

# Happy Holiday 5

By Suze Hargraves

The long weekend is behind us. Raise your hand if you gained a couple of pounds. I know my hand's up. I didn't think I did that bad and I tried to make good choices yet a few extra pounds crept up on me somewhere between Friday night and Monday night. Like you, I had the best of intentions and yet there they were, glaring at me from the scale this morning; the holiday five. Don't beat yourself up. There's no point to it. Humans are prone to folly, especially when it comes to barbecues. Pick yourself up, dust yourself off and get back on track.

The first step to getting back on track is truly the most important one: forgive yourself. It's just a few pounds. You are not a failure nor are you evil or pathetic. No worlds are going to come to an end. You're just human. Sometimes the Snickers and Doritos win. It's okay. Forgive yourself and move on to better things. Yes, it's better to stick to your big plan and make good choices, but a few days of failure do not equal a complete meltdown. Let go of the anxiety and guilt. Take a deep breath and repeat after me: "Every day is an opportunity to make choices that are healthy for me and today I will make good choices." Forgive yourself and move on.

When I say "move on" I mean that literally. Make a commitment to put in a little extra time toward burning calories and a little less time consuming them. Move your body. If you're sitting there using the lame excuse, "I'm too tired." then your weekend splurge is going to turn into a month or more. Feeling lethargic after a holiday weekend is often a result indulging in excesses. You have to get that body out of "party" mode and back into success mode. Get up and do something. Move.

I know you're feeling guilty, as am I, and want to ditch those pounds quickly, but don't succumb to quick fixes. They don't work. Do not alter your calorie intake from 1,200 to zero. Punishing yourself is not the answer. You'll be tired, grouchy, thinking fuzzy and possibly even sick. Madelyn Fernstrom, PhD, director of the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center Weight Management Center recommends reducing your normal healthy daily caloric intake by 100 calories to help get those splurge pounds off. Go to <http://www.medicinenet.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=50450> for more tips on how to get rid of that little extra.

Holiday pounds happen. It's an unfortunate reality. No, you shouldn't ditch your commitment to your health every time a holiday or a barbeque rolls around, but if you do succumb you need to be prepared to pull yourself up by your bootstraps and recommit to making good choices. Remember, taking weight off and keeping it off is not a one day, one month or even a one year commitment. It's a lifestyle choice.

Get back on track and follow that track to more days of good choices and a healthier you.

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