



# Wellbeing



Living a Better, More Vibrant Life

# Insights

December | 2013

## Stay Active for the Holidays

**W**ho has time for exercise when we're shopping for presents, returning presents, running errands, and attending parties? Most of us add a pound (or six!) over the holidays from the sheer amount of food and inactivity. But you can use that holiday running around to get in some exercise. Here's how:

**1. Skip Online Shopping.** Get out there and shop the mall, parking far away from the entrance. Don't dilly-dally but keep up a strong, steady pace as you move between shops.

**2. Clear Drives and Sidewalks with a Shovel.** Shoveling burns about 400 calories an hour. Keep your spine straight and lift with your back and hips while rotating sideways. Don't bend forward at the waist or lift with just your arms. Those in warmer weather can do yard work or volunteer your labor to Habitat for Humanity.

**3. Intensely Clean Your House.** It's no surprise – house cleaning is similar to gym exercises and stretches. So be thorough in your holiday cleaning. Even



vacuuming burns about 240 calories per hour. Take a few trips up and down the stairs, and move furniture for extra deep cleaning.

**5. Turn Your Kitchen Into a Gym.** Whisking burns almost 140 calories per hour. Use water bottles to do curls while waiting for the casserole to finish baking. Instead of watching water boil, use a chair to do slow-motion squats by acting like you're going to sit all the way

down but don't. You'll work your legs, back, and core muscles.

**6. Create a New Tradition.** So many of our family traditions are based on food. Try making physical activity a tradition. Mixing the social and physical activities is so much fun and you can find something that everyone will enjoy – ice-skating, building snowmen or charity walks. Make them your annual tradition.



*“The holidays are not as much about opening our presents as opening our hearts.” – Janice Maeditere*

## *Holiday Eating Tip: Avoid Carrot Sticks*

**A**n anyone who puts carrots sticks on a holiday buffet table knows nothing of the Christmas spirit. In fact, if you see carrot sticks, leave immediately. Go next door, where they're serving fruitcake!" – Craig Wilson



## So You've Overeaten – What Now?

**H**oliday parties, gourmet meals, and celebratory dinners can easily get a little (or a lot) more decadent than you expected. Let's face it: everyone blows his or her calorie budget every now and then. Is that old diet saying, "a moment on the lips, forever on the hips" really true? What should you do next?



**Relax (for a moment).** One meal is not going to ruin you if you eat sensibly and exercise regularly the rest of the time and get back to your routine. No one is perfect in their eating habits; we can give ourselves permission to take a timeout for the holidays. And as soon as it's over, we should go back to a more appropriate eating plan.

the next day with small meals packed with fruits and vegetables.

**Don't Beat Yourself Up.** Too many people throw in the towel after a splurge. Feeling defeated, some say, "I blew it so I might as just eat through the whole Holiday season." You may overeat on one day, but you can get on back on track the next, being more conscious of portion sizes and calories, compensating accordingly. Don't skip meals the next day because that may leave you hungry and at risk for pigging out later. Instead, cut back throughout

**Skip the Scale.** After a feast, your weight is bound to be inflated, more because of all the excess salt you ate than an increase in body fat. Experts say to weigh yourself on Fridays, when you're likely to weigh your lowest.

**Be Physically Active.** Don't compensate by over-exercising because that will actually make you feel worse. But do adopt and stick to an exercise routine that works for your lifestyle. If you can help it, don't take a holiday timeout from physical activity – but carve out a few 10 minute breaks to engage in some form of movement and physical activity that gets your heart pumping.

**Track What You Eat.** Most of us need a little bit of help to be accountable to what and how much we eat – one of the biggest ways to help yourself is to write down what you eat during the course of the day – keep a little notebook or log it on your mobile device. This simple act increases your awareness every time your hand goes from a plate to your mouth.

*"It doesn't matter what you eat between Christmas and New Year's, it matters what you eat between New Year's and Christmas."*  
~ Anonymous

### Mini Brie and Apple Quiches

Brie and apples taste great together, and they are quick and simple to make, creating an elegant appetizer:

30 mini phyllo shells (Two 9 oz. pkgs)  
½ medium apple, peeled and finely diced  
5 large eggs  
1 tsp. Dijon mustard  
¼ tsp. salt  
Pinch of pepper  
Pinch ground nutmeg  
4 oz Brie, cut into 30 pieces

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Arrange phyllo shells on a large parchment lined baking sheet. Divide the diced

apple among the shells. Whisk eggs, mustard, salt, pepper and nutmeg in small bowl and then pour the mixture over the apple (do not overfill). Place a Brie piece in each shell. Bake until egg is set, the Brie is melted and the phyllo is starting to brown around the edges, about 15 minutes. Let cool slightly before serving.



## Increase Your Social Wellbeing

**H**aving close friendships is good for our health – reducing our cardiovascular risks and even our risk of catching colds! The holidays are a great time to give our social wellbeing a boost!

As scientists continue to explore the connection between our relationships and our health, they are discovering that our social wellbeing might have even more influence on how quickly we recover from illness or injuries. Another finding is that proximity matters. A friend who lives close to you will likely have more influence on your wellbeing than a friend who lives farther away. Even your next-door neighbor’s wellbeing has an impact on yours. And mutual friendships matter even more. Simply put, we have stock in each others’ wellbeing.

