

December 2015

Reducing Holiday Stress

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Holidays

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Holiday Wish to You



"The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt with the heart." (Helen Keller)

IT IS NOT HAPPY
PEOPLE WHO ARE
THANKFUL. IT IS
THANKFUL
PEOPLE WHO ARE
HAPPY.

WHAT ARE
YOU THANKFUL
FOR?



Wellness Corner Connection

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Handling the Holiday Stress

The holidays are that time of the year when people feel even more stressed than they usually do. Shopping, limited finances, gift demands, family interactions, loneliness and several other factors all go into making this time of year unique. For some, this stress can cause you to turn to food to help you cope. Add to this the actual physical demands that the holidays place on the heart (increased rate of heart attacks) and the stress of this time of year is clearly not something to take lightly. So what are some simple, yet often ignored, ways to help decrease your holiday stress?

Exercise: Remember that mental stress can be relieved through physical exercise. But we hear so much about what we should do: how many minutes per day, how many times per week, etc. Yet so many of us find an excuse to avoid doing something because it's not fun. Find something that YOU enjoy doing and will stick with. What do you enjoy that requires movement? A brisk walk in the park, taking a fun exercise class with friends, chopping wood, playing catch with your grandkids...physical exercise is anything that enhances or maintains physical fitness and overall health and wellness. Something that strengthens your muscles, especially your heart and helps to manage your weight. It also helps to keep your immune system elevated to help ward off colds and flu. Best of all...reduces stress!

Politely decline: Don't feel obligated to attend every holiday party you are invited to. Decide ahead of time which ones you can afford to go to (mentally) and which ones you simply do not have the time for. Remember, over-commitment is not a sign of love...it is simply a sign of your own guilt. Free yourself this year!

Relax: Give yourself 15 minutes each day for peace and quiet, a time to be reflective, meditate, or simply unwind. If you have small children, ask someone to watch them while you take a short break. Or simply escaping to a quiet room could energize and empower you.

Eat healthfully: At least most of the time. Proper nutrition promotes health, well-being and rejuvenation, which in turn enhances your resilience to stress.

Enjoy natural sunlight: Winter is tough on those of us who need sunlight. It can be depressing being stuck inside. But if you can plan a brisk walk during your day, it can be a mood enhancer. No time? Then stand in front of a window and let the warm rays fall upon your face while you take deep breaths in and out.

Music: Listen to music that you love. If the holiday music gets monotonous, take a break and listen to something that energizes you. Why not put on a set of headphones while shopping especially if you've heard one too many "Chestnuts roasting on an open fire."

Set some ground rules: Knowing that this is a time of rich and tempting foods, set ground rules about eating such as only eat while seated at the table, no food after 8pm, no second helpings, no "saving up calories" for that one meal.

Don't deprive yourself: Enjoying the foods you love is important because if you deprive yourself of them, it could lead to binge eating. The key is planning to eat a small portion of the desired food, eat it slowly and savor every bite.

Be good to yourself: Have a list of motivational sayings that inspire and strengthen your resolve. Use affirmations daily to help you feel good about yourself and your mission to stay healthy and enjoy the holidays with minimal stress!

Resources: *Psychology Today* and *WebMD*

Goal this Holiday: Maintain your current weight

As noted on the previous page, getting through the holidays can be a very stressful time. The added stress cause us to eat more than we should, foods that are convenient vs food high in nutrition, and being emendated with goodies in the office and parties can all result in added weight. This is not the time to try and lose weight but simply NOT GAIN! The holiday's provide opportunities to have those foods that may be a family tradition. It's not a time for deprivation or dieting. It's a time to celebrate but keeping your weight in check.



TIP:

While it may sound counterintuitive, eating before going to a work dinner or happy hour can actually take off pounds. A series of studies out of Penn State found that noshing on an apple or a broth-based soup prior to sitting down to a restaurant meal can reduce total calorie intake by 20 percent. With the average restaurant meal weighing in at 1,128 calories, saving 20 percent once a day could help you lose up to 23 pounds this year.

