

Get Healthy: How to Bounce Back From a Food-Filled Weekend

Hot dogs and burgers and pies, oh my! The 4th of July is a time of celebration, indeed. I don't need to remind you that on that momentous day 239 years ago, the Continental Congress approved the final wording of the Declaration of Independence. (The Congress actually declared independence two days prior. But surrounding the jubilation, the fired-up grills and fantastic fireworks, and the thanksgiving for our freedom, there is food ... *lots and lots* of food.

Did you know that just a few years ago, in 2013, The National Sausage and Hot Dog Council (I could hardly believe there's such a thing) predicted Americans would eat 150 million hot dogs over the July 4 holiday alone, part of the 7 *billion* hot dogs eaten over the summer season from Memorial Day to Labor Day? And that's just the hot dogs.

When you consider that most Americans also indulge in delicious sides like potato salad, chips and dip, French fries, lemonade, ice cream and apple pie, it's a wonder we are not in carb-induced comas by the time the fireworks start.

In this article, rather than filling you with remorse about any holiday indulgences, I'm going to give you a few tips on how to recover from it—how to de-bloat, regain your energy and get back on track with your healthy, God-honoring nutrition and exercise schedule.

Here are some tips:

1. Pray. I know that may sound trite, but it's important to remember that honoring our bodies isn't just a suggestion—it's a command. First Corinthians 6:19 explicitly tells us that as

temples of the Holy Spirit, our bodies don't belong to us. Therefore, we're to be good stewards of them so that they're strong and fit to do the works God has prepared in advance for us (Eph. 2:10). And in our busy, fast-based Western society where fast food chains and non-nutritive processed products abound, fueling up properly and working out regularly is no easy task.

Praying daily—not just when we need a little extra encouragement or motivation—is key to keeping Christ at the center of all that we eat, drink, and do.

“Therefore, whether you eat, or drink, or whatever you do, do it all to the glory of God” (1 Cor. 10:31).

2. Start each day off on the right foot. I should back up and insert a Tip No. 1.5: Don't box up leftovers to take home with you! Start fresh the following day by opening up a fridge full of your healthy meats, eggs, cheese, veggies and fruit—not round two of barbecue and star-spangled cookies! Even if you don't feel hungry, skipping breakfast is not advised as this could set you up to overeat later in the day. Cook a well-balanced breakfast composed of protein (for example, eggs and egg whites, turkey sausage), good-for-you fats (for example, almond butter, coconut oil, avocado) and healthy carbohydrates (for example, a half-cup of berries, a piece of fruit, no-sugar-added oatmeal, Ezekiel bread), and 16 to 20 ounces of water with it. Which brings me to Tip No. 3 ...

3. Drink lots of water. More than half of your body weight comes from water. So it makes sense that drinking water helps combat the bloating that swiftly follows a night of overeating. Water can be the cause of bloating and ultimately the cure for it. If you don't drink enough water, your body tries to retain as much water as possible, which causes dehydration ... and bloating.

After overindulging at the 4th of July barbecue, you may be a

bit concerned about weight gain. When you drink water, your body works hard to warm up the water that goes into your system, making your metabolism work faster. At least two-thirds of Americans don't drink enough water, so strive to be among the third that does!

Water relieves bloating in two ways: 1) The boost in your metabolism causes your body to digest the unhealthy meal faster. 2) Your body can remove the excess water in your belly through urination.

Aim to drink two to three liters throughout the day.

4. Breathe deep. Taking long, deep breaths will assist your organs in the detoxification process and stimulate them for digestion.

Take a few minutes to become quiet and focus on nothing but your breath. Close your eyes. Place your hands on your stomach and gently interlace your fingers. Begin to breathe deeply into your belly.

Practice breathing with a slow, controlled, deliberate breath so that you feel the fingers slide apart on the inhale and back together on the exhale. As much as you try to expand as you take in breath, see how much you can expel as you breathe out. You may find that your fingertips slide together farther than when they started. Notice where you tend to rush or lose control; then work on evening it out.

Breathe like this 15-20 times, as deeply as you can without force or discomfort.

5. Get some cardio in. Even if you're feeling bloated and sluggish, doing a high-intensity cardio session to sweat things out is some of your best defense against your case of bloat and "blahs." I guarantee you'll feel 100 times better after you exercise! Check out last week's post for six less-than-20-minute workouts that are sure to help get you back into your

fitness groove!

I hope these tips have been helpful! Please reach out to me with any questions or feedback you may have on Instagram @dianaandersontyler and Twitter @dandersontyler.

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