

Healthy Holidays

Managing Stress During Holidays

Healthy Holidays, Happy You

As great as it is, the holiday season is also a bit of an assault on your health. Busy schedules make it difficult to exercise or cook healthy meals; good-natured co-workers, friends and family offer more homemade snacks and treats; holiday parties overflow with savory sides, sugary desserts and alcohol; and the stress of family gatherings can sap the energy needed to leap over these obstacles.

This month's newsletter is all about making it through a busy holiday season with your health, your happiness and your waistline intact. First, let's address your first potential pitfall—the mood-ruining, diet-derailing, exercise-delaying effects of increased stress.

section **01**

Your December Activity:

Manage Stress and Maintain Your Weight

Keep a host of useful tips in mind as you interact with friends and family. If you wish, track your weight each week and remain in control of your diet.



Don't Let Seasonal Stress Get You Down

Keep your routine

Regular sleep, exercise and diet will help you feel in control and have a massive — and entirely positive — impact on your stress level.

Don't over-schedule

Overextending yourself doesn't do anyone any favors. Keep the peace and enjoy your time with friends and family by only agreeing to take on assignments you know you can handle.

Know your budget

Extra rounds of drinks and bursts of generosity add up in a hurry. Determine how much you're willing to spend in advance and stick to your decision!

Admit when you need support

There's never shame in feeling overwhelmed. Stress-related health issues such as depression are known to spike when our schedules are hectic and new stressors are introduced. If you need to take a break or get some help, do so! Your health and happiness is more important than a holiday triviality.

Weight Management Tips

These simple weight management tips are good in every day practice, but it's an especially great idea to keep them in mind over the holidays.

1

Bring your own dish to social events.

That way you know you'll have a healthy option!

2

Be mindful of portion size.

You won't eat what's not on your plate.

3

Use smaller plates and glasses.

Sometimes your eyes are bigger than your stomach. This helps!

4

Always include healthy choices on your plate.

It makes sure you eat some nutrients and it reduces the real estate available for unhealthy treats.

5

Track what you eat.

Know when you're getting out of control!

6

Plan ahead and continue to exercise.

If you don't have time for your normal routine, break it up and complete it in small bursts throughout the day.



Healthy Holiday Food Substitutions

Pumpkin pie with a tower of whipped cream. Buttery mashed potatoes. Fluffy homemade stuffing. We all have our own favorite comfort foods during the holiday season, and those temptations make it hard to stay in control of a diet. But you can do it—all it takes is a few mental tricks and the willpower to make some simple food substitutions.

Limit Indulgences and Maintain Your Diet

- **Fill up on the good stuff first.** Eat your fruits, vegetables and lean meats first! Slow down to let the healthy food settle and you'll be less tempted to make a big calorie splurge on a sugary dessert.
- **Eat a healthy snack or small meal before you leave.** Don't "save up" for a big meal and don't expect your willpower to hold out forever, especially if you're hungry when you arrive. Get something in your stomach before you depart for a party or family gathering.
- **Control your environment.** Try to keep sweet and savory treats out of your line of sight, and socialize away from the snack or dessert tables. If it's convenient, it's also a great idea to sit next to someone who is also making healthy choices and support one another.

Simple Food Substitutions

Eat This

Fruits

Water or unsweetened ice tea

Whole grain breads

Low-fat or fat-free dairy products

Not That

Pies and rich, sugary desserts

Sugary soda or juice

Breads made with white/enriched flour

Whole milk, fatty cheeses and ice cream

Bonus Tip: Every meal, ease up on the gravy and fill half your plate with healthy fruits and vegetables!



December Recipe

Quick and Healthy Stuffing

Bring this tasty stuffing to ensure there's something healthy at each holiday gathering

Total Time (Cook and Prep): 60 minutes
Servings: 6

INGREDIENTS

6 pieces sourdough bread
6 pieces rye bread
½ cup chopped onion
1 stalk celery
1 red bell pepper
3 cloves garlic
1 sprig fresh rosemary
1 ½ cup vegetable stock
3 tablespoons coconut oil
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon black pepper



Nutrition Information

325 calories
9 g fat
538 mg sodium
48 g carbohydrates
0 g fiber
11 g protein

INSTRUCTIONS

1. While your oven preheats to 350°F/177°C, prep your veggies and dice the onion, celery, garlic, red bell pepper and rosemary.
2. Next, chop the bread, roughly, into 1-inch pieces.
3. In a large bowl, add all of your ingredients to the bread cubes and thoroughly mix.
4. Transfer the mix into a baking dish, cover and bake for 30 minutes.
5. Remove the cover and cook for 15 more minutes (until the top is golden brown).