

November 9, 2016

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN SEMINOLE COUNTY ENCOURAGES RESIDENTS TO JOIN THE 'MAINTAIN, DON'T GAIN' CHALLENGE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON



Contact:

Mirna Chamorro

Mirna.Chamorro@flhealth.gov

407-665-3374

Sanford, Fla.— To help Florida families across the state enjoy a happy and healthy holiday season, the Florida Department of Health is partnering with North Carolina State University to offer the Maintain, Don't Gain! Holiday Challenge for the third year in a row. This free seven-week challenge runs from November 14 through December 31 and provides participants with tips and ideas to help maintain their weight throughout the holiday season.

"The Maintain, Don't Gain Challenge is an excellent tool to keep us all motivated and not fall off our health goals during the holiday season. The variety of resources will keep participants engaged, inspired and provide support which is essential for reaching personal health goals," said Donna Walsh, acting health officer for the Florida Department of Health in Seminole County (DOH-Seminole).

Many Americans gain between one and five pounds each holiday season. Last year, more than 1,600 Floridians participated in the Maintain, Don't Gain! Holiday Challenge, the second most participants of all 50 states, and received helpful advice on enjoying the holidays in a healthier way. Participants in last year's challenge experienced beneficial results. Sixty-seven percent reported they maintained their weight, 18 percent lost three to five pounds and 98 percent said they will continue to use the strategies learned during the challenge.

Venise White, Manager of the Office of Health Promotion and Education at DOH-Seminole emphasized, "We routinely set annual weight-loss resolutions at the beginning of the year, however most people never manage to lose extra holiday pounds. Rather focusing on trying to lose weight this holiday season, commit to maintaining your weight."

The 2016 Holiday Challenge includes:

- Seven weekly newsletters delivered to your inbox;
- Tips to host a healthier Thanksgiving, manage holiday stress and survive a holiday party;
- Weekly challenges, winners and prizes;
- Support through social media;
- Healthy holiday recipes; and
- Motivation and support from other participants.

For more information and to register for the 2016 Maintain, Don't Gain! Holiday Challenge, please visit Healthiest Weight Florida at <https://esmmweighless.com/holiday-challenge-live/>. For information about assessing your weight and health risks contact Venise White at (407) 665-3008 or via email at venise.white@flhealth.gov.

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.

Follow us on Twitter at [@HealthyFla](#) and on [Facebook](#). For more information about the Florida Department of Health please visit www.FloridaHealth.gov.