with bad measuring. (Once again—the math is working against you.)

The same goes for chocolate chips, sprinkles, and any other holiday dessert decorations. I'm not suggesting that you count the number of chips you use, or that you deprive your gingerbread man of an extra gumdrop button. But be aware that those things have calories.

Be honest with yourself. And maybe consider cutting down the amount of decorating you do—or skipping it altogether. Would you enjoy those gingerbread cookies just as much if they didn't have a sugar glaze? It's entirely possible.

Great Grandma Would Be Proud.

Another strategy is to change your recipe. I know, that's sacrilege for some people. That rum cake recipe has been in the family for generations. Well, what about this generation? And the generations to come? How cool would it be if they used your recipe—one that didn't pack on the pounds every year?

There are some really smart people who have already figured out how to lower the sugar and carbs in your favorite recipes. Just Google them. "Low carb sugar cookies." Or "healthy rum cake."

It might be as simple as learning how to bake with almond flour instead of the regular all-purpose variety. And who knows, you might like these healthier versions even better than great-great-grandma Edith's recipe.

Free Up Some Time (and Get a Massage)

Some people love to have a few special treats around, but actually hate baking. Is that you? Then don't bake! Save yourself the time and the dirty dishes. Let yourself off the hook. You could put that time to much better use—like a spa day!

Just don't rely on your grocery store bakery for those treats, because who knows what they've put in those pasty-white concoctions?! Find a bakery that specializes in using natural ingredients.

Here's an idea—find a friend (or a child) who does love to bake and ask them to make you a healthier version of your favorites.

There are plenty of low-sugar, low-carb versions of everything from pumpkin pie to gingerbread to sugar cookies. Offer to buy the ingredients and maybe even pay them for their time.

You get exactly what you want without all the hassle of baking.

Timing is Everything

Look, I'm all for doing the work ahead of time to save on stress later. But baking cookies weeks ahead of time is just asking for trouble.

If you know those suckers are sitting in the cupboard, how long do you think you can realistically hold out before you have "just one"? (Or more like the whole dang batch!)

Even if you're some sort of superhero and manage to avoid the temptation. Chances are pretty good your family won't. Then all the cookies will be gone, and you'll have to make a whole bunch more for whatever magical day you were saving them for.

Save yourself the trouble and the temptation—save the baking until the last minute. Don't even shop for the ingredients until it's time to bake (because dang those chocolate chips taste good right out of the bag!).

7. And We All Settled Down For a Long Winter's Nap (Getting Enough Sleep)

Here's a word of warning for all you night owls and last-minute gift-wrappers: lack of sleep will increase sugar cravings!

When I still worked 1:1 with clients, sometimes my sleep would suffer for days in a row. I'd stay up late taking care of clients who were on Pacific Time, plus working on my business, and just really running low on sleep.

If I get less than six hours of sleep, I don't do too well. When you add in my gym schedule and everything else I have to do, I just hit a wall.

What happens when you don't get enough sleep?

Let me guess. It goes something like this:

Your body says, "Hey. Listen. You're hitting a wall. It's not looking good. You need to get some sleep."

And you say, "Hey. I got crap to do. We've got to keep going."

Your body isn't stupid. It knows exactly what's going to happen. But you are pretty stubborn, and you keep pushing.

So your body says, "Okay. If that's the way you really want it. Fine. If you're not going to sleep, then we've got to get some quick fuel in here to keep you going. You need a pick-me-up."

And that's when the sugar cravings kick in.

It's just chemistry. It's how we're made.

We make demands on our bodies, and we have to have fuel to support those demands. When we burn the candle on both ends, that fuel often comes in the form of sugar. A quick hit on a caramel macchiato...oh, and you want to throw in a sugar cookie with that? Sure, why not? It's the holidays!

You will get that sugar high. The energy will be there for a little while. Then you're going to crash, and your energy will be lower than ever. If you keep ignoring your body, you'll need more and more sugar to keep going. Your weight will creep up.

