

STAYING FIT THROUGH THE HOLIDAYS

Spending time with family and friends, great food, tasty drinks... maybe more great food and tasty drinks than usual - can lead to a few extra pounds. In fact, the average American tends to gain 1 to 2 pounds over the holidays and this extra weight is often not lost. Over the years, those 1 to 2 pounds can easily become 20 to 30 pounds. Extra weight puts stress on our joints and bones, makes our organs work harder than they should, worsens osteoarthritis, back pain, asthma, and other conditions. Too much body fat can raise blood pressure and cholesterol and makes heart disease and stroke more likely to happen. The following are tips to stay fit during the holidays.



- **Fun Activities** – Instead of focusing on food, enjoy some physical activities with family and friends such as walking together, dancing, skating, skiing or whatever sounds fun!
- **Short Workouts** – Many of us are short on time during the holidays, so fit in a workout where you can. 10 minutes here and 10 minutes there are better than no minutes! Go for a quick walk or run, do bodyweight exercises such as pushups, squats, lunges, sit-ups during the day. Keep moving! Try not to sit too much! Once your time frees up a bit, get back to your normal exercise routine.
- **Gameplan** – Having a plan for the day helps to keep us on track! Being aware of what we eat and how much we move tends to make those things a priority. If you can work out in the morning, you may be less likely to become distracted later in the day by holiday commitments. Making lists and getting plenty of rest will help you to stay organized and stress-free.
- **Eating Healthy at Events** – Don't go to an event hungry! This will make it easier to resist heading straight for whatever food is in front of you. Fill a small plate with food, going for fruits and vegetables, and lean protein before trying higher calorie foods. Don't plan on seconds, and definitely don't hang out at the food table – very difficult to resist!
- **Liquid Calories** – Hydrate with water! Drinking alcohol, soda, special coffee drinks, and other calorie-rich beverages can contribute heavily to weight gain! Drink plenty of water and be aware. We really shouldn't consume more than one to two alcoholic drinks a day.



Cauliflower Stuffing

Ingredients:

- 1/2 tbsp. olive oil
- 2 onions finely diced
- 2 sticks celery
- 3/4 cup chopped mushrooms
- 5 cups cauliflower florets
- 1 1/2 cups ground pork
- 1/4 cup chopped pecans
- 1 1/2 tbsp. fresh sage
- 1/2 cup chicken broth
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 tsp. pepper

Directions:

Preheat the oven to 200 degrees Celsius (390 degrees Fahrenheit). Start by removing the stalk of the cauliflower and breaking the head up into small florets. Try to keep the florets uniform in size and not too big or chunky, otherwise they won't cook evenly. Place all the florets into a large bowl. In a large pot heat the olive oil on medium heat and add in the diced onions, celery and mushrooms and cook for approximately 5 minutes until the veggies have softened. Pour the cooked mixture into the bowl with the cauliflower and set aside. Cook the sausage for approximately 5 minutes until well cooked. Add the meat to the bowl along with the chopped sage, pecans, eggs, and chicken stock. Season with salt and pepper and toss with your hands until well combined. Pour the stuffing into a baking dish and cover with tin foil. Bake for 20 minutes and then remove the tin foil and bake for another 10 minutes until the cauliflower is tender and the top becomes golden in color. Serve warm with gravy.

Recipe and photo by <https://www.everylastbite.com/cauliflower-stuffing/>

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- **Home Cooking** – Grilling, steaming, and baking are healthier than frying. In baking recipes substitute oils for applesauce or pumpkin puree, substitute skimmed milk or a nut/oat milk for whole milk or heavy cream, use dried fruit instead of chocolate chips. Make meals that are vegetable-heavy vs starch-heavy. Keep fruit handy for sweet snacks and deserts.
- **Dump the Junk** – Indulging on occasion is not going to make you gain weight or leave your healthy lifestyle behind but allowing the treats to linger after the celebration is ended, can lead to everything we don't want to happen. After the party, get those unhealthy calories out of the house!
- **Me Time** – Take some moments to yourself each day. Nobody wants to get burned out and stressed. Stress leads to poor sleep, a craving for "comfort food", and the tendency towards sedentary behavior.

THE BENEFITS OF STRENGTH TRAINING

Strength training has very positive effects on the musculoskeletal system, and the good news is, you don't have to spend a lot of time at the gym doing it to reap the benefits. Just two to three 15-to-20-minute training sessions a week are extremely beneficial.



