



Robert Portman

WELCOME DR. ROBERT PORTMAN TO THE START FITNESS™ TEAM

"In this issue, we are very proud to introduce Dr. Robert Portman, a distinguished nutritionist and exercise physiologist, and author of *The Performance Zone* and *Nutrient Timing* (Basic Health Publishing). He shares the same vision of helping Guard and family members worldwide by providing the absolute best health advice possible! With him on the START Fitness™ team, we stand ready to challenge you to be in the best shape of your life!"

—Stephanie and SSG Ken Weichert

If you have a question about nutrition in general or sports nutrition in particular, please e-mail Dr. Robert Portman at askthetrainer@startfitness.com

He will answer selected questions in an upcoming column. For more information about Dr. Portman, please refer to www.pacifichealthlabs.com.

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Operation Calorie Control

by Dr. Robert Portman

If you are conscientious about staying in shape and maintaining your weight, the period between Thanksgiving and New Year's is a time of challenge. The average American gains one pound during the holiday season and never loses it. So the typical American, over 20 years of holiday eating, can put on 20 pounds of fat.

During the rest of the year, we concentrate on getting into the best shape possible. However, our objective during the holiday season is simply to maintain. This period is dangerous territory but that doesn't mean we cannot take defensive action to ensure that we do not become a weight gain casualty.

Tips to get you through the holiday season:

1. DON'T SKIP MEALS

It is quite common to skip meals or eat less before a major meal such as Thanksgiving or Christmas Dinner to "bank" calories for later. Unfortunately, your appetite doesn't work this way. You will actually eat more later because you are famished.

It is far better not to skip a meal and simply eat less. This will prevent a large increase in hunger, which results in enormous overeating.

2. SPOIL YOUR APPETITE

If you know you are going to a party where there will be great food and drink, take the edge off your appetite beforehand and you will eat less. The best pre-meal appetizers are those that have a little bit of fat and protein. Peanut butter is excellent for helping reduce appetite. A small dab of peanut butter on a celery stick contains only about 100 calories.

3. LIMIT YOUR PORTIONS

Portion control can save you an enormous number of calories. For example, an 8-ounce cup of eggnog has 350 calories. Have half a cup and you save 175 calories. The same strategy can be applied to desserts.

4. DON'T AUTOMATICALLY CLEAN YOUR PLATE

Stop eating your dinner when you are full, not when your plate is clean. When you reach level 4 on a 1-5 scale of fullness, put down the fork.

5. WALK AFTER DINNER

A recent study shows that if you exercise even moderately after dinner, you greatly decrease the deposition of fat in your arteries. Make a post-meal family walk a new Thanksgiving tradition.

6. LIMIT YOUR ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

Drink a non-caloric beverage such as water after every alcoholic beverage you consume. Since your stomach can hold only so much fluid, this strategy will slow your intake of alcohol calories (there are 130 calories in just one bottle of beer).

7. FOCUS ON HIGH-INTENSITY AEROBIC EXERCISES

Exercises such as stationary cycling, running and brisk walking that burn calories most efficiently. Twenty to thirty minutes on a stationary bike can help you burn 200 calories. That might not seem like much, but if you do it every day during the holiday season, you will bank 8,400 calories, which you can then apply to those desserts, second helpings and champagne.

