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MAINTAIN, DON'T GAIN! THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

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Panama City, Fla. — The Florida Department of Health is encouraging everyone to include health in their holiday activities this year by joining the 2017 Eat Smart, Move More: Maintain, Don't Gain! Holiday Challenge. Many Americans gain between one and five pounds each holiday season. While it might not sound like much, most people never manage to lose those extra pounds. The Maintain, Don't Gain! Holiday Challenge is a seven-week, email-based campaign to help participants maintain their weight through the holiday season.

"Maintaining a healthy weight through healthy eating and exercise can help prevent many health problems such as diabetes, heart disease, and stroke," said Douglas Kent, DOH-Bay Administrator.

With balance and moderation, you can enjoy the holiday festivities and remain healthy! Choose fresh fruit as a substitute for candy. Limit fats, salt and sugary foods. Find fun ways to stay active, such as dancing to your favorite holiday music or going for a brisk walk following holiday meals. Make it a goal to be active for at least 30 minutes a day.

Healthiest Weight Florida, in partnership with North Carolina State University, has been promoting and participating in the Maintain Don't Gain Holiday Challenge for the past three years. Last year's Holiday Challenge was the biggest and best yet with over 13,500 participants from across the country.

The challenge will begin November 13 and run through December 31. This year, rather than focusing on trying to lose weight during the holiday season, try this free seven-week challenge which provides participants with tips, tricks and ideas to help maintain your weight throughout the holiday season.

The Challenge includes weekly newsletters delivered by email with tips on how to:

- Survive a holiday party;
- Manage holiday stress;
- Be a healthy host;
- Fit physical activity into your day;
- Prepare quick and healthy meals; and
- Serve healthy holiday recipes.

For more information and to register for the 2017 Eat Smart, Move More, Maintain, Don't Gain! Holiday Challenge visit <http://www.healthiestweightflorida.com/activities/holiday.html>.

About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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