

Vibrant *living*

YOUR GUIDE TO VIBRANT LIVING THROUGH FITNESS AND NUTRITION

10 Ways to Beat the Holiday 10!

Robin Walsh BASc, ND

Oh the holidays....smells of fresh gingerbread cookies in the oven, getting together with loved ones for a Christmas feast or sipping on a rum and eggnog by the fire. The holidays bring with them so many warm memories and traditions...but this can come at a price in terms of your health. It has been shown that people will put on an **average of 10lbs of body fat** over the holiday season. The problem is not only the short term weight gain, but that fact that they majority of people will never get all this weight off.

Weight gain – whether it be long or short term is dangerous for your health...your heart as to work harder, your joints are under more stress not to mention the fact that this extra body fat is inflammatory and has been shown to be linked with certain forms of cancer.

The reality is, we all need to indulge in moderation!!! There is no single human being that can eat all of these inflammatory and high fat foods and beverages and be healthy. Even those people that look “skinny” and eat “whatever they want” in terms of high sugar and high fat foods will NOT be healthy.

Therefore...we all need to learn moderation. The goal of the holidays whether you are on a weight loss or weight management program is to come out of the holidays being the exact same weight that we went in.

Do not fall into the rut where you dig a hole so deep in terms of your weight that you have to then climb your way out in January.

You are more than welcome to indulge...but use these 10 tips to forgo the holiday 10!!

Tip #1 – Exercise Is A MUST!

Think about it this way, you need to eat 3500 calories to put on 1 pound of fat. While this may sound like a lot...think about this

- Starbucks Gingerbread Latte - 270-330 calories
- Peppermint white chocolate mocha – 540 Calories



- Eggnog Latte – 470 calories
- Stuffing – 100g – 231 calories
- 1 slice Christmas Cake – 249 calories
- 1 glass wine – 90-245 calories

It adds up!! Especially when Christmas seems to last 4-6 weeks with the office parties and friend and family get-togethers. Not to mention the fact that everyone seems to bring in “treats” for the office.

If you exercise, even 30min per day you are going to burn an average of 250-300 calories. It is one of your biggest tools to keeping this weight off – therefore my suggestion is to do at least 30min of exercise per day. Make exercise fun, and start making some healthy traditions – maybe instead of sitting on the couch in a coma like state after a large meal, you could take the family for a walk through park and look at the lights...or even around your neighbourhood. Or on boxing day morning, you could start a tradition to go tobogganing or for a cross country ski. While you are making good habits for yourself, start to make some for the whole family.



Tip #2 – Know Your Intention Before Going To The Party

We all do better with a plan. Therefore, when you have so many parties decide on the way there in the car what you are going to eat. While you may not completely stick to your plan, you are going to come a lot closer than if you never set goals in the first place. For example – at my work Christmas party I am going to have 2 glasses of wine, and some dessert but I am going to keep away from the high fat, high calorie appetizers at the beginning of the night.

Tip #3 – Bring Something You Can Eat To The Party

If you bring a healthy option, you know there will be something there for you to eat. I have included a bunch of healthy salad and dressing recipes that are great later in this newsletter. Dazzle your friends and family with a healthy and delicious new recipe. If all else fails and you have no time – go to Zehr’s and grab a fruit or veggie tray, or bring an olive and pickle tray or some mixed nuts.

Tip #4 - Don't Go To The Party Hungry

When we are hungry we make irrational food choices, and to get our blood sugars back up we crave foods that are high in fats, refined carbs or sugars – like the cheese dip with bread, the cookie tray or the bulldozer dip with nachos. One great way to stop this behavior is to have a snack 45 minutes before you go to the party. Things like veggies and hummus, fruit and nut butter, a protein shake, a handful of nuts and seeds or a bowl of soup. This will take the “edge” off so you can make good choices at the party.

Tip #5 – Don't Stand Beside The Food Table!!

Get a plate, and fill up on what you would like to eat and go and sit down and enjoy your food. It will help you slow down, and it will also help you to digest your food. One of the worst things we can do for our digestive system is eat on the run, or eat standing up.

Tip #6 – Watch The Size Of Your Plate

Studies have shown that the bigger your plate the more you eat. If you have an option, choose a smaller plate and if you choose to go back for seconds then you may do so.

Tip #7 – Choose Your Glass Wisely

It has been shown that people tend to pour more into short wide glasses than tall slender glasses. So – if you have a choice – always choose the tall slender glass.