In addition to close relationships and proximity, the sheer amount of time we spend socializing matters. When people have almost no social time in a given day, they have an equal chance of having a good day or a bad day. However, each hour of social time quickly increases the odds of having a good day. Social time includes time at work, at home, on the telephone, talking to friends, sending e-mail, and other communication.

Friendships have tremendous implications in the workplace too. Research reveals that just 30% of us have a best friend at work. Those who do are seven times as likely to be engaged in their jobs, are better at customer service, produce higher quality work, have higher wellbeing, and are less likely to get injured on the job.

So, this holiday season, take a bit of time to socialize with others – those “over the top” holiday sweaters worn by the whole gang make everyone smile!



## *Holiday Stress*

**T**he winter holiday season can be fun and festive. It can also be stressful and tiring. At this time of year people often find themselves trying to keep up with shopping, decorating, cooking, entertaining, kids’ school events and family gatherings. With so much going on, its easy to feel overwhelmed.

Here’s some tips for staying in balance during this time of year:

- Set limits and keep it simple. Try to be realistic about what you can do during the holidays, and don’t feel obligated to accept every invitation or request.
- Avoid procrastinating. Develop a “to do” schedule so you won’t have to rush so much.
- Plan to limit your spending. Estimate the total amount you can afford this year, without buying items on credit – then do everything you can to stay within that limit!
- Gift-giving with thoughtfulness, not quantity. Consider other alternatives to high-end expensive gifts and consider homemade or well thought-out needed gifts.
- Focus on the “Now.” If past family rituals or traditions are causing stress or conflict within the family, consider changing them. Be creative and open to new ideas – activities that are low- or no-cost, such as a Holiday Lights drive, or using video chat to bring family members together who may be far away.



## Take Our Quiz!



1. **Who was the most milk-friendly President?**
  - a. Barack Obama
  - b. John F. Kennedy
  - c. Teddy Roosevelt
  - d. William Taft
2. **When did we start bottling milk?**
  - a. 1884
  - b. 1954
  - c. 1793
3. **What is the most common place to get chocolate milk?**
  - a. Grocery Store
  - b. School
  - c. Gas Station Quick Mart
4. **How much milk does a person drink in a year?**
  - a. 40 gallons
  - b. 100 gallons
  - c. 20 gallons
5. **Whatever happened to the milkman?**
  - a. No one uses a milkman anymore
  - b. 10.2% of Americans still get milk deliveries
  - c. 0.4% of Americans still get milk deliveries

### Answers:

1. William Howard Taft had a cow at the White House that provided the family's milk
2. The first glass milk bottle was invented in 1884
3. 71% of the milk kids drink at school is flavored
4. 20 gallons, milk consumption has been falling for the past 20 years
5. As of 2007, 0.4% of Americans were still getting deliveries from milkmen.

## Myths and Facts About Your Immune System

**Y**our immune system is your friend. It protects your body from infection. Give it your full support and, as with any friends, there will be perks. Here's how it works: Your immune system creates, stores, and distributes the white blood cells that fight bacteria and viruses that enter your body, especially during cold and flu season. Here are some myths and facts about your immune system:

### Eating fruits and veggies keeps your immune system strong.

**Fact.** Your mom was right when she told you to eat your fruits and vegetables. People who eat a lot of them get sick less because the nutrients help your immune system fight viruses and bacteria.

### Not getting enough sleep has no effect on your immune system.

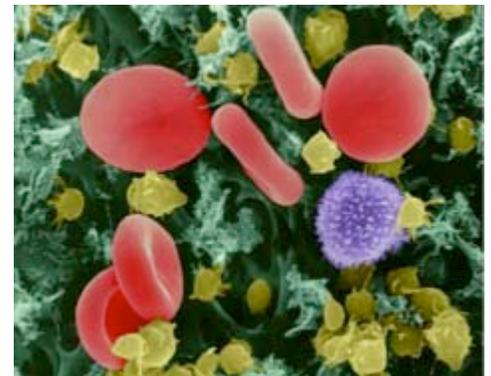
**Myth.** There is a strong link between sleep and a healthy immune system. But not just any sleep will do. Restorative sleep is key, 7-8 hours for adults, 9 – 10 hours for teens, 10 hours for elementary students, 12 hours for preschoolers. Also, you can't make up sleep with naps or by sleeping in on the weekends.

### A positive attitude can be healthy.

**Fact.** A good outlook is good for your health. When we are worried, our immune system slows. When we feel better, our immune system is better. Looking on the bright side might better equip your body to fight illnesses.

**You are safe from germs from those who cough or sneeze if you are standing 2 feet away.**

**Myth.** Coughing, sneezing or even talking with someone who has the flu can make you sick when virus droplets get into the air. You inhale these droplets even if you are 2-3 feet away. Persons who are sick should cover their nose and mouth and stand at least 4 feet away from others. Also, since germs can live on hard surfaces like doorknobs for hours, wash hands frequently and keep them away from your face.



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