Benefits:

- Increases metabolic rate, allowing your body to burn calories more efficiently
- Cuts down on cardiovascular stress by reducing resting blood pressure and heart rate
- Helps to prevent osteoporosis, loss of body mass, lower-back pain, and other disabilities
- Improves strength, power, muscular endurance, and mood
- May positively also affect risk factors such as insulin resistance, glucose metabolism, blood pressure, body fat, and gastrointestinal transit time, which are associated with diabetes, heart disease, and cancer.

Common Mistakes to Avoid:

- **Using too much weight, too soon;** always start lower than your expected ability and work your way up. You want precise controlled movements for each major muscle group. If your form is suffering, your weight is too high.
- **Not using enough weight;** play it safe, but if you can perform 30 reps with a certain weight, it's likely time to increase it a bit. Tip: Increase the weight no more than about 5% at a time.

Brussels Sprouts, Kale & Bacon Gratin



Ingredients:

- 1 pound brussels sprouts trimmed and halved (quarter if large)
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 2 small onion (or 1 large) finely diced
- 5 ounces bacon cut into small pieces
- 4 cloves garlic
- ½ tsp. salt
- 4 cups shredded curly kale
- ¾ cup cashews soaked in hot water for 10 minutes
- ¾ cup milk (dairy or non-dairy)
- ¼ cup nutritional yeast
- 1 tsp. Dijon mustard
- pinch of nutmeg
- 1 tsp. lemon juice

Directions:

Preheat the oven to 400° Fahrenheit. Prep the brussels sprouts by trimming off the stem and removing any dirty outer leaves. Cut the brussels sprouts in half or quarters depending on their size. Try to ensure that all the brussels sprout pieces are approximately the same size. Place them on a baking tray/baking dish, drizzle with 1 tbsp. oil bake for 20-25 minutes until tender. In a cast iron skillet (or oven proof skillet) add the bacon and cook on medium high heat for 5 minutes until it begins to cook through. Depending on how much oil there is in the pan from the bacon, you may need to add ½ tsp. olive oil before adding in the diced onion and garlic, sprinkling with salt, and leaving to cook for 4 minutes until the onions begin to soften. Finally add in the shredded kale, lower the heat to medium and cook for 6 more minutes until the kale has wilted and is no longer crunchy.

While the kale is cooking make the creamy sauce. In a high-speed blender or nutribullet container combine the drained cashews, almond milk, mustard, lemon juice, nutmeg and nutritional yeast and blend until smooth. Once the brussels sprouts are tender, remove them from the oven and add them to the skillet with the sautéed kale and onions. Pour in the cashew sauce, give everything a stir to ensure it's well coated. Transfer the skillet to the oven to make for 15 minutes until the top is golden and the gratin is gently bubbling and heated through.

Recipe and photo by Every Last Bite at <https://www.everylastbite.com/brussels-sprout-gratin/>

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- **Moving through repetitions too quickly**, going too fast; there is nothing gained by lifting weights 'fast'; in fact, slower is better and faster can cause injury.
- **Not resting long enough or resting too long**; both can be a workout killer. Tip: The recommended rest period is between 30-90 seconds, for overall fitness.

<http://www.thetrainingstationinc.com>
<http://www.webmd.com>

SNOW SHOVELING SAFETY

Winter is almost here, and for those of us living in the North, snow can be both a blessing and a curse (and depending on who you talk to, more one than the other). Regardless, shoveling snow can be physically demanding and can lead to injuries such as sprains and strains. Please follow these safety tips when you go out to shovel in wintery weather:



- Dress in layers and be sure to wear warm clothing; be especially careful if there are wind chills and temperatures are below freezing. Also wear the appropriate footwear for wintery weather.
- Use a shovel that is comfortable for your height and strength. Make sure it's not too heavy or too long for you. Consider buying a shovel that is specifically designed to prevent too much stooping. Space your hands on the tool grip to increase your leverage.
- When it snows, shovel a few times during a storm rather than waiting until after it's done snowing and shoveling it all at one time. Freshly fallen snow will weigh less than compacted snow.
- Warm up your muscles. Shoveling can be a vigorous activity. Before you begin, warm up your muscles for 10 minutes with light exercise.
- If you must lift, take small amounts of snow, and use proper form, keeping your back straight and lift with your legs. Lift by straightening your legs, without bending at the waist.
- When possible, push the snow instead of lifting it. Do not throw the snow over your shoulder or to the side. This requires a twisting motion that stresses your back.
- Avoid shoveling under snow- and ice-covered trees and roof lines due to possible falling limbs, ice, and snow.
- Take breaks while shoveling and do not overexert yourself, especially if you are inactive and over the age of 40. Pace yourself. Take frequent breaks and replenish fluids to prevent dehydration.



