



Wellness
GARAGE

Lifestyle Medicine Clinic

Strategies for Healthier Holidays



★ Stick to your morning routine

No matter what day of the year, make a point to have a healthy breakfast, meditate, drink water and get some exercise if that's your normal habit. Even if you have houseguests or can't control the rest of the day's activities, getting started on a healthy note sets the tone for the whole day!

★ Stay hydrated

Drink 8 cups of water or herbal tea per day, especially before big gatherings where there will be alcohol. Get creative with flavouring your water with fresh fruit, cucumber, or mint sprigs. Keep a pitcher in the fridge so you have a go-to refreshment.

★ Bring a healthy dish to the party

You'll have something nourishing to eat and you'll get the opportunity to share healthy and delicious food with others. Hosts always appreciate when someone brings an appetizer or side dish.

★ Drink moderately



Resist the urge to have a drink before guests arrive and always stop drinking an hour before you leave the party so that your sleep won't be disturbed. Before a night out set a limit on the number of drinks you'll have, so you know when to stop. Make a point to

keep your glass full of water between alcoholic drinks to stay hydrated—use the same glass so that you have to finish the water!

★ Try a mocktail

Instead of sugary punch or pop, mix together 2 tbsp lime juice, freshly squeezed, 1 teaspoon zested ginger, 5 drops stevia and 8 ounces sparkling water over ice. Use sparkling water instead of pop as a mixer for mocktails or cocktails.

★ Practice mindful eating

No matter what you're eating, take time to enjoy it mindfully and slowly. Pause between bites and only eat until 80% full. Think ahead about saving room for dessert if you know you won't be able to refuse your favorite fruit cake. When partaking in "indulgent" foods, start with a half portion and notice whether that satisfies you. Whenever possible, eat within an 8-12 hour window.

★ Avoid overeating appetizers

Make sure not to arrive at any events starving—have a healthy snack beforehand if necessary. When enjoying appetizers, fill up on the veggie tray and always eat off a small plate rather than straight from the table or the bag. If you decide to skip appies to save room for dinner, keep your hands busy at cocktail hour with a drink, or chew gum instead of munching.



★ Be wary of "holiday" foods

Holiday foods like candy canes, cookies, chocolates and specialty drinks are tempting, but they are rarely healthy. Advertisers make us feel that we need to consume treats over the holidays or we are "missing out", but sugary snacks are not essential for a special holiday season. (In fact they may make us feel worse!) Choose wisely which holiday indulgences to enjoy and leave the rest.

★ Stay active

Plan some physical activity each day. Start the day with a morning walk, or check out the Christmas lights in the evening before bed. When out shopping and running errands, park farther away from the stores, skip the elevator and unpack the car on your own when you get home. Try partaking in a winter activities—ice skating, X-country skiing, sledding or building a snowman.