

FAMILY FITNESS FUN

Research suggests that the average person gains about one pound during the holidays. While that isn't a huge weight gain, it can be problematic because most of us keep that one pound, never lose it, and add to it over time! Being festive doesn't mean throwing good choices out the window. Here are tips!

- Keep your eating on a schedule. Don't skip a healthy breakfast in anticipation of a large holiday dinner. This causes us to overeat unhealthy foods later.
- Drink plenty of water during the day to avoid dehydration and the temptation to indulge in sugary holiday punches and carbonated drinks.
- Take smaller portions of your high-calorie favorites and eat more slowly to enjoy them longer. Still hungry? Grab some crunchy veggies or some fruit salad to round out your meal.
- Make social events about the fellowship. Eat- and then move away from the food table. Mingle and enjoy conversation with family and friends.
- If you do eat too much, forgive yourself and plan for light meals for a few days.

If you happen to be hosting the gathering, have smaller plates for your guests. That helps everyone to see "full plates" while they actually eat less food. Have healthier options available for those who do want to be health-conscious. Moderation is the key to having a holiday season that is memorable... but don't celebrate so hard that you have to add "larger pants" to your Santa wish list!

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holly jolly CHRISTMAS



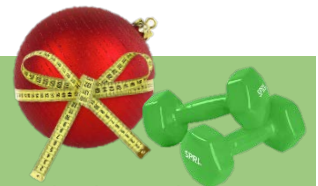
Don't Neglect Your Health This Christmas

Health... It's the gift that keeps on giving.

The holidays are FULL of delicious feasts, crazy shopping lists, and yummy goodies left and right. Finding a chance to exercise might be the *last* thing on your mind. However, it might be the very thing you need to help get you through this busy holiday season. It's easy to get caught up in the "holiday rush". Don't forget to take time for yourself and your health.

Just 30 minutes of activity each day can help you keep your weight under control. Exercise offers incredible benefits...benefits that can improve nearly every aspect of your health. We're talking from the inside out here, people! More than just keeping your weigh in check, exercise also helps to relieve stress, which you might be experiencing more of during this time of the year. Studies have shown that regular physical activity can increase the hormones that make you feel happier and help you sleep better. And who doesn't want that? Lack of regular physical activity is an issue in America, and is the primary cause of many chronic diseases such as heart disease, obesity, diabetes, stroke, and hypertension. When you're making your list and checking it twice, don't forget to add some time for a bit of exercise.

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'Tis the Season to Be Savvy

Christmas is only a few weeks away, and for those of you who have not quite finished shopping for your friends and loved ones, a feeling of anxiety may have started to creep in. But, before you panic, take a deep breath and look around your house for items that were purchased last year at after Christmas sales and were stored away for times like these. Whew! You forgot you had some things that will turn out to be just what you need for some of the people on your Christmas list, and some not on the list. Some creative ways to cut back on spending and contribute to the recycling process is to start a trend by using old newspapers and weekly mailings as gift wrap. Using reusable shopping bags also saves money and helps the environment. The internet can help you become eco-friendly as well. Sending e-cards at Christmas saves money on postage and helps reduce paper waste. Don't forget to unplug your Christmas lights during the day and by all means regift that gift that has been sitting in the back of your closet hiding from the person who gave it to you 10 years ago. Give it back to them, and pray they don't remember it. And, if they do, just tell them you loved it so much you thought you'd get them one. Have a Holly, Jolly, Christmas.

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Tips for De-Stressing the Holidays

(Taken from: Carleton Kendrick Ed.M., LCSW)

- * Keep cherished childhood traditions & establish new ones for your family – involve the children.
- * Plan, organize, and prioritize to avoid burnout, disappointment, and fatigue. Ask others to share the responsibilities and assign tasks to all family members.
- * Create some time ALONE for YOURSELF. Reflect on what is precious to you about the holidays.
- * Establish realistic holiday goals. Share with family & friends any worries such as money for gifts.
- * Plan free or low-cost activities and celebrations. Create and practice a holiday family tradition that helps those in need – run errands for shut-ins, share baked goods, etc.
- * Don't spend money beyond your means. Consider gifts of "help" or "special times together" rather than gifts of "things". Discuss gift-giving costs and realistic expectations with all family members (including children) well before the holidays.
- * Create a new family tradition to keep the post-holiday "blahs" away. Talk about the fun you've had and what the holidays mean to your family. As you pack away the Holiday decorations, remind your little ones that the holidays will come again! Happy New Year!

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Upcoming Dates:

- 12/2: Brownsville Christmas Parade, 6 pm <https://www.facebook.com/events/142522013052447/>
- 12/3: Dine-In Day! Prepare a meal and eat at home together. <http://www.aafcs.org/FCSDay/commitment.html>
- 12/7: C3/BE MORE Coalition meeting @ UT/TSU Extension, 11:30 am RSVP your attendance to nicolenevman@utk.edu
- 12/9: Stanton Christmas Parade, 2 pm
- 12/12: Health Council quarterly meeting @ Chamber, 11:30am; RSVP your attendance to elise.gillespie@tn.gov
- 12/21: First Day of Winter... Bundle Up!
- 12/25 – 1/1: Extension Office Closed