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WITH THE HOLIDAYS UPON US, FLORIDA HEALTH IN CHARLOTTE COUNTY ENCOURAGES RESIDENTS TO JOIN THE 'MAINTAIN, DON'T GAIN' CHALLENGE

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PORT CHARLOTTE, 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 Nov. 14 through Dec. 31 and provides participants with tips, tricks and ideas to help maintain their weight throughout the holiday season.

"Even a small amount of weight gain can pose a major health risk," said Dr. Frank Lepore, Administrator for the Florida Department of Health in Charlotte County. "I invite Charlotte County residents to join the Department of Health's free challenge to help you maintain your weight through the indulgences of the holidays."

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 more healthy 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.

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 the Healthiest Weight Florida website.

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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