Benefits of Lemon Water:



- ✓ Improves glow of skin
- ✓ Enhances immunity
- ✓ Promotes healthy hydration
- ✓ Diminishes Inflammation
- ✓ Antibacterial and antiviral benefits—helps during cold season
- ✓ Enhances digestion
- ✓ Enhances brain and nerve health thus improving mental clarity and focus
- ✓ Helps prevent UTIs
- ✓ Cancer fighter
- ✓ Naturally freshens breath
- ✓ Natural de-toxic for your system

1. **Control portions:** Studies show that the more food you are served, the more you will eat even if you don't particularly like what you are eating!
2. **Keep moving:** Exercise is even more important for maintaining weight loss than for taking off the pounds in the first place. And as noted on the previous page, it's a great way to help you cope with stress. It can give you the energy needed to tackle that endless "to do" list. Do whatever you can to squeeze in even 10-minute intervals of some type of activity throughout your day. Something is better than nothing!
3. **Weigh in regularly:** Keeping weight in check at least once a week is important. Best to weigh yourself first thing in the morning. If you see the scale notching upward, it's a signal to cut back on portions or rev up your exercise.
4. **Eat plenty of lean protein:** Boosting protein intake with lean meats, skinless poultry, low-fat dairy, seafood, and beans will help keep you satisfied longer. At the buffet table, opt for lean protein choices and complement them with high-fiber grains, fruits, and vegetables, which also help fill your up for relatively few calories.
5. **Have a healthy breakfast:** People who eat breakfast end up eating fewer calories throughout the day. It powers up the brain, gets the metabolism going and helps you perform any task better.
6. **Put it on a plate:** It's hard to keep track of how much food you are eating if you nibble without using a plate. Having snacks or finger food on a plate will help avoid the mindless hand-to-mouth munching that goes on at holiday parties. This could save you many extra calories.
7. **If you don't LOVE it, don't eat it:** Don't waste calories on foods that don't knock your socks off. If after one bite you don't love it, leave it.

TIP:

People who skip breakfast are 450% more likely to be overweight. Eat some protein within an hour of rising to help keep you feeling fuller longer.

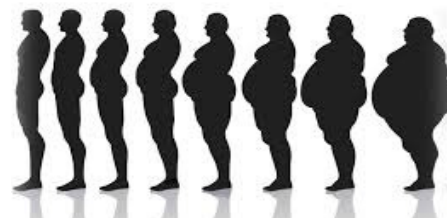
8. **Enjoy soup or a salad before going to a party.** Studies have shown that a large green salad with light dressing or a bowl of broth-based vegetable soup, can reduce the total calories you eat during a meal. These super-nutritious foods take the edge off your appetite so you don't arrive starving.
9. **Satisfy a craving with a few bites.** A piece of pecan pie or a glass of eggnog can set you back by more than 400 calories. But if you just enjoy a few bites or choose a lower-calorie alternate (like pumpkin pie or low-fat eggnog) you can save yourself up to 200 calories.
10. **Savor every bite.** Sit down, relax, and enjoy every bite of your meal. Be mindful of what you are consuming helps you feel more satisfied, helps slow down your eating so you can recognize when you start to feel full.

DID YOU KNOW?

The amount of weight gain from Thanksgiving to New Year's Day can range from 1 to 10 pounds. Although one pound does not seem bad, the weight gained typically remains for the year. Therefore, the weight becomes the unwanted, un-returnable gift that keeps on giving and could be such a gift each holiday season. With that in mind, one pound each holiday could turn to 10 pounds in 10 years. Huge risk to your overall well-being and increases your chances for certain diseases.

This year give yourself the gift of health by managing your weight while you enjoy a guilt-free holiday banquet of deliciousness. Happy Holidays!

Resources: WebMD



NEW Ways to Avoid Getting Sick This Winter

We've heard it a million times but the first line of defense against colds and flu this winter is to wash your hands. We usually get sick not from a cough or sneeze but often from taking your fingers and touching your eyes, nose and mouth. But even being careful, so many of us still have to deal with at least a few days of hacking, sneezing and lost productivity. *Prevention* asked several doctors from sports medicine physicians to acupuncturists for a few new ideas on fending off the winter funk.

Omega-3

If you don't like fish or don't eat it often, you might want to ask your doctor if you should take a supplement. Omega 3s increase the activity of certain cells that fight flu by eating up bacteria. Omega 3s also increase airflow and protect lungs from colds and respiratory infections.

Look for: purified fish oil capsules containing at least 1g combined of EPA & DHA.

Book a Massage

Research in *The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine* finds deep-muscle Swedish massage (compared to a light touch massage) can significantly increase levels of immune-boosting blood cells, while decreasing levels of the stress hormone cortisol.

Even better, these findings are the result of one session! So treat yourself!

Of course getting enough sleep, eating a balanced diet low in sugar and processed foods, and getting regular exercise will help keep our immune system working at it's best all year, we sometimes need a little help during cold and flu season. Trying one of these simple home remedies at the first sigh of illness could shorten the duration and intensity of it.

Garlic is made of compounds that are potent against infection. Use it in cooking to help boost your immune function. But don't cook it to a crisp or leave it exposed to air. It can minimize its medicinal properties.

