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How Not to Gain Weight This Holiday

Bethenny Frankel gives savvy tips for staying trim this season

By [Lisa Arcella](#) Posted December 04, 2009 from [WomansDay.com](#)

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Bethenny Frankel is probably best known for her tell-it-like-it-is style on the Bravo reality show *The Real Housewives of New York City*. But the 39-year-old first-time mom-to-be is also a successful natural food chef and entrepreneur who has taught many people how to stay slim. As any woman knows, that's especially challenging during [the holiday](#) season, when temptation is lurking around every corner. But Bethenny says, fear not! There are plenty of easy ways to keep those yuletide calories at bay.

"Bingeing at this time of year is very common," she says. "People indulge a little bit, get anxiety about it and decide to destroy themselves because they've already been 'bad.' The only unbreakable rule I have is never to binge. You can have a cookie or a few bites of cake or a piece of pizza and it will never make you fat. The 'beat yourself up' mentality will cause you to binge and that will make you fat." Frankel adds, "I have friends who worry about vinaigrette dressing, but will later binge on two pieces of chocolate cake. If nothing were forbidden, the binges wouldn't happen."



Photo: © Courtesy of Bethenny Frankel

Still, even though she has an enviable figure now, Bethenny admits she struggled with her own weight until she had an epiphany during a trip to Italy nearly 10 years ago. "I couldn't take another moment of being imprisoned by dieting," she explains. "I saw and tasted the smaller, yet tastier and brighter, real fruits and vegetables," she says. "I saw normal-size yet full-fat portions of pastry, cappuccinos and pasta. I realized it was about quality, not quantity, low-carbs, lowfat or no-anything—that's the American obsession. My weight was never the same two days in a row for almost 30 years. Since my turning point—aside from being pregnant—my weight hasn't changed a bit."

Bethenny's Top Tips for Staying Fit During the Holidays:

1. If you want hot chocolate, replace 1/2 with regular or decaf coffee.
2. With fattening [dressings](#), like blue cheese or ranch, mix with a light vinaigrette dressing. For a fattening Caesar dressing, add balsamic vinegar.
3. Wear tailored, fitted clothes to prevent overeating.
4. Alternate cocktails with club soda.
5. Order your cocktails on the rocks, so you get some hydration from the diluted ice cubes.
6. Spoil your appetite with a 200-calorie good-investment snack before you leave. It should contain [fiber](#) and protein, like edamame, nut butter, lowfat cheese, hummus or turkey on sprouted grain bread.
7. Decide where to invest calorically: alcohol, dessert, bread or a very small amount of each.
8. Don't waste calories on average hors d'oeuvres, like neon-orange cheese cubes. Make a plan and allow yourself tiny tastes of luxury foods, such as baby lamb chops.
9. Fill yourself up on low-cal, high-fiber foods first. Even if you don't desire them, have some cruditéés or

plain shrimp cocktail to give yourself a base. Then have a small amount of decadent hors d'oeuvres. Do this at restaurants, too. Have a salad or non-cream soup before a meal to fill up on less.

10. Skip the entrée. Instead, have one good-investment appetizer (salad) and a decadent appetizer (crab cakes).

11. Never clean your plate. Even if it's broccoli, leave a few bites. This gets you into the habit for everything you eat.

12. Play your own game. No one can make you do, say or eat anything. You have to take responsibility for what you put into your mouth or when you do or don't exercise.

Finally, Frankel says she uses her own "Skinnygirl Fix-ology" formula during the holidays and also gives it as a hostess gift. For any highly caloric drink, use clear liquor and soda with a splash of the sweet component. For example, a Screwdriver becomes vodka and soda with a splash of orange juice, while a Cosmopolitan turns into citrus vodka and soda with fresh lime juice, a splash of cranberry and fresh fruit—to replace the sugary Rose's Lime normally used. (It's also only 100 calories per serving.)

For more Skinnygirl cocktails, go to SkinnygirlCocktails.com. You can also follow [Bethenny on Twitter](#).



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