

Putting the “Me” in Merry During the Holidays

Between shopping and get-togethers, the period between Thanksgiving and New Year’s Day can feel like a whirlwind – especially if you fail to make the time to take care of yourself. But just because your calendar is packed is no excuse to fall into bad habits or deny yourself personal time.

First, there’s the matter of holiday eating. In the final weeks of the year, we tend to cut our diets some slack, because a New Year’s resolution will surely turn things around, right? But a better strategy is to enjoy high-fat or sugary foods in moderation. Before heading out to the next holiday party, have a serving of vegetables or other healthy fare so you’re less hungry later.

Maintaining your fitness regimen is equally important. When you’re busier than usual, it’s easy to let your workouts slide a bit. But taking 30 minutes a day for exercise helps to keep off the extra holiday pounds and reduces stress to boot.

Also, pencil in some “me” time to treat yourself in healthy ways. Get a massage, read a book, take a bubble bath, listen to music... whatever works to soothe your mind and body and give you a welcome reprieve from the seasonal merry-go-round. And be sure to get seven or more hours of sleep every night!

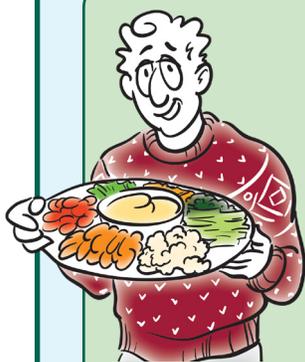
One more thing: If you haven’t already got your annual wellness exam yet, please schedule it ASAP. A checkup is not only useful for early detection and prevention of serious conditions, it’s a great opportunity to talk to your doctor about how you’re holding up over the holidays.



Get an Emotional Boost by Giving Back

Another great way to take care of yourself? Spend some time this season helping others.

- **Volunteer.** Helping others through charitable work can be a great spirit-lifter.
- **Give Gratitude.** Embrace seasonal spirit through compliments, thank you notes, and kind gestures.
- **Offer Help... or Ask for It.** Just about everyone can use a little assistance this time of year, so don’t be shy about offering a helping hand. Conversely, if you’re feeling overwhelmed, it’s okay to let others pitch in.
- **Say “No.”** And sometimes, it’s also okay to decline a request if you’re just too busy.
- **Enjoy the Moment.** Don’t get so caught up in planning that you fail to appreciate the time spent with others.



SOURCES: American Psychological Association, Psychology Today, Thrive Global