

# TAKE CHARGE!



for health and living

December 2011



**Inside:**  
Is gaining extra pounds over the holidays inevitable?

eating healthy

## Healthy Holiday Eating

This season, give the gift of tasty yet healthy holiday fare. Simple steps can cut the fat or sugar in your favorite dishes — all without sacrificing taste:

**Reduce the roast.** Lean cuts of meat (loin), turkey (white meat) and fish are great choices. Trim visible fat before broiling, baking or stewing. Drain fat from meats after cooking. Baste with low-fat broth, not drippings.

**Lighten up side dishes.** Instead of heavy sauces, top with toasted nuts or sesame seeds, low-fat salad dressings, spices or herbs. Use buttery sauces sparingly and amplify the flavor with lemon juice and zest. Steam vegetables to preserve flavor and nutrients. Sweeten baked yams with apple or orange juice. Use low-fat sour cream or buttermilk to prepare mashed potatoes. To prevent latkes from absorbing too much oil, cook potatoes beforehand, make the patties thin and fry quickly — or bake them.

**Slenderize the sweets.** Create crust-free or single-crust pies and use fat-free evaporated milk in fillings. When baking, replace half the eggs with egg whites. Many recipes can be made with three-fourths the sugar and up to half the fat (replace with low-fat dairy products or fruit puree). Use powdered sugar instead of frosting. Serve a sliver of angel food cake with helpings of berries or fruit salad.

### City Events

**Goal Setting for Life and Work**  
Thursday, December 6  
12 noon - 1:00 pm  
SMT Room 4050

**Blood Pressure Screening**  
Wednesday, December 28  
Stop by between 10:30 am and 1:30 pm  
SMT Room 4096

**Deferred Compensation – Retirement Readiness**  
Tuesday, December 15  
12 noon - 12:45 pm  
SMT 4080

**Deferred Compensation – Account Consolidation**  
Wednesday, December 28  
12 noon - 12:45 pm  
Room 4020  
Register at 206-447-1924

### Plan a Healthy New Year

Ready to reach a healthy weight? Quit tobacco? *Available resources:*  
Weight Watchers: **1-866-442-1232**  
Quit for Life: **1-866-784-8454**

**Check Your Health in Action Plan**

See the best and most economical gifts you can give yourself. ➔

# in and out: december

## Managing Holiday Stress

With all the hustle and bustle that's associated with the holidays, it's no wonder most of us are a little stressed out. With this in mind, manage that stress four ways:

- 1 **Prioritize with a to-do list.** Update this list every day.
- 2 **Say "no."** The holidays may not be the best time to take on a new project. Know what you can handle.
- 3 **Delegate tasks.** Whether at work or at home, learn to delegate some of your simple yet time-consuming tasks.
- 4 **Take a break.** Take an exercise class or get up early and enjoy a brisk walk. Proven to relieve stress, physical exercise is one way to help you "work out" frustrations and stay in shape.

## Heart-y Advice

The heart is like an elastic band — the more pliant it is, the better it works. Lifelong exercise helps keep your heart flexible, but even latecomers to exercise can reap benefits. The heart starts to stiffen between the ages of 45 and 60 years old, so it's important to start moderate exercise four or five times a week to help the heart maintain its elasticity.



Find activities you enjoy — dancing, walking, cycling, swimming — and that you can do regularly.

## Nutrition Education : Good for Girls

Teaching middle school girls about nutrition and exercise could reduce the incidence of eating disorders, based on results from Planet Health, a program developed by the Harvard School of Public Health. Participants who learned about eating healthy foods, limiting screen time and increasing physical activity were half as likely as other girls to begin purging (vomiting or taking laxatives after eating) or using potentially dangerous diet pills to control their weight.

## HEALTHY MIND, HEALTHY BODY

### Surprising Facts

#### Did you know ...

- \* Stress-related symptoms account for two-thirds of visits to family doctors.
- \* One study found that hostility is a stronger predictor of heart disease than is high cholesterol, smoking or obesity.
- \* Major life events can trigger physical symptoms and new health conditions.
- \* Even among teens, positive moods are a good predictor of physical health.
- \* Optimistic men are less than half as likely as pessimistic men to develop heart disease.
- \* Stress is linked to the six leading causes of premature death.
- \* Maintaining a positive outlook may help you live longer.