Your body will start to cramp and hurt. All because your body is crying out, "Hey! Take care of me! You're treating me like crap."

I can go years without a sugar craving. But sure as Santa, when I push myself too far, they'll come

back. And it's all too easy to fall into the downward spiral of sugar highs and lows. It's not worth it!

Starting right now, I want you to pay attention to your body. What does it really need?

When it says, “Hey--Caramel macchiato! You need a donut. You just need a pick-me-up,” that’s your cue to pay attention.

Because chances are that’s a craving talking. And cravings are a sign that your body really needs something else. Maybe it needs sleep. Maybe it needs some water. Maybe it needs to spend an evening laughing with friends.

What it doesn’t need is another donut.

It’s okay to talk back to your body. You do it all the time when you ignore its warning signs.

So next time those cravings show up and you just know you’re pushing yourself too hard, try saying this:

“Hey there, body. Thanks for clueing me in. You’re right. I am pushing you really hard. I have one errand left to do, and then I’ll go home and take a nap. Okay? Help me get through this next hour, and I will reward you with that sleep you need.”

Maybe, just maybe, if you speak nicely to your body and treat it with kindness—it won’t even bother with sending those cravings. Because you don’t need that donut. Not even just one.

I know there are a lot of extra demands on you this time of year. But trust me. Don’t run low on sleep.

You’re not doing yourself any favors. You’re setting yourself up to fight a battle with your body. And you already know the craving battle is practically impossible to win.

Make sure you’re getting enough sleep, okay?

8. Are We There Yet? (Holiday Travel Tips)

Woo hoo! Road trip!

Who doesn't love to spend hours in a cramped metal box with a lot of other cranky people just counting the minutes until they get to their destination?

No matter how much you're looking forward to traveling to see friends and family this holiday, there's no denying that the actual trip can be a challenge.

Especially if you're trying to eat clean.

Here's the good news—there's nothing to be afraid of, as long as you plan ahead.

Whether you're taking a car trip or traveling by plane, train, or pack mule, there are lots of healthy options for you.

The key is to pre-pack your food.

If you're traveling by car, you can pack your food in a cooler.

If you're going by plane, you can still pack it in a cooler bag; you just have to limit your liquids before you go through security.

Let me share a few options with you.

You can slice up veggies ahead of time—carrots, celery, cucumbers, bell peppers, tomatoes, mushrooms—whatever you like.

If they tend to get slimy, like cucumbers, don't slice them up until the last minute.

You can add some fats like almond butter or cream cheese to put on top of the veggies, or bring small cups of hummus to dip them into.

For protein, you can cook up steak or chicken breasts and slice them up into bite-sized pieces. Sometimes I roll the slices into lettuce wraps and bag them up. They're easy to hold onto, and they're not messy. So, they make great snacks or full meals.

I also sometimes pack salami or pepperoni slices, or pre-packaged tuna.

I also take raw nuts like pecans, almonds, walnuts, as well as sunflower seeds, and put them into little one ounce bags. I might also include small portions of dark chocolate.

It's easy to go overboard on these, so pre-measuring is important.

Now, you might say, "Cristy, that's not very much."

You don't need very much. The biggest reason people eat in the car or on a plane is because they're bored, not because they're hungry. Don't eat more than you need.

A huge part of a healthy travel plan is making sure you have something to do. How will you keep your mind occupied?

Bring a book; watch a movie on your iPad; play with a coloring book; knit a sweater—whatever! Just keep your mind off food.

And that goes for the kids, too. If they're happily listening to an audio book, they're not going to bug you for a milkshake. You won't be stopping at every other exit.

You'll save money. You'll save time. And you'll stay on-plan.

Don't be afraid of holiday travel.

It just takes a little bit of preparation on your part, and you won't feel like you're missing out on those stale airplane pretzels.

9. What's the Deal With Detox?

As the season comes to an end, you might find yourself staring at all sorts of advertising talking about detoxing. It's all part of the New Year's Resolution marketing frenzy.

Many people come to me confused about detoxing. There's so much mixed information out there, and they don't know what to believe. And I totally get it. It's incredibly confusing. And a lot of that information is designed to sell you something.