Turkey Cutlets with Parmesan Crust

These Turkey Cutlets with Parmesan Crust, pan-fried or air-fried, are a quick weeknight dish the whole family will love!

Ingredients:

- 4 turkey cutlets (4 oz. each)
- 2 large egg whites (beaten)
- 1/3 cup seasoned breadcrumbs
- 2 tbsp. Parmesan cheese
- Kosher salt and fresh pepper
- 1 tbsp. butter
- 1 tsp. olive oil
- Lemon wedges for serving

Directions:

Season cutlets with salt and pepper. Combine breadcrumbs and Parmesan cheese in a medium bowl. In another bowl beat egg whites. Dip turkey cutlets in egg whites, then breadcrumb mixture, shaking off excess. Heat a large nonstick frying pan on medium heat. Add the butter and olive oil. When butter melts, add the cutlets and cook about 6 minutes on each side, until golden brown and cooked through. Serve with lemon wedges.

How to Cook Cutlets in the Air Fryer:

To cook cutlets in the air fryer, first, spray both sides of the cutlets with oil. Then, put in the air fryer at 400 degrees for 6-7 minutes. Flip halfway through and remove when the crumbs are golden brown, and the center is no longer pink.

Recipe and photo by <https://www.skinnytaste.com/turkey-cutlets-with-parmesan-crust/#recipe>

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- If you or someone you are with begins to have chest discomfort, shortness of breath or other signs of a heart attack, seek emergency care. If you have a history of heart disease do not shovel without your doctor's okay.

STAYING HEALTHY WHILE WORKING FROM HOME

Are you still working remotely from home? Is it going as well as you thought it might? Many remote workers have a difficult time shutting off work at the end of the day, and almost half believe that their mental health has taken a hit. When people work from home, their job and home life can merge, so it helps to set time and space boundaries such as having a separate workspace. The following are a few tips to reduce stress.



Maintain a regular schedule. Resist the urge to sleep in or do chores. You wouldn't do those things if you were going into the office, and it's difficult to switch work mode off and on. It can also drag your 8-hour workday into 10 hours.

Take breaks and connect. If you can get out of the house for your breaks, do it! Take a walk; meet family or friends for lunch or coffee. Try not to become isolated. If you were at the workplace, you'd come into contact with other people. The goal is to avoid burnout. Try to avoid TV and social media during your workday as well.

Physical activity is important. It benefits both physical and mental health, so don't just sit for 6-8 hours or even 4. Get up often to stretch, walk around, do some calisthenics, whatever works for you. Consider a standing desk or working where you can stand and move while working. And stay hydrated by drinking water throughout the day.

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Gingerbread Cookies (Low-fat)



Ingredients

- 3 tbsp. unsalted butter (softened)
- ¾ cup firmly packed brown sugar
- ½ cup unsweetened applesauce
- 1 egg
- 1/3 cup dark molasses
- 3 cups all-purpose flour plus more for dusting
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 2 tsp. ground ginger
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp. allspice
- ¼ tsp. ground cloves

For the Icing:

- 1 1/2 tbsp. egg whites
- 1/4 tsp. fresh lemon juice
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- Pinch of cream of tartar

Directions:

For the cookies:

In a large mixing bowl, beat the butter, sugar, and applesauce until smooth. Add the egg and molasses, mix well. In another large bowl, combine flour, baking soda and spices. Add to sugar and molasses mixture, stirring well. Divide the dough into two flat balls; cover with plastic wrap and chill in the refrigerator for at least 2 hours. Preheat oven to 350°F. Generously dust the surface of your working area with flour before rolling out the dough. Work with one ball of dough at a time, keep the other refrigerated while you do so. Roll the dough out to 1/4 or 1/8-inch thickness, sprinkle a little flour on top of the dough if it's a little sticky. Cut the gingerbread with a cookie cutter shape of your choice. Place cookies 1 or 2 inches apart on a lined baking sheet. Bake 10-12 minutes.

For the icing:

Mix the egg whites with lemon juice. Combine with powdered sugar, mixing well. If the icing is too thin, add more powdered sugar, if it's too thick add a drop of lemon juice. Add to a piping bag to decorate cookies when cookies are cooled.

Depending on the size of your cookie cutter, makes about 48 cookies.

Recipe and photo by <https://www.skinnytaste.com/low-fat-gingerbread-cookies/>