



DECEMBER 2020

## HEALTHY HAPPY HOLIDAY

Brighten the holidays by making your happiness, health and safety a priority. Take steps to keep you and your loved ones healthy and safe—and ready to enjoy the holidays.



**Manage Holiday Expectations.** The holidays may look very different this year with the pandemic surging. Be prepared to modify your typical plans. Focus on what you have and make a point to celebrate the good things.



**Holiday Food can be Fun AND Healthy with Fruits & Veggies.** Eat fruits and vegetables which pack nutrients. Arrange them in a holiday theme.



**Stay Active While Having Fun.** Make a family commitment to be active at least 30 to 60 minutes every day – and make it fun! Dance to your favorite music or venture out for a walk.



**Stay Hydrated.** Don't forget to drink plenty of water to keep your body fueled and to reduce hunger cravings. You can often feel "hungry" when you simply need water!



**Get Plenty of Zzz's.** The holiday hype can leave you feeling drained. Remember, if you don't take care of yourself, you won't have anything left to give others. The holiday season is about giving – including to yourself, so get some sleep!



**Health and happiness can exist simultaneously during the holidays.** Focus on being aware of your choices. Don't restrict yourself so much you feel like you missed out. If you want pie, balance it out by eating fewer carbs at dinner.

## HOLIDAY SAFETY



**Use caution when hanging decorations.** Hospital emergency rooms treat about 6,000 people annually from falls involving holiday decorations.

**Practice fire safety.** Most residential fires occur during the winter months, so don't leave fireplaces, space heaters, food cooking on stoves, or candles unattended. Have an emergency plan and practice it regularly.

**Travel safely.** Don't drink and drive. Always wear your seatbelt and buckle child in safety seat or a seat belt according to their height, weight and age. For more info click [here](#).

**Protect children from exposure to lead in metal and plastic toys, especially imported toys, antique toys, and toy jewelry.** [Read more.](#)

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# HEALTHY HOLIDAY EATING HACKS

## HOLIDAY HEALTH TIPS



### WASH YOUR HANDS OFTEN

Wash your hands with soap for at least 20 seconds or use at least 60% alcohol-based product. Good hand hygiene is one of the most important ways to avoid spreading germs.



### GET YOUR FLU VACCINE

We are awaiting a COVID-19 vaccine, but we have a safe flu vaccine that is readily available. More than 200,000 people are hospitalized annually from flu complications.



### STAY WARM

Cold temperatures can cause health problems in seniors and infants. Stay dry and dress warmly in several layers of loose fitting tightly woven clothing. Indoor breaks should happen every 20-30 minutes when it is 13 – 31 degrees. Pets should not be outside more than 30 minutes.



### SNEAK IN HEALTHY ITEMS

Instead of butter or sour cream in mashed potatoes, use low-fat or nonfat Greek yogurt. Replace up to a quarter of the butter or oil you'd use in baking with applesauce for muffins or brownies.



### GET ALL THE FLAVOR WITH LESS SALT

Cut down on salt and boost savory flavors by substituting garlic, or herbs such as basil, rosemary, sage, tarragon, thyme, or turmeric. Avoid salt laden restaurant and processed foods.



### HAVE A PARTY PLAN

Eat a small snack before heading to a seasonal gathering—going hungry will only make you more likely to overeat. Eat more simple foods, such as shrimp, veggies and hummus, fruit and less of cookies and other desserts.



### BE CHOOSY ABOUT BOOZE

To cut down on alcohol consumption and calories, you can alternate alcoholic drinks with nonalcoholic offerings or make a lower calorie, wine spritzer with half wine, half seltzer.



## DECEMBER TIP SHEET

# TIPS TO PREVENT HOLIDAY STRESS & DEPRESSION

The holiday season often brings stress and depression and the COVID-19 pandemic may add additional anxiety. Below are tips to help.



**Acknowledge your feelings.** If someone close to you has recently died or you can't be with loved ones, realize that it's normal to feel sadness and grief. You can't force yourself to be happy because it's the holidays.



**Reach out.** If you feel lonely or isolated, seek out community, religious or other social communities. They can offer support and companionship. Volunteering your time or doing something to help others also is a good way to lift your spirits.



**Be realistic.** The holidays don't have to be perfect or just like last year. As families change and grow, traditions and rituals often change as well. Find new ways to celebrate together, such as sharing pictures, emails, or meet virtually on a video call.

**Set aside differences.** Try to accept family members and friends as they are, even if they don't live up to all of your expectations. Set aside grievances until a more appropriate time for discussion.



**Stick to a budget.** Before you do your gift and food shopping, decide how much money you can afford to spend. Then stick to your budget. Don't try to buy happiness with an avalanche of gifts.

**Plan ahead.** Set aside specific days for shopping, baking, connecting with friends and other activities. Plan your menus and then make your shopping list. Make sure to line up help for meal prep and cleanup.



**Don't abandon healthy habits.** Don't let the holidays become a free-for-all. Overindulgence only adds to your stress. Have a healthy snack before holiday meals so that you don't go overboard on sweets, cheese or drinks. Get plenty of sleep. Include regular physical activity in your daily routine. Avoid excessive tobacco, alcohol and drug use.

**Take a breather.** Make some time for yourself. Find an activity you enjoy. Take a break by yourself. Find something that reduces stress by clearing your mind, slowing your breathing and restoring inner calm. Take a walk at night and stargaze. Listen to soothing music or read a book.



**Seek professional help if you need it.** If you have an Employee Member Assistance Program (EMAP) reach out to them for help. If you don't have access to an EMAP, talk to your doctor or a mental health professional.