So let me just break it down into simple language.

Your body already knows how to detox itself. It knows how to completely heal itself and cleanse itself. It just needs a few basic things from you.

First of all, it needs a lot of water. I'm not talking about LaCroix or sugar-free Crystal Light, or beverages made with water. No. Just plain old water with maybe some lemon or lime added for flavor. Give your body lots of water, and it will naturally flush your system of any toxicity.

Your body will cleanse itself. It will heal itself. It can do that.

Now, it only makes sense that if you're trying to "reset" and rid your body of toxins, you can't be adding new ones in at the same time, right?

You can't cleanse or detox and still be drinking beer at night, you know what I'm saying? It's counterproductive. Eating a doughnut on the way to work? Not gonna help.

Even starting your morning off with Raisin Bran. You're just giving your body extra work to do. Your body can handle itself, as long as you're not creating this perpetual cycle of crap.

Once you've got the garbage out of your system—you've detoxed all the chemicals and sugar, and your system is squeaky clean.

Then what? Are you going right back to the donuts and coffee? It's no wonder people's systems burn out and become diseased.

Yes, it's worth the work to detox your body.

No, you don't need to buy anything to help it.

Just eat clean. Drink water. And don't mess it up when you're done.

Don't fall for the advertising about detoxing shakes or pills or powders. Don't fall for all that stuff.

Your body knows how to take care of itself. It just needs a little bit of help from you, okay?

10. Holiday Party Survival Guide

You're cruising along through the week. Drinking your water. Keeping track of your sugar. When BAM!

Friday hits. Party time!

How do you keep from completely blowing all your progress in 24 hours? Here are some quick strategies to help you keep calm and party on.

FOOD

Eat before you go. Don't head out the door hungry.

Mingle. Don't stand by the snack table.

Chew gum. Lots of gum. (It's probably rude to blow bubbles in your boss's face, though.)

Keep a glass of water in your hand and keep sipping on it all night.

Wear something tight and sexy. Loose clothing can make you a little too comfortable, and more likely to pig out.

If you must eat something, go for the veggies and dip. (Or better yet, just the veggies.) Dip may load up on calories, but won't do as much damage as cookies and cake.

Choose the smallest plate possible, eat slowly, and avoid seconds.

DRINK

If you're drinking alcohol, stick to clear varieties like gin or vodka.

Mix with diet tonic or Diet Sprite (not a sugary juice).

Avoid the beer—it's too high in calories.

Choose red wine—it's got fewer calories than white or blush.

Stick to one and DONE—have one drink and that's it (especially if you're driving).

Plan on going to the gym or an early run (to encourage an earlier bedtime).

Laugh, dance, play games, run around after the kids—ENJOY your party! The laughter is the best part, and it's calorie-free.

11. What Does "Enjoying Yourself" Really Mean? (Is It Time To Re-Evaluate?)

A lot of people don't want to start losing weight over the holidays - or even stay on track at all - because they want to be able to "enjoy themselves."

What most people mean by "enjoy themselves" is: "eat as much as I want, when I want."

It's SO important to remember is that food is one of a million ways to "enjoy yourself." It's interesting we get so fixated on it as the ONLY way to have fun and spend time together.

I'm not saying you can't or shouldn't eat anything, of course. We do need to eat in order to stay alive, even when we need to drop some weight!

But what if we recognized that dropping all self-control around food, and eating everything in sight, isn't the only way to have fun over the holidays?

I would be doing you a disservice if I didn't point this out, because if you're here to not only get some weight off, but also feel better, and be able to physically do things you aren't able to do right now, it could be that "enjoying yourself" with food is part of the problem.

Food is your body's fuel, and if you aren't feeding it the fuel it needs, while also staying away from what's causing it to store fat and hurt, is "enjoying yourself" with food really worth the price you're paying?

Or, could it be that "enjoying yourself" with food is costing you the ability to enjoy anything else?

