

Wellness Newsletter

Don't be so hard on yourself...

Most of us look forward to the holidays. We enjoy decorating, finding the perfect gift and catching up to family and friends. But often we are pulled in so many directions it can become stressful. Sometimes you need to let go and realize you simply can't live up to your own expectations and get it all done.



Here are some tips to help you through the holiday season:

Keep it simple. Don't let the demands of the holidays overwhelm you. Be realistic, do what you can manage and ask for help if you need it.



Spend time with people who support you. If you have had a particularly difficult year...family issues, loss of a loved one or financial pressures...spend time with people you can confide in and who will help you through.

Take care of yourself. Stick to your routines as often as possible. Get plenty of sleep, exercise, step outside and get some fresh air, and have a healthy snack handy for when you miss a meal.

Limit alcohol. Remember that alcohol is a depressant. If you are already feeling down or stressed, it could make you feel worse.

Avoid marathon mall shopping. Some of us love a day of shopping, love the crowds and going from store to store. But if this isn't your cup of tea, shop on-line or plan several short shopping trips instead of squeezing everything into one long day.



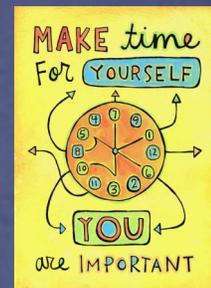
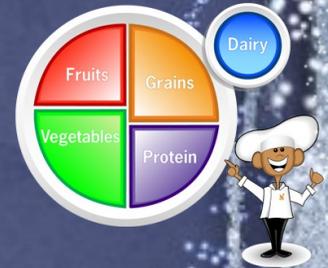
The greatest gift. It doesn't have to be big or expensive. Sometimes the best presents are the traditions your family creates. Memories are the greatest gift.

Creative Benefits, Inc.
strategies to insure your success

Holiday Challenge - Staying Healthy

Some steps to help you stay on track for the holidays:

1. Set a weight management goal. Be realistic, trying to lose 10 before the New Year is probably not attainable!
2. Follow the MyPlate guidelines for at least one lunch or dinner a day.
3. Be active everyday, even if it is just a walk.
4. Take a pass on those high calorie holiday drinks.
5. Don't skip a healthy breakfast, it is the best jumpstart for the day.
6. Pick up a piece of fruit in place of candy, cookies, cakes and other sweet treats.
7. In general try to keep your diet more healthful. Try not to eat fast or processed foods. If your time is limited prepare something on the weekend that you can eat throughout the week that covers your basic food groups.
8. Portion control. Just trying to eat a little less of everything, it will make a difference.
9. If you are bringing a dish to a holiday party, make your contribution a healthy one. So you don't over-indulge at a party, consider eating before you go and don't hang out by the food table.
10. Plan some "me-time" in your calendar.



Watching your sugar intake?

If you need to reduce the sugar in your diet, here are some tips:

- ◇ For best results only replace 1/2 the sugar in a recipe with a sugar substitute and remember you may not need as much of the sugar substitute.
- ◇ Sugar adds moisture to baked goods. Decrease your dry ingredients by 25% and under-bake your goods.
- ◇ Cookies made with sugar substitutes may not spread when they bake. Flatten them before baking with a fork or a glass dipped in flour to prevent sticking.
- ◇ Not all sugar substitutes are heat stable. Sucralose (Splenda or Alterna) do not lose their sweetness when heated.
- ◇ Also consider natural sugar substitutes like honey or maple syrup.

