



Nutrition Nibbles

Healthy Seasonal Celebrations

College Corner: The 12 Days of Health and Fitness

December is packed with holiday festivities, traditional treats, and seasonal celebrations. While the average American only gains 1-2 pounds between Thanksgiving and the New Year, those extra couple of pounds tend to stick around all year long. To keep yourself from feeling like the stuffed turkey, try one (or all) of my healthier celebratory suggestions:

- 1. Skip typical selections.** Holiday parties generally offer a large variety of tasty and unusual goodies. Don't waste your calories on things you can eat any day of the year, like potato chips or bread rolls. Instead, save your calorie splurge for a small serving of that delicious dish you only eat once each year.
- 2. Don't arrive hungry.** It can be quite tempting to "save" your day's allotment of calories for the beautiful and bountiful buffet but don't! This strategy almost always backfires, resulting in gluttonous feasting that leaves you feeling uncomfortably guilty after. Pre-party the smart way and eat a sensible breakfast, lunch, and snack before you arrive at the celebration and stick to calorie-free water during the day.

- 3. Swap out your side dishes.** If you're hosting the party (or bringing a side dish), make a few simple ingredient swaps to boost the nutrition and lower the calorie content of your dish. Choose sweet potatoes in place of white potatoes. Sauté your green beans in chicken broth rather than smothering them in cream of mushroom soup. Make a wild rice stuffing or a whole grain stuffing instead of your typical turkey dressing. Serve chocolate-covered strawberries in place of a rich double-decker chocolate cake or make your pies using only one crust rather than two (they'll hardly miss that bottom crust).
- 4. Fill half your plate with produce.** Making green salad, sautéed vegetables, and fresh fruit the mainstay of your dinner will leave you just enough room for small portions of higher calorie options.
- 5. Alternate your calorie-rich beverages with water.** This will slow down your alcohol and calorie-intake, leaving you feeling much better the next day.

Enjoy your celebrations!

You've probably heard the popular Christmas carol, "The Twelve Days of Christmas," that describes a series of impressive gifts given by "my true love" over the twelve days leading up to Christmas. Why not give yourself a daily gift of health, nutrition, or fitness this holiday season?

- Day 1: Fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables:** <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/>
- Day 2: Go for a 20-30 minute walk:** <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/walking/HQ01612>
- Day 3: Try a new whole grain:** <http://www.wholegrainscouncil.org/whole-grains-101/easy-ways-to-enjoy-whole-grains>
- Day 4: Pause and take a few deep breaths:** <http://www.drweil.com/drw/u/ART00521/three-breathing-exercises.html>
- Day 5: See how many calories you burn during your usual workout:** <http://www.healthstatus.com/calculate/cbc>
- Day 6: Drink more water:** <http://www.mayoclinic.com>

**Questions or Comments? Email me at
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Holiday 2 Do List

Twelve Days
continued...

Great things come in pairs...salt and pepper shakers, peas in a pod, dice, socks, eyes, and twins! Here's your very own pair-sonalized holiday health "2 do" list, complete with easy tasks to keep you on track this holiday season.

Holiday 2 Do List:

❑ Set 2 mini-goals for every celebration you attend. For example, 1.) You could decide to mingle for 20 minutes before hitting the buffet table and 2.) You could opt to skip second helpings.

❑ Eat 2 handfuls of produce (or about 2 cups worth) at your family feast. Eating plenty of fruits and vegetables will help fill you up at a fraction of the calories, plus give your body vital fiber, vitamins, minerals, and fluids.

❑ Drink 2 glasses of water at every party you hop. This helps slow down your consumption of calorie-rich beverages like festive cocktails, eggnog, cider, and hot cocoa.

❑ Commit to exercise on 2 occasions between now and Saturday. Take a brisk walk at lunch, power walk while power shopping, do the stairs a couple of times... Make sure to pencil in 2 workouts over the next few days!

❑ Offer to bring 2 healthy items to your upcoming holiday gathering. Bring a tasty, low calorie side dish and your favorite low calorie beverage. You will have at least something healthy to eat and drink.

Now, get on with your 2 Do List, because I'll be checking it twice!

com/health/water/NU00283

❑ Day 7: Use a smaller plate at dinner to help with portion control: smallplatemovement.org/

❑ Day 8: Go for a 15 minute power walk during your break: <http://www.thewalkingsite.com/howtowalk.html>

❑ Day 9: Swap your usual afternoon snack for a piece of fruit or serving of veggies: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/healthy-diet/HQ01396>

❑ Day 10: Get up from your desk or couch and do a few stretches: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/stretching/WL00030>

❑ Day 11: Drink 1 tall glass of water before each meal: <http://www.scientificamerican.com/podcast/episode.cfm?id=water-before-meal-means-fewer-calor-10-08-24>

❑ Day 12: Add fruit to your breakfast: <http://www.livestrong.com/article/351598-is-eating-fruit-for-breakfast-healthy/>

Happy Holidays to a Healthy You!

Create Successful New Year's Resolutions

Do you start the New Year off with a renewed sense of purpose; enthusiastic about all of the wonderful things you are going to do this year to improve yourself or your body? About 45% of Americans make New Year's resolutions but unfortunately only 8% successfully achieve their goal. Interestingly, 38% of resolutions are weight-related. If you want to create and follow-through with your New Year's Resolution this year, make sure your goal is SMART:

S-Specific-It is not enough to say that you want to lose weight. How much weight exactly? A more specific weight-related resolution would be: "I want to lose 20 pounds (or 1 pound each week)."

M-Measurable-You'll have more success if you can measure your progress. In the above weight-related example, you could weigh yourself

weekly and plot your progress.

A-Achievable-It's ok if your resolution is a little bit of a stretch but you must make sure you have the tools, resources, and desire to reach your goal.

R-Realistic-Keep your resolution reasonable. Losing 20 pounds over 6 months is very sensible; losing it in 6 days is not.

T-Timely-Set an expiration date on your resolution. Create a practical end date like losing weight by June 1st.

Once you've set your resolution, revisit it sometime later and evaluate your progress (more about this in February's newsletter!)

Good luck!