

# Happy healthy holidays

This holiday season, make it a point to indulge...in healthy living. It's a great way to connect with the pleasures of the season. And there is so much to enjoy – time with friends and family, the smiles that being active brings, and let's not forget the wonderful food! So say goodbye to holiday guilt and hello to healthy indulgences.

## Your holiday party plan

Will you be going to a lot of parties this holiday season? Lucky you! Enjoy the good times and great food without holiday weight gain. Here's how:

1. **Enjoy your “must-have” treats.** Be choosy. What foods do you really enjoy? Promise yourself that you will have a few favourites over the holidays and aim to make healthy choices the rest of the time.
2. **Be active for 30 minutes a day.** More is better! Remember, every 10 minutes counts. Plan to be active every day. You will feel marvelous!
3. **Curb your hunger before the party.** Eat a small, healthy snack an hour before a party. Try plain yogurt with cut-up fruit. You'll find it easier to make healthy choices if you're not too hungry.
4. **Bring something deliciously healthy.** That way, you are sure to have at least one healthy choice. Try this: fruit salsa (chopped fruit with a little honey) and cinnamon crisps (whole-wheat pita wedges brushed with water, sprinkled with cinnamon and brown sugar, and baked until crispy).

5. **Be ready for the “food-pushing host.”** If someone is pressuring you to eat more, try saying, “Everything I ate was wonderful. I wouldn’t want to spoil the great meal by overdoing it, but thanks for the offer.”
6. **Stop when you are no longer hungry.** Eat slowly, and when you’ve had enough, put away your plate, or if you are eating out, ask the server to pack leftovers for later. If there is a food table, go to the other side of the room. You’ll be less likely to nibble!
7. **Drinking? Alternate alcoholic drinks with lower-calorie beverages (club soda and lime, or diet pop).** Another way to watch the calories is to drink light beer or wine spritzers (half soda water, half wine). Choose lower-calorie mixers, such as club soda, sparkling water or diet pop. Remember, a fancy sweet drink or eggnog might have nearly as many calories as a meal. If you really want one, think of it as your dessert and take your time to enjoy it!

## **How to have a guaranteed good time**

For lots of fun and laughter, enjoy quality time with family and friends the active way. Add any of these ideas to your calendar:

1. Play ball. Try “snow pitch” (baseball in the snow) or “snoccer” (soccer in the snow). TIP: Use a brightly coloured ball!
2. Try something new. Sign up for a lesson or ask a friend to teach you a new activity. How about skating, skiing, snowboarding, winter camping, snowshoeing or hockey?
3. Explore the great outdoors. Look into winter festivals, winter camping, tobogganing hills, zoos, hiking trails, ski hills and skating rinks in your area.
4. Get creative. Make snow sculptures, mazes, obstacle courses or castles, then paint them! Fill a spray bottle with water and a few drops of food colouring, and use that to paint your creations.

5. Too cold? Play indoors. Kids love to play hide-and-seek, dance to music, build forts with bedsheets, and take turns hiding a toy and giving clues for others to find it. Ask about discount days at local museums, indoor pools, arenas, indoor playgrounds and bowling alleys.

**TIP:** If you've been invited to a get-together, offer to plan some active games to play before or after eating – your host will thank you!

## **How to give the gift of health**

Give gifts that help to keep your loved ones happy and healthy. Try:

1. Homemade coupons from the kids. Children can make coupons good for shovelling snow, helping with dinner, putting away the groceries, or going skating together. They are a super treat for a parent or grandparent.
2. Sports theme. Replace damaged or poorly fitting sports equipment. Buy a book about a favourite sport or pay for lessons.
3. Great-tasting, healthy food. Prepare and wrap up the dry ingredients for a recipe (pancakes, whole-grain muffins, bean soup, yogurt-herb dip). Write directions on a card. Makes a great teacher's gift!
4. Cooking classes or a cookbook. Try your local grocery store or community college for classes. Better yet, offer to teach someone how to make your best-loved healthy dish. Visit Dietitians of Canada to find healthy cookbooks.
5. Gifts with an active-living theme. Great ideas include a yoga mat, a music CD for exercising, a fitness journal, small weights, a pedometer (step counter), a ski mask and an exercise ball.

## **10 great stocking stuffers**

1. Swimming goggles

2. Skipping rope
3. Exercise bands
4. Flavoured teas
5. Mini whisk (hand-held or battery-operated) with hot-chocolate mix
6. Trail mix in a nice, small cloth bag
7. Spice blends in a pretty jar
8. Nuts and a nutcracker
9. Shiny red apple and clementines
10. A card with clues to find one or more gifts hidden in the house, such as lotions, soaps or movie passes.

Copyright © [Dietitians of Canada](#) 2017.

All rights reserved