

Healthwatch: Have a Healthier Holiday
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The holidays are fast approaching, but unfortunately, many of us find ourselves feeling tired, rundown, and maybe even ill by New Years, not to mention a few pounds heavier. With a bit of moderation, we can come into the New Year feeling healthy and well. Wouldn't it be great not to spend the first few weeks of the New Year recovering from our dietary and health indiscretions over the holidays?

One of the most enjoyable aspects of holiday festivities is food. It is unrealistic to recommend that you stay away from the goodies—but consider following these guidelines for holiday snacking:

- Choose snacks with higher density nutrition—meaning more nutrition per calorie—vegetables, nuts, fruits, etc,
- Avoid foods high in saturated (solid) fats and trans fats (usually found in fried foods like chips, fries).
- Choose foods with fiber—those made with whole grains, fruits, and vegetables.
- Eat a light nutritious snack before a party—you'll be less likely to overindulge if you're not starving.
- Be a “two fistful drinker”. If you're drinking cocktails or other caloric drinks, sip on water as well.
- Remember that viruses and bacteria love sugar—a high sugar diet is a breeding ground for infections. Don't overindulge on the sweets.

Along with holiday overindulgences comes stress. Keep in mind these stress busters:

- Don't sacrifice exercise in this busy season. You need regular exercise to reduce stress and burn calories. If you can't possibly fit in your usual work out, then at least take a brisk 10-20 minute walk—you'll be amazed at how it energizes you.
- Make sure you're getting plenty of rest. A tired body is not effective at fighting off illness.
- Set priorities early and stick with them. Learn to say NO.

Finally, don't get too busy to do your daily devotion—after all Jesus is the reason for the season!