#### Steps you can take to reduce your stress are also likely to improve your health, including:

- \* Getting adequate sleep
- \* Exercising regularly
- \* Avoiding excessive use of alcohol or drugs
- \* Developing a good balance between work and leisure
- \* Learning to put things in perspective
- \* Making a list of things you are grateful for
- \* Regularly practicing a calming technique such as guided imagery, meditation or yoga
- \* Talking with a counselor or caring friend

**Mind your health:** Health and happiness often go hand in hand, and both deserve your attention.

## LONGEVITY CORNER | Colon-Healthy Choices

A recent British Medical Journal study of nearly 50,000 adults looked at the relationship between diet and diseases such as diverticulosis. Diverticulosis is best described as small pockets in the colon. **What the study found:** Vegetarians were 30 percent less likely to have diverticular disease; meat eaters were 50 percent more likely to be hospitalized for this condition. Fiber helped too. **Bottom line:** Mom was right — eat your vegetables.

— Zorba Paster, MD





## Check your Health in Action Plan

When you take good care of yourself, it shows. These are the gifts that keep on giving!

**Physical activity.** Moving more opens the door to longevity — healthy mind and body. Your body needs daily aerobic exercise and stretching and regular muscle-strengthening activities.

**Healthy choices.** Year-end is a good time to lay to rest bad habits such as tobacco and alcohol. Treat your body well, and get your daily dose of vitamins and minerals by eating lots of wholesome fruits, vegetables and whole grains.

**Mental activity.** Puzzles, classes, new interests — keep challenging yourself.

**Optimism.** Remember that bright side.

**Meaningful connections.** A network of supportive people fosters a happy heart and helps you weather life's storms.

Best of health! These might be some of the best and most economical gifts you can give yourself!

### weight basics

## Holiday Weight Basics

The dreaded “holiday spread” is that weight we fear gaining between Thanksgiving and New Year’s Day. Many people gain a pound or two (though overweight people tend to gain more).

**The problem?** Most people keep those pounds after the holidays, especially if they continue eating rich foods, and the weight keeps piling on.

- **Eat a balanced breakfast with protein.** It'll help prevent overeating during the rest of the day.
- **Don't skip regular meals.** Before a party, have some fresh fruit or fat-free yogurt so you can eat moderately when you arrive.
- **When making baked goods for others,** deliver them promptly. Save only a few (or none) for yourself. Make cookies smaller so each one will have fewer calories. Choose healthier recipes with less saturated fat and less sugar.
- **Limit desserts to no more than one small serving per day.** Eat slowly and savor the taste.
- **Add to your exercise program;** consider adding a session or lengthening your workout to compensate for the additional calories.
- **Be assertive.** Don't feel obligated to say “yes” to food offered. Also, stop eating before you're full. You can actually mentally rehearse saying “no” when offered high-calorie foods.



• **At a buffet,** take a small plate and fill half with salad, veggies or fresh fruit, then add small servings of protein and starch. Skip the heavy dips, sauces and deep-fried foods. Wait at least 15 minutes before getting seconds.

**Kids can gain weight too.** Limit TV, video games and computer time during holiday vacation. Plan physical activities for each day. Ask relatives not to give sweets as gifts. If your child does receive treats, dole them out over time.

### best bites

## PRODUCE PICK



## Clementines

### Missing the fresh fruit of summer?

Consider clementines, the small mandarin oranges often available during the winter holidays. Sold in net bags or small boxes, they are juicy and sweet, easy to peel and generally seedless. Clementines are less acidic than regular oranges but still high in vitamin C. Eat them for a quick snack, break them into sections and toss into salads, or use the sections to decorate desserts.

## Know Your Numbers Sweet Potatoes

Consider what a nutritional treasure sweet potatoes are. These colorful vegetables pack a whopping **7 grams of fiber** per cup. They're also an excellent\* source of vitamins A and C. Enjoy the natural flavor of sweet potatoes without adding the extra calories and fat from toppings such as butter.

