

# Keeping Fitness A Priority During The Holidays

*Exercise is a key factor in maintaining or losing weight, but can be a particular challenge at the holidays. Here are easy ways to add calorie-burning activities into your season.*



- To avoid gaining weight in the holiday season, increase the amount you exercise to balance out extra calories you take in. For example, if you usually work out for 30 minutes a day, do 45 minutes instead.
- Schedule physical activity like you do holiday events. In your planner or on your calendar, write the times you plan on exercising...and stick to them!
- If you belong to a fitness center, keep workout clothes and shoes in your car so that you're always prepared. Having these items with you will eliminate a common excuse for not exercising.
- Arrange to exercise with a friend or relative so you can encourage each other.
- When the weather outside is frightful, find locations inside to be active. Walk laps around a mall, play basketball in a gymnasium, or use an indoor community pool.
- While cleaning the house in anticipation of holiday guests, turn on lively music and dance around while you work.
- If weather permits, park far away from the entrance of your shopping destination. And in a multi-level store or mall, use the stairs instead of an elevator or escalator.
- Break up your daily exercise amount into smaller chunks to fit it into your busy schedule. But aim for at least 10 minutes at a time.
- Try a new winter activity, such as ice skating.
- If you have an exercise bike or treadmill collecting dust at home, put it in front of your TV so you can combine watching your favorite holiday movie or program with burning calories.

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# Fitting Family Physical Activity Into Thanksgiving

- If your Thanksgiving travel plans include flying, lead everyone on a brisk walk around the airport terminal while waiting for a flight. Also, avoid moving walkways.
- When driving long distances to visit loved ones, give passengers opportunities to get out of the vehicle and move around. Pack jump ropes, a Frisbee, or a baseball to use at pit stops.
- See if your town offers a fun run on Thanksgiving morning, often called a turkey trot.
- Hold a game of flag football or kickball before your holiday meal, perhaps while the turkey is cooking.
- Take advantage of the time off around Thanksgiving to explore parks and trails in the area.
- Instead of napping after your big meal, walk through the neighborhood. Perhaps you'll spot others doing the same thing!
- Find Thanksgiving-themed games to play, such as a popcorn relay race. Suggestions are available online. In addition, put a new spin on old games. For example, Duck-Duck-Goose could become Chicken-Chicken-Turkey.
- Plan an outing to pick pumpkins or apples. Autumn is the perfect season to do it!
- If you're out of town for Thanksgiving, locate activities unique to the community you're visiting. Ask around or do a search online for fun, local outings.
- On the Friday after Thanksgiving, have an adventure at a zoo or animal park. Sometimes these places offer special deals or programs on that day.



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# Navigating Holiday Parties: 10 Tips to Help You Succeed



- 1** *During your other meals and snacks the day of the party, consume less calories than you do normally.*
- 2** *Before leaving for the party, eat a low-calorie snack that's filling. Combining protein and fiber works well, such as a small amount of peanut butter on celery.*
- 3** *Bring a healthy appetizer or dessert with you to the event that you know you can eat without guilt.*
- 4** *At buffet tables, choose foods that aren't fried and don't have sauces.*
- 5** *Sit down with your food if possible. Eat slowly, savoring every bite.*
- 6** *Wait 20 minutes after eating to decide if you want seconds. This will give your brain time to receive the signal that you're full.*
- 7** *Have club soda, sparkling water, or diet soda to drink instead of eggnog, alcoholic beverages, or regular soda.*
- 8** *Hold your conversations away from the food table.*
- 9** *If you are the one planning the holiday party, put vegetables, fruit, lean meat, whole-grain items, and low-fat dairy on the menu.*
- 10** *Don't completely give up on your healthy holiday plans if you end up splurging once. Jump right back into good nutrition and exercise.*

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# Reducing Calories & Fat In Your Holiday Meals



- Use Yukon Gold potatoes to make mashed potatoes and leave out the butter. They are buttery enough on their own. Also, add skim milk in place of whole milk.
- Try covering a cake with fresh fruit instead of traditional frosting.
- Refrigerate your gravy. This will cause the fat to rise to the top and form a solid layer. Skim the fat off, then reheat the gravy.
- For each cup of mayonnaise you need for dips, appetizers, or side dishes, blend together a half a cup of mayonnaise with half a cup of fat-free sour cream.
- Remove the skin from your turkey before serving it.
- Do an Internet search and find a good recipe for pumpkin pie without crust.
- Replace traditional green bean casserole with green bean almandine. Make sure the recipe you choose calls for olive oil, not butter.
- Top your sweet potato casserole with pecans and Splenda® brand brown sugar, and skip the marshmallows. Note that Splenda® brown sugar is twice as sweet as the regular, so cut the amount in half.
- Pass by the higher-fat crescent rolls at the store; bring home brown-and-serve rolls instead.
- Remember that even if you modify dishes to be healthier, portion control still is very important to avoiding weight gain.