There are LOTS of ways to enjoy yourself over the holidays. You can watch movies, play games, build puzzles, maybe go outside and see some sights, or just visit, be present, and really connect with your loved ones.

Depending on where you live, maybe there are some local adventures you can participate in, like a Christmas parade, caroling, or a Christmas fair. Get creative and see what you can come up with, and/or find!

For this holiday season (and each one hereafter), I hope you'll choose YOU, instead of choosing food again, because choosing food over you hasn't helped you get (or stay) where you want to be.

Start choosing YOU!

12. Staying On Track When It's "Spooky!" (Surviving The Halloween Candy)

As Halloween looms, a lot of my new Code Red Rebels get jittery about their first Halloween on the Code Red Lifestyle™.

With candy, cupcakes, frosted sugar cookies, and other treats coming at you left and right, it feels like a sugar onslaught!

But that doesn't mean you have to derail yourself and wake up feeling sick and ashamed the next morning.

The first thing to do is remember: You're not helpless! Take control of situations instead of resigning yourself to them.

If candy and cupcakes make their way into your house, get rid of them when the party's over.

Leaving junk food around to tempt you sets you up to fail, because it's just too easy to walk by the candy jar and sneak "just one" of this and "just one" of that. Set yourself up to win by getting rid of it. Throw it out or send it home with guests.

If you take your kids trick or treating for candy, let them keep a few pieces, then pay them cash to hand the rest over to you. A lot of Rebel Moms do this, and their kids love it!

As for keeping candy around that you plan to hand out, use candy you yourself don't like, so you won't be tempted. You can also skip the candy altogether, and hand out non-candy goodies.

Here are some fun, affordable options you can hand out instead of candy:

Glow sticks, stickers, pencils with pencil toppers, toy cars, bubbles, Halloween-themed toys, mini bottles of water, temporary tattoos, Play-Dough, bouncy balls, slap bracelets, small boxes of crayons, and mini slinkies.

You can find a lot of these at your nearest dollar store.

Pharmacies with toy sections might have them too. You can also check department stores like Wal-Mart; and of course, Amazon!

Kids don't have to gorge on candy to enjoy Halloween, and you don't have to have tempting candy, cookies, and cupcakes around in order to celebrate it with them!

13. What Can I Take To A Holiday Party? (Code Red-Approved Potluck Ideas)

When attending a potluck, a lot of people consider it good manners to bring a dish to share, even if they aren't going to eat at the party.

As a Code Red Rebel, bringing a Code Red-approved dish is also a great way to ensure there's food at the party you'll be able to eat without derailing your progress, since most of the food you're likely to see at a holiday gathering is bad news for weight loss.

Here are some ideas for delicious dishes you can bring to holiday gatherings:

- Anything with meat, veggies, and/or eggs. Try a veggie tray, or a meat and nuts tray!
- Roll a pickle and full-fat cream cheese inside a slice of lunch meat. (Kids, especially, will love these!)
- Bring summer sausage with cherry tomatoes and ranch dressing.
- Cook a ham or turkey and bring slices of that.
- Deviled eggs are always an excellent choice.
- Roll some nuts in butter (nuts such as pecans, almonds, macadamia nuts, walnuts), sprinkle them with cinnamon and stevia or monkfruit, and toast them in the oven for a crunchy treat that's sure to be a hit (and better for you than all the flour and sugar-soaked baked goods). For a little added showmanship, put groups of toasted nuts in little baggies with a ribbon tied around them!
- Make a potato salad, but in place of potatoes, use chopped cauliflower.
- Bring cauliflower mashed "faux"-tatoes. Mix in cream cheese or sour cream, a little heavy cream, butter – or any combination thereof – and season with salt, chives, and your other favorite mashed potato seasonings. They'll be a hit!
- Make cauliflower stuffing.
- Bring some fresh berries and freshly whipped cream sweetened with stevia or monkfruit. YUM!
- Instead of tortilla chips, bring pork rinds with a layer dip featuring salsa, sour cream, guacamole, and black olives.
- Bring a beanless chili with steak or ground beef as the meat. Include sour cream for people to add to the chili, and flax muffins for them to enjoy with it.

