



# 7 SKINNY SECRETS TO SLIM DOWN THE HOLIDAY POUNDS

BY: SJ Strock

Did you pack on the pounds this holiday season? Gave yourself till January 1st to embark on the healthy regimen you've been promising to start with the New Year? Well, 2010 is here and it's time to get motivated, get moving and get more out of your diet and exercise plan.

**THESE 7 SIMPLE STEPS WILL GET YOU ON TRACK FOR A THINNER, HEALTHIER AND MORE ENERGIZED NEW YEAR.**

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## 1 Eat Right

Dieting doesn't mean starving yourself. So plan your meals ahead of time and eat well. Five to six small, high protein (low fat, low carbohydrate) meals a day will keep you energized and satisfied. Cravings for sugar soirées and pasta parties will be eliminated in just a few days, once you give your body a constant dose of the good stuff.

## 2 Set Realistic Goals

Whether you're ready to shed some pounds or tighten and tone up, know what you are capable of and then set weekly goals. Running a half marathon (13.2 miles) by February, after sitting on the couch for the last few years isn't realistic. If a road race is on your "to do" list for this year, start with 1 mile and increase your distance weekly. As for losing weight, fifteen pounds per week may not be a goal easily attainable, but two to five pounds a week sure is.

## 3 Add Color

Have you noticed that your favorite restaurants serve not only delicious food, but the presentation is usually appealing to the eye as well as the palate? Color is a great way to add rich-in-nutrient foods to your quest for a healthy new you. Bright red apples, dark green leafy veggies, sun-lit yellow peppers, sweet red onions, juicy pink grapefruits; thick orange carrots will all add excitement to your table, variety to your diet as well as fiber and phyto-nutrients to your body.



## 4 Buddy Up

Friends are the great equalizer. They will keep you motivated and on track. It's oh-so-easy to blow off the gym at 6am, unless you've already got an appointment to meet a trainer or friend. Walking off the pounds, while catching up with your friend(s) will wile away the miles. It's also effortless to stay on track in social situations when you've got your buddy leading you toward the crudités rather than the over stuffed potato skins. You're in it together, so you naturally support one another.



## 5 Keep a Food Journal

It's been noted that writing down your food intake increases your awareness of what, why and when you eat. Once you can pin point if you are eating out of frustration, anxiety, boredom, or any other emotion, you can make the necessary changes to curb that behavior. A food journal is also an excellent tool to review, for knowledge of greater weight loss weeks, for repeat performance.

## 6 Play

Exercise does not have to be a dirty word. The trick to keeping active, which will burn calories and increase your metabolism, is to find an activity you enjoy and then stick with it. So, if you love to dance but don't enjoy the club scene, sign up for ballroom dance lessons or find a Zumba® class at your local fitness center. Run around with your four legged friends. Tennis, softball, hockey leagues are always open for all levels of players. You don't have to walk a treadmill to burn calories...just play!



## 7 Reward Yourself

It was easy to pack on the pounds over the holiday season, and a bit difficult to take them off, so be good to yourself. A reward doesn't have to be a night out drinking or a huge piece of chocolate cake. When you set your goals, also set the treat you will obtain by meeting each goal. Feeling good about working out and toning up? Well then, book a massage at the spa. Buy a new pair of jeans for every ten pounds off ten pounds is a full size, you know!