One clove a day is recommended

Gargling will help cut the mucus in your throat where viruses tend to nestle before finding their way to your cells. Start as soon as you come face-to-face with germs (pretty much any time you touch a public surface).

3x/day could reduce chances of catching a cold by 35%.

Acupuncture assures all your body's fluids are circulating as they should. Chinese medicine doctors believed that viruses enter through an area of our body called the "wind gate". Inserting needles into the upper back, near the shoulder blades, could close off this gate.

Many insurances are starting to cover this holistic treatment. It may be worth asking about and giving it a try.

Wash with HOT water. Washing clothes with very hot water and a full drying cycle can help prevent illness by killing some of the disease-causing viruses that can cling to our clothes.

The flu virus may survive 8-12 hrs on cotton clothing and only 1 to 10 virus particles are necessary for infection.

Here is a crazy one for you: wear a pair of cold, wet socks to bed with a pair of dry wool socks on top. Naturopathic medicine doctors have shown that this encourages arteries to deliver more blood to the feet in an attempt to dry out those wet socks. This will drive circulation throughout the entire body, increasing surveillance of the immune system.

Bonus: also pulls fluids away from head where they tend to accumulate when you are coming down with something.

Stick to a regular sleep schedule. Just because you may be someone who can stay up and feel fine the next doesn't mean you should. To keep your system working smoothly, you should pick a time to go to bed and stick with it.

There is a clear link between sleep and your immune system. Also lack of sleep can cause weight gain.

PRODUCE PICK...

Persimmons

I just had my first persimmon and it was delicious!! Look for fruits yellow to orange in color without bruises, cuts or abrasions. Store them at room temperature. Excellent source of fiber, vitamins A and C, and manganese. But look out (esp. if you are diabetic), they are VERY SWEET! One medium persimmon has 21g of nature sugar.



Butternut Squash and Leek Gratins

A crunchy browned cheese topping conceals a hearty, sweet squash-and-onion combination. Serving individual gratins in single-serving ramekins makes for a more impressive presentation than one large casserole. But if you don't have ramekins, go for it anyway!

Ingredients:

- 1 (2-pound) butternut squash, halved lengthwise and seeded
- Cooking spray
- 1 teaspoon butter
- 4 cups finely chopped leek (about 6 large)
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 3/4 teaspoon salt 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- Dash of ground nutmeg
- 4 large eggs
- 1 large egg yolk
- 1/4 cup (1 ounce) grated fresh Parmesan cheese



Nutritional Information:

Yields: 6 Serving Size: 1 gratin

Calories per serving:	186
Fat per serving:	6.4g
Sat fat	2.6g
Sodium:	437mg
Protein:	8.6g
Fiber:	3.6g
Calcium:	170mg
Iron:	2.9mg

Preparation:

1. Preheat oven to 375°.
2. Place squash halves, cut sides down, on a baking sheet coated with cooking spray. Bake at 375° for 45 minutes or until tender. Cool 30 minutes. Scoop out pulp, and mash with a potato masher or fork until smooth.
3. Reduce oven temperature to 325°.
4. Heat a large nonstick skillet over medium heat; coat pan with cooking spray. Melt butter in pan. Add leek; cover and cook 20 minutes or until tender, stirring once. Reduce heat to medium-low; uncover and cook 10 minutes or until lightly browned, stirring occasionally. Cool slightly.
5. Combine sugar and next 5 ingredients (through egg yolk) in a large bowl, stirring with a whisk. Add squash and leek; stir until well combined. Divide the squash mixture evenly among 6 (6-ounce) ramekins or custard cups coated with cooking spray. Place ramekins in a 13 x 9-inch baking pan; add hot water to pan to a depth of 1 inch. Cover pan with foil; bake at 325° for 25 minutes. Uncover and cook an additional 15 minutes or until a knife inserted in center comes out clean. Remove from oven, and place the ramekins on a baking sheet.
6. Sprinkle 2 teaspoons Parmesan cheese over each ramekin.
7. Preheat broiler.
8. Broil gratins for 2 minutes or until cheese melts and begins to brown.

Recipe from: CookingLight

My wish for you this coming year

is that you have...

The *gallantry* to let go of any failures, shortcomings or regrets that may be holding you down.

The *wisdom* to realize how important you are and that you are in control of your own destiny.

The *belief* in yourself that you can be who you really want to be and the *fearlessness* to go after it.

The *determination* to look those goals & desires in the face and realize you *can achieve* them.

And finally the *motivation to start*. You only have one chance at this life.

MAKE YOURSELF PROUD!

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"Don't strive for perfection...strive for progress"