As you can see, it's very easy to come up with something delicious and Code Red-approved for your next holiday potluck!

14. "What If I'm Nervous About Staying On Track?" (Getting Your Mindset Right)

Today's holiday season is about more than celebrations, lights, gratitude, and gifts. It's also a society-wide feeding frenzy.

It starts with Halloween, and it continues with holiday "treats" and constant overeating all the way through the new year.

If you're on a weight loss journey, and looking to continue that journey (instead of gain weight and get sick over the holidays), you may find yourself feeling like an outsider. You may feel like you're missing out.

And worst of all, you may mistrust your own ability to stay on track.

If you're nervous about your own ability to get through the holidays while staying on plan, I want to remind you that making it through the holidays is a decision.

In other words, you make your mind up that you're in control of what goes in your mouth, and you decide that's the way it's going to stay.

If you're on a Home Study program, you choose foods that fit your budget, calories, and macros, and then log, weigh, and measure every single crumb.

You may even want to bring your own pre-logged, pre-measured food if you're at someone else's house, in case they're not serving anything you eat during weight loss mode.

If you're following 10 Pound Takedown rules, or even reading *The Code Red Revolution* book, you have access to a foods list, and you know what's Code Red-approved and what's not. Stick with the foods on the "foods to eat" side of the list.

If you're hosting a gathering, you have complete control over what is and isn't served, so take advantage of that. Use it to not only stay on plan, but to prove to the people you have over how delicious Code Red-approved meals can be.

As you navigate the holidays in a way that keeps you on track, step one is to decide that you're someone who stays in control. Better yet, ask yourself, "What would someone who easily loses their weight and keeps it off do in this situation?"

That question puts your brain in problem-solving mode. When the answers come, write them down and use them as an action plan.

The bottom line is that what you believe is what happens, so if you believe you're someone who will derail your own progress, it will be harder to stay on track. NOT impossible, just harder than it has to be.

It's time to start believing in YOU, because yes, YOU can do this!

15. What's Your Plan? (A Prepared Rebel Is A Successful Rebel)

Regardless of their original purpose, all our holidays in today's world revolve around the same thing: FOOD! If you want to stay on track, but doubt your ability to do so (or even if you don't, but want to give yourself the best possible shot at success), planning is your best bet to stay on top of the holidays.

If you're someone who wants to stay on track, but you're nervous about it, here are three things you can do:

First, remember that nobody's holding you down stuffing the food into your mouth. You're the only one feeding yourself, which means you have complete control over what goes in your mouth.

Make your mind up ahead of time that you're staying on track. Don't be wishy washy about it. Commit to it, tell yourself "This is the way it is because I want to do well," and believe it!

Next, make a plan to set yourself up for success. If you're traveling, bring your own approved foods.

If you'll be at hotels and restaurants, look them up online or call ahead and find out what your options are. There's always a way for you to make a plan, take control, and set yourself up for success.

Plan other activities that don't revolve around food. Make it about the memories, not about how much food you can eat.

Memories will last longer and mean more to you than the time it takes that food to digest and end up in the toilet.

Think about it. When you're on your deathbed, are you gonna care whether your family ate a piece of cake, or are you gonna care how much time you got to spend with them?

When that "sweet-talking" voice pops up in your head to try and convince you to cheat, show it the door, because if you want your weight off once and for all, you've gotta learn to stop listening to that voice.

Instead, focus on how amazing it's gonna be to live the rest of your life without all the physical and mental problems you're enduring right now because of how you eat (or used to eat).

The holidays can include food, but they do NOT have to revolve around it.

Food can be present, and we can enjoy it, without it being the center of everything!

16. Helpful Holiday Food Swaps (How To Replace 5 Common Holiday Foods)

One of the hardest parts of managing your eating to lose weight is the feeling of missing out on foods you enjoy. Even though you know they slow down your weight loss, you're emotionally attached to them, and you may use emotional attachment to justify cheating.