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# Beware of High-Calorie Cocktails



Margaritas, daiquiris, grasshoppers, pink ladies, spiked eggnog... what do these tasty concoctions have in common? They're delicious, sure, but they're also loaded with calories. Quite a lot.

So, what drinks and holiday libations are loaded with flavor but *low* in calories? Here are a few to try and enjoy. *Cheers!*

## Champagne

Simple yet elegant, a 4-ounce glass of this bubbly favorite is only 85 calories. That's less than a 12-ounce bottle of light beer or a 4-ounce glass of wine. Pop the cork for a smart and sparkling choice!

## Gin & Tonic

A popular drink any time of year, this cocktail is a calorie-conscious classic. Being just over 100 calories (1 ounce gin, 4 ounces tonic) makes this a drink that won't go to waist.

## Vodka & Diet Lemon-Lime Soda

Nothing exotic about this little cocktail, but it's quite refreshing. You'll sip with a smile knowing that its calorie content is less than 100. Enjoy!

## Rum & Diet Cola

Don't forget this twist on an old standard. It can run as low as 65 calories, depending on the brand of rum. Add a splash of nutrients with a slice of fresh lime.

***Always drink responsibly. Never drive after having even a small amount of alcohol; it can impair your driving and is not worth the risk. Also, be aware that health experts advise men to have no more than two drinks a day, women one drink. And women should never drink when pregnant.***

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# This Holiday Season, Give Yourself the Gift That Truly Keeps on Giving— *Less Stress!*



If you or your loved ones are living a life of stress, especially during these hectic holidays, here are some simple tips to help de-stress; live a happier, healthier life; and enjoy this most wonderful time of the year.

**Plan ahead.** Instead of heading to the mall or your favorite store looking for that perfect gift, call first and make sure the item you're looking for is available. If possible, have the store hold the item for you and designate a time to pick it up.

**Simplify.** Don't take on too many projects, assignments, or chores at one time, or commit to too many holiday events. It's OK to say no. Simple enough.

**Try to relax.** Deep breathing, pleasant thoughts, and happy memories of holidays past are easy ways to tell your mind and body to settle down. In the hustle and bustle of going from store to store and fighting traffic, take the time to just breathe, smile, and know this is only temporary.

**Exercise, exercise, exercise.** You don't have to join a club or gym. Use the stairs instead of the elevator, park your car farther away than normal when holiday shopping, and walk instead of driving when it makes sense. Going to the neighbor's house a few blocks away for some holiday cheer? If the weather permits, walk. It's good exercise and safer than being on the roads.

**Start thinking healthy.** With all the holiday parties, office get-togethers, and more, the temptation to "pig out" is a natural part of the season. Limit the amount you eat and drink, look for veggies when possible, and again, it's OK to say "no" when offered seconds or even thirds. And keep it up after the holidays—choose fresh food instead of fast food, and water rather than a soft drink. Be sensible about alcohol (on average, no more than one drink a day for women, two for men) and, if you smoke, take steps to finally quit. Good habits tend to bring on good health. And less stress. And happier holidays!

**Keep things in perspective.** Overthinking can clutter your mind with unnecessary thoughts and concerns. The season is about joy and, for many, faith and charity, so stay focused on your priorities, count your blessings, and let go of the rest.

*All stress can't be avoided; it's a part of life, especially this time of year. But stress can be managed to keep it to a minimum. Be smart—enjoy life. And have the happiest of holiday seasons!*

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# Making Healthy Cooking & Baking Substitutions

*Try these "smart swaps" to lower the fat, calories, sugar, and salt in your favorite holiday recipes. They still can be tasty—see for yourself!*



- Replace butter with trans-fat-free margarine.
- Instead of oil, put nonstick cooking spray on pans to stir-fry food.
- Mix in unsweetened applesauce in place of oil when baking.
- Develop the habit of choosing low-fat cheese and low-fat or nonfat milk.
- When a recipe calls for a whole egg, substitute two egg whites.
- Swap out sour cream in favor of plain, nonfat yogurt.
- Use three-fourths of the amount of sugar listed in a recipe.
- Purchase raw nuts as opposed to oil-roasted nuts.
- Incorporate plain vegetables or vegetables with sodium-free seasoning into casseroles. Stay away from vegetables in sauce.
- Substitute mini chocolate chips for milk chocolate chunks, and reduce the amount by half.
- Consider using a marinara sauce instead of a cream sauce.
- Make evaporated skim milk the norm in your kitchen, not full-fat evaporated milk.
- Try replacing breadcrumbs with rolled oats.
- Choose broth-based soups over cream-based soups.
- Give up breaded, deep-fried meat. Serve unbreaded, grilled, or roasted meat.

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