Tip #8 - Speaking of Alcohol

This is one of the areas that we can really increase the calories. Not only is alcohol higher in calories, but your body finds it a great source of energy...so uses the calories in alcohol for energy and stores the food that you eat with alcohol as fat. Therefore...to reduce your alcohol consumption try to drink water in between your alcoholic drinks. Therefore, glass of wine – then a glass of water and so on.



Tip #9 - Keep Your Portions Balanced

We have talked before about the ratio of protein to carbs to vegetables...this applies to Christmas too!!

- ¼ of your plate full of protein (meat, fish)
- ¼ of your plate with your carbs – yes this includes stuffing and potatoes!! Also pasta, rice, bread, sweet potatoes, squash, yam
- ½ of your plate with veggies

This is going to make a huge difference in terms of your comfort and energy level after dinner. The poor turkey always gets blamed for “turkey tired” but really it is all the carbs, alcohol and sugar that we are eating!! Make this the Christmas that you don’t have to undo your belt and flake out on the couch after dinner!!

Tip #10 – Indulge in Moderation

When you are indulging ...take your time, eat the food and really enjoy it. The most important thing is to indulge in moderation. When you do indulge, make it a choice and do not feel guilty. There is absolutely nothing wrong with enjoying all of the flavours that Christmas has to offer.



Healthy Sweets—Guilt Free Indulging

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Sarah's Raw Organic Chocolate Bars

This recipe happened by accident. I went to Eating Well Organically, the best natural food market in Waterloo, ON to buy some raw cacao butter to make the bars, but they were sold out. So, Eileen, the owner suggested that I try using raw organic coconut butter instead. The rest is chocolate heaven history!

Note: These bars taste like chocolate macaroons, so you need to like coconut to enjoy this flavor.

- 2 454g jars of raw organic coconut butter (not coconut oil)
- 8 Tbsp carob powder
- 10 Tbsp raw honey
- 1 tsp sea salt
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

1. Mix all ingredients in a large bowl.
2. Spread mixture into a cookie sheet and place in the fridge for 2hrs before enjoying.

Can be modified by adding mint extract, almonds, raisins, cacao nibs. Thank you Sarah Heipel!!

Chocolate Monkey

This can actually be considered a protein shake, and is great after a workout

- 1 bananas
- 2 fresh dates
- 2 cups cold water
- 2 tbsp almond butter
- 2 tbsp ground flax seed
- 5 tbsp cacao powder

1. Blend and Enjoy!!

Can add avocado to this as well for a great recovery beverage)

Strawberry Pie

This recipe is great...reminds me of the strawberry sauce that is on the strawberry sundaes at Dairy Queen (when I used to eat them ;-)

1. Blend 2 cups of raw almonds with 1 cup of pitted dates (best in the food processor),
2. Can add water to get a crumbly consistency.
3. Spread in the bottom of a pie plate.
4. Top with 4 cups of sliced strawberries.

Glaze (if you add some ice to this glaze it makes a great sorbet, you can change the fruit)

- 1 cup apple juice
- ½ cup pureed strawberries
- ¼ cup honey or agave

1. Bring glaze to a boil for 2 minutes.
2. Let cool for 5 minutes and then pour over the strawberries.
3. Let chill in the fridge for 2 hours before serving

Banana Pom Poms

- 1 tsp water
- 1-1/2 tbsp carob or cocoa powder
- 2 tsp honey
- 1 large banana
- ¼ chopped almonds or walnuts

1. Blend water and carob/cocoa powder, then stir in honey.
2. Cut banana into 8 pieces.
3. Using a toothpick, dip the banana (or other fruit) into carob/cocoa and then roll in nuts and seeds.
4. Place on plastic wrap and freeze until firm.
5. Wrap and store in the freezer.
6. Serve frozen.

Almond Banana

- 2 ripe banana
- ½ cup almond, cashew or hazelnut butter
- 1/3 cup orange juice
- ¾ cup shredded coconut

1. Peel banana and slice length wise.
2. Spread each half with almond butter, and put slices back together to form sandwich.
3. Brush with orange juice and roll in coconut.
4. Cut into pieces and serves as snack.

Frozen Fudge

- 1 cup dates
- 1 ½ cup water
- 1 tbsp pure vanilla extract
- 1 ½ cups nut butter (almond or hazelnut)
- 1 ½ cup raw carob
- ½ cup dried coconut

1. Blend dates and vanilla until smooth.
2. Add the water to create a creamy consistency.
3. Transfer the dates to a large bowl and add nut butter and stir.
4. In a separate bowl combine carob and coconut and gradually add the dry mixture to the wet.
5. Press into a pan and freeze until firm (3hours).
6. Cut into 1 inch squares.
7. Delicious!!!