Instead of cheating, use these five Code Red-approved holiday food swaps

First up: Potatoes! We avoid potatoes in weight loss mode on the Code Red Lifestyle™, because they stall or slow down weight loss in most people.

Replace potatoes either with cauliflower or radishes, depending on how you cook them.

Cauliflower makes amazing "no-tato" salad. You can also boil it and blend it into mashed "no-tatoes." It even makes great stuffing!

Radishes are delicious sliced up and fried in Code Red Olive Oil. You can also shred them to make hash browns!

Next up: Sweet potatoes! Instead of sweet potatoes with marshmallow and brown sugar use squash instead. It's just as nutritious, yet not as starchy.

For brown sugar, use Lakanto Golden Monk Fruit Sweetener. It's similar to brown sugar, but won't spike your blood sugar. It also tastes amazing. As for the marshmallows, they're a hard no! Melt real butter over your squash instead.

Third, we have fruit salad, which is a popular side dish for most holiday gatherings. Instead of a typical fruit salad, use strawberries or blueberries with fresh, homemade whipped cream. Sweeten it with a little stevia or monk fruit. No one's gonna miss the fruit salad when they get berries and real whipped cream!

Fourth, if you need to thicken sauces or gravy, use full-fat cream cheese instead of flour. It's rich, it's creamy, and it's filling. Plus, cream cheese won't damage the lining of your stomach and intestines like flour does!

Finally, if you're making pie for the holidays, here are a couple things you can do. Sweeten your pie's filling with stevia or monk fruit. Monk fruit usually works best for baking.

Instead of making a flour-based pastry crust, use crushed walnuts or pecans. There are lots of walnut and pecan pie crust recipes online!

Food swaps are a way to replace foods that derail weight loss with foods that promote it (or at least, don't slow it down). Give these swaps a try at your next holiday gathering!

17. Let's Have A Laugh! (What If Santa Ate Like A Code Red Rebel?)

Just for fun, here are 10 ways Santa's life would improve if he went Code Red!

- 1) With less weight to haul around in the sleigh because he's down 100 pounds, Santa could retire a couple of reindeer and save on labor costs.
- 2) Santa's roaring Type II diabetes would finally come under control, saving him a fortune on insulin shots, blood sugar testing supplies, and pricey medication.
- 3) Mrs. Claus could go from cooking 3 meals and 2 snacks a day to just two meals a day, leaving her free to take a hot bath, sleep in, and catch up on her soaps. BONUS: The Claus' grocery bill would drop to 1/4 of what it currently is.
- 4) Santa could finish delivering gifts in a fraction of the time, since he wouldn't be pausing at everyone's house to eat 50 pounds of cookies. (Actually, he wouldn't pause to eat anything, because it'd always be after 6:30.)
- 5) The red on Santa's cheeks and nose, which everyone assumes is from the cold but is actually rosacea, would finally clear up.
- 6) Because he's so much leaner, Santa would drop straight down those chimneys, instead of having to push and struggle his way down. This would shave a good 30 minutes off each visit (and reduce his dry cleaning bill, since his suit wouldn't get as stained or ripped up from touching the insides of the chimney).
- 7) Santa would no longer drive Rudolph and the other reindeer crazy bouncing up and down in the sled like a squirming baby, due to the sugar rush he gets from eating all those cookies.
- 8) Santa wouldn't pass out in his yearly diabetic coma on the way back to the North Pole early Christmas morning, an incident that always results in an expensive and stressful side trip to the emergency room.
- 9) The diabetic neuropathy in Santa's feet would ease up, so when he needed a new pair of boots, he could pick them up at North40, instead of having to special order expensive diabetic versions.
- 10) With all this time Santa would save on Christmas Eve, he'd FINALLY get back to the North Pole in time for his date night with Mrs. Claus.

Clearly, getting on the Code Red Lifestyle™ would benefit Santa in all kinds of ways.

Let's hope this is the year he quits screwing around with bullcrap excuses, and makes himself and his health a priority, so he can finally feel as jolly as he acts!