\*Excellent = 20% or higher of Daily Value

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 cup (200 g)	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 180	Calories from
Total Fat 0g	Potassium 450mg
Saturated Fat 0g	Total Carbohydrate
Trans Fat 0g	Dietary Fiber 7g
Cholesterol 0g	Sugars 13g
Sodium 72mg	Protein 4g
Potassium 450mg	Vitamin A 76%
Total Carbohydrate 41g	
Dietary Fiber 7g	
Sugars 13g	
Protein 4g	Vitamin C 65%

## Stay in Touch

Keep those questions and suggestions coming!

**Phone:** 800-871-9525

**Fax:** 205-437-3084

**E-mail:** editor@personalbest.com

**Website:** www.personalbest.com

Executive Editor: Liz Carey • Advisors: Charles Stuart Platkin, PhD, MPH; Wm. Richard Ludwig, MD; Zorba Paster, MD; Cynthia Gale, MS, RD; Eric Endlich, PhD; Mary P. Hollins, MS, JD; Alice Lockridge, MS

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100 Corporate Parkway, Suite 600, Birmingham, AL 35242

800-871-9525 • fax 205-437-3084

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## NEWS AND NOTES

### Activate Your Personal Health Record



You and your adult family members covered on a City medical plan can access a secure, personal electronic health record. Components include a detailed health history, integrated information, and personalized messages and alerts. Once you turn on your personal health record, your claims data will be added automatically.

#### Set up your personal health record:

**Aetna:** Log into AetnaNavigator.com; choose *Personal Health Record*

**Group Health:** Log into GHC.org; select *Online Medical Record*

**Add prior medical procedures and non-claim health information:** Enter your health history, family health history, non-prescription drugs and vitamins.

**Bring or email your health summary to your provider** so they have a complete record of your health.

### Sesame Chicken Party Bites

## EASY | RECIPE

from Personal Best®

2 tbsp reduced-sodium soy sauce  
2 tbsp honey  
1 tsp sesame oil  
1 tsp minced garlic  
¼ tsp ground ginger

3 tbsp sesame seeds  
4 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves (4 oz each), cut into bite-size pieces

- 1] Mix soy sauce, honey, sesame oil, garlic and ginger for marinade and set aside.
- 2] Toast sesame seeds in large nonstick (dry) skillet over high heat for 1-2 minutes; stir constantly to avoid burning. Remove from skillet.
- 3] Toss chicken in marinade and marinate for at least 1 hour. Pour off excess marinade; add sesame seeds and mix to coat chicken.
- 4] Heat skillet to medium high and sauté chicken 8-10 minutes, allowing all sides to brown.
- 5] Place on serving plate. *Option:* Garnish with chopped scallion. If desired, serve with a dip combining wasabi and light soy sauce.



**MAKES 8 (2-ounce) servings. Per serving:**

139 calories | 18.6g protein | 4.3g fat | 0.9g sat fat | 48mg cholesterol | 5.4g carbs | 4.3g sugar | 0.4g fiber | 186mg sodium

## Where's the Caffeine?

Maybe you watch how much caffeine is in your coffee, tea and cola, but did you know that caffeine lurks in many other unexpected places?

#### Some surprising caffeine sources:

- Chocolate ice cream or frozen yogurt
- Dark chocolate
- Flavored non-herbal black and green teas
- Some brands of root beer, orange soda and cream soda
- Medications (weight-loss pills, pain relievers)
- Any product that's advertised as "energized," "energy" or "buzz"

Caffeine amounts in these products vary greatly, so read labels carefully.

top fitness

## Helping Your Family Become More Active

Provided by the American Council on Exercise, [www.acefitness.org](http://www.acefitness.org)

**Focus on Fun.** When you love somebody, you want the best for him or her, including the best of health. Why not appeal to family members' sense of adventure and look for fun ways to be active as a family? What about going to the playground, swimming, bowling, canoeing, hiking or bird-watching?

Through these types of experiences, families can learn that being active is much more fun and rewarding than sitting in front of a computer or TV.

**A Lasting Gift.** Set a good example for your family by limiting your own screen time and becoming as active as possible. Parents are powerful role models. Chances are good that when your kids see you having fun working out, they'll want to join you.

Helping your family move more and sit less is a powerful act of love. A lifelong habit of physical activity will create healthier and happier families and may even expand your longevity.