Spiced Up Salads

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Salad Variety – Choose one or more from each of the categories to make a complete salad

1. Lettuce (unlimited)– romaine, mache, endive, mixed field greens, broccoli slaw, spinach, boston lettuce, watercress, arugula, savoy cabbage
2. Protein (3oz) – white meat, fish, eggs, tofu
3. Legume Family (1/2cup) – chickpeas, black beans, 3 bean salad, lentils
4. Fats – 8-10 olives, 1/8 avocado
5. Dressing – choose from one of the options below

Make it interesting – Davids gourmet, Vincenzos, and Zehr’s cold prepared section have salads you can add to the top of a green salad to change the taste. Add 2-4 Tbsp such as cous cous, quinoa, chickpea salad, or 3 bean salad. Anything that is not creamy can be added!!

Dressings – all ingredients for the dressings are to be combined in a blender

<p>CZer</p> <p>Try this healthy caeser recipe!!!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ½ cup tahini • Juice of 1 lemon • 4 cloves of garlic • 1 tsp Celtic sea salt • Water to thin if necessary <p>Combine dressing ingredients in blender and blend until smooth.</p>	<p>Poppy Seed Dressing</p> <p>great with 1 head romaine lettuce, 1 pint strawberries and ½ cup almonds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 tbsp honey • 2 tbsp sesame seeds • 1 tbsp poppy seeds • 1-11/2 tsp chopped white onion • ¼ tsp tamari sauce • ¼ tsp paprika • ¼ cup flax oil • ¼ cup sunflower oil • ¼ cup apple cidar vinegar or lemon juice
<p>Almond Vinegrette</p> <p>Great with 1 head lettuce, 1 cup celery, 2 green onions, 1 tbsp parsley, 11oz mandarins</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ½ cup balsamic, apple cidar vinegar • 1 tsp tarragon • 1/8 tsp black pepper • 1 tsp honey • ½ tsp Dijon mustard • ½ cup flax seeds • ½ cup sunflower oil • ¼ cup sliced almonds 	<p>Cucumber Dill Dressing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 cucumber • ¼ cup dill • 1 tbsp braggs (soy sauce) • Juice of ¼ lemon • 1 cup water
<p>Peanut Curry Dressing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 cup peanuts • 1 tsp curry powder • 1 tbsp braggs • ½ inch piece ginger • 1 cup water 	<p>Herbed Vinegrette</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ¼ cup olive oil • ¼ cup red wine or apple cidar vinegar • 2 tbsp braggs • 1 clove garlic • 3 springs parsley • 4 springs dill • 3 spriggs of fresh cilantro

<p>Mango Ginger Vinaigrette</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 ripe mango • 3 pieces fresh ginger • 3 tbsp apple cidar vinegar • 1 cup water • Juice of 1 lemon 	<p>Papaya Lime Dressing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 ripe papaya • Juice of 1 lime • 1 tbsp cayenne pepper • 1 cup water • 2-3 tbsp braggs
<p>Creamy Herb Dressing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 ripe fatty avocado (peeled and pitted) • 2 tbsp chopped parsley • 2 tbsp basil • Dash of braggs • 1 cup water 	<p>Waldorf Salad Dressing</p> <p>Mayo</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ½ cup tahini • ¼ cup freshly squeezed lemon juice • 2 tbsp apple cidar vinegar • 2 tbsp braggs <p>Combine this in a blender, and then add the following ingredients</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ¼ cup orange juice • 2 tbsp dried dill • 2 tbsp minced onion • 1 cup water

**Braggs is a gluten free soy sauce that can be found at the health food section of the grocery store
 **Tahini is a sesame seed paste that can be found in the health food section of the grocery store

Recipes from:

1. Raw Truth – Jeremy Safron
2. Rawvolution
3. Guilt Free Indulgence – Mark Percival

Storage – Dressings can be stored in the fridge in a sealed container for 2-3 days.



New Seminar Series

For all of those people that would like to lose more weight in January, need to get re-motivated, or just want to a refresher on how and why we need to take care of our bodies we have the course for you.

I have teamed up with another lifestyle and nutritional focused ND in the area, Kristijana Rakic and we are starting a 6 week seminar series on how to live optimally through lifestyle modification.

Topics will include detox, stress management, nutrition (including recipes, the how and why to eat well), and exercise to name a few.

The series will start in January and will run for 1 hour each week.

We are offering this to our existing patients free of charge. You are more than welcome to come to one of the talks, or all.

In early Jan we will be sending out another email with more details and also a sign up sheet...STAY TUNED!!

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