18. How To Keep Weight Off (3 Tips To Survive The Holidays Without Weight Gain)

The average American gains 10 pounds between Thanksgiving and New Year's; and even with yet another "New Year, New You" commitment to lose weight, most Americans do not lose that 10 pounds...or if they do, it's temporary, and they gain it back plus more.

So what can you do to prevent holiday weight gain and start the new year weighing the same (or even less!) and feeling better for once? Here are three simple tips to help you manage the holidays and start the new year without 10 or more extra pounds of weight to lose.

#1: Drink more water! Unless you're already a Code Red Rebel who's faithfully drinking your water, it's highly likely you're not getting anywhere close to the amount of water you need. Rebels drink a gallon of water a day, because that amount is safe for most adults.

Drinking a gallon of water a day reduces hunger, gives you energy, flushes gross toxins building up in your fat tissue, and reduces "room" in your day for drinks that are likely to lead to weight gain, like soda, energy drinks, sugary coffees, alcohol, and so on.

Drink a gallon of water a day, every day, starting in September (so you have time to get used to it before the holidays actually start).

Tip #2: SLEEP! Sleep is the #1 rule in weight loss. Not my rule, THE rule. Lack of sleep puts your body in a state of stress, and when your body is stressed, it holds onto fat and water weight to protect you from the "danger" it thinks you're experiencing.

The holidays are pretty stressful already for most people, and not sleeping only makes it worse. Lack of sleep also causes hunger and sugar cravings. Your body is telling you, "I need sleep," but you're ignoring it. So, it figures going to sleep right now will put you in danger, so it sends hunger and sugar cravings, so you'll eat something high in glucose (sugar) and get instant energy.

When there's holiday sweets and baked goods around all the freaking time, the last thing you need is to feel overwhelmed by hunger and sugar cravings. Get your sleep!

Tip #3: Make healthier alternatives (they're EVERYWHERE). There are SOOOO many healthy versions of "traditional" foods available nowadays. It is not as hard as you might think to make healthier alternatives and keep your waistline from exploding.

Preventing that 10-pound weight gain is simpler than you think when you use these tips!

19. When You Secretly Want To Cheat (What Does Cheating Really Get You?)

There are three kinds of people who come up against the holiday season during a weight loss journey. First, you have the people who are SO determined to stay on track and get the freaking weight off, nothing and no one's gonna stop them. They won't allow it.

They plan, they prep, they're committed. Even if they face prickly or persuasive family and friends who think they should cheat, they don't.

Next, you have the people who want to be the first type of person, but they're so worried and anxious over whether they'll stay on track, they create a self-fulfilling prophecy, and end up cheating.

Sometimes it's by a lot, and other times it's only by a little. But they do cheat, and usually feel awful about themselves, because unlike person one, these people have given just enough of their power away to food and other people that they don't quite keep it together.

Finally, you have the people who already know they're going to cheat. Some feel a little bad about it, but some don't. Maybe they want to take a break from caring, because actually caring about what you eat is "too hard." (Although, being obese and sick is also hard, right?)

Maybe they're believing the bald-faced lie echoing in their own head that's telling them, "I'll just start fresh for the new year." (How many times have you fallen for THAT one? It's almost as bad as "I'll start tomorrow.") Or maybe they're even grudge eating, to "prove" to whoever that NO ONE tells them what they "can and can't eat," and they're gonna binge on whatever they feel like in order to "stick it to" whoever they think is controlling them.

(As an aside, no one ever tells you what you can or can't eat. Not even me. YOU decide what goes in your pie hole, including when you decide to eat in a way that keeps you on track. YOU are always who has the final say. So grudge eating is complete bullcrap that's based on the lie that someone else is somehow controlling what you eat. Worst of all, the person you hurt most by grudge eating is YOU.)

If you choose to cheat over the holidays, just understand everything you're choosing along with it. You're choosing obesity and disease and suffering. You're choosing to let yourself down again. I know it's hard to feel like you're missing out, but isn't it also hard to waddle when you walk? And to feel bloated, tired, and gross all the time? And to hate what you see in the mirror so much you refuse to look – or if you do, it's only from the neck up? Personally, I think you deserve better than that, and for that reason, I hope you'll choose you, instead of choosing food OVER you again.

20. Why I Don't Do New Year's Resolutions (Do This Instead!)

I don't do New Year's Resolutions, because waiting for a "new year" to transform your life makes no sense to me. I say start NOW if you're ready for a change.

What I will do when a new year rolls around is look at what is and isn't working in my life and business at end of the current year, and use what's not working to determine how I move forward with the upcoming year. For example, could I be doing more to bring Code Red to the world? Am I happy with myself? Am I happy with my relationships? Those are the kinds of things I look at.

Every year, I have things I wanna accomplish in all those areas, so for each one of them, I write down the action steps it'll take to get me where I want to be. See, goals don't magically happen just because you set them and think happy thoughts. You've gotta believe they'll happen, yes, or you'll sabotage yourself.

But you've also gotta get off your butt and do the stuff that'll bring you closer to them. That's why I create an action plan, and especially, why I make my action steps measurable, so I'll be able to tell when I've reached them.

Here's an example of what I mean, but I've applied to it a weight loss goal so you can see how you might use this strategy to help you get the weight off. Let's say your goal is to lose weight. Well, how much? In order to make that goal measurable, you've gotta choose an amount of weight. Otherwise, you could drop half an ounce, and ta-da, you've lost weight! But that's probably not what you had in mind when you said lose weight, is it?

Instead of just "lose weight," your goal can be, "I want to lose 80 pounds of fat by May 1 on the Code Red Lifestyle™." THAT is measurable. You know you'll need to average 16 pounds a month, starting January 1, to reach that goal, because without that date, you could drag that 80 pounds out for the whole year, or wait until the year's half over to even start.

The next step is to look at what you need to do each day to hit that 16 pounds a month it'll take to reach 80 pounds down by May 1...and then just freaking do it.

You may reach 80 pounds down by May 1, or you might get there sooner. It also might take longer than you think, so please remember that a goal date isn't pass or fail – it's simply a deadline to inspire you to take action.

Forget New Year's Resolutions. They don't work. Instead: Decide on the things you want to happen by the end of the year, set MEASURABLE goals, reverse engineer them and create action steps you can follow, and then take the actions. At the end of the year, check in with yourself. See what worked and what didn't, and use that information to move forward with the upcoming year. This works for me, and I know it can work for you, too!

You Can Do It!

Thanks for sticking with me through this book. I hope I've encouraged you and shown you that this holiday season does not have to be like every other one.

It doesn't have to end in a 10-pound weight gain.

It doesn't have to be a giant sleep-deprived stress-fest. It doesn't have to be the precursor to a guilt-ridden January 2nd.

You now have tricks and tips in your box of tools that you can pull out and use anytime.

Not just for the December holidays, but for Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, the Fourth-of-July, birthdays, weddings—any special occasions, or no special occasion at all. These tools work all year round.

You know what? It doesn't matter who you are. It doesn't matter if you're rich or poor, if you're old or young.

It doesn't matter if you celebrate Christmas or Hanukkah or Festivus. Every single person can do this. This is not just for athletes; this is not just for celebrities. It's for all of us. And we are all in this together.

I use these strategies myself. My clients use them, as well as my friends and family.

This book is the result of thousands of nutrition plans and clients who have all had to get through the same holidays that you do. I have walked down this path, and I've seen real people just like you actually lose weight while enjoying a magical, fun-filled holiday season.

And I'm telling you it's gonna work for you, too. You can do this. I just know it!

I hope you have a wonderful holiday and I hope you take to heart what you have learned today. Take care of yourself. Because you deserve it.

- Cristy "Code Red"

P.S. Want to kick-off the New Year by taking your life back and dumping the extra weight? [Go HERE](#) to learn about my popular 10 Pound Takedown Challenge.



CODE RED
— TAKE YOUR LIFE BACK —