

Timmins



Family Health Team  
Équipe de Santé Familiale

The Holiday season is here, and we would like to share our strategies for a healthy holiday season!



Christine, Dietitian

**Dietitian: Food Strategies and Tips**

Holidays are a wonderful time to bring people together and food is often the focal point. Dietitians have the following tips to help you and your families make healthy choices as a guest or host.

- φ Keep an eye on portion sizes. It's often not what you eat, but how much that can lead to overindulgence at any time of the year. Use Canada's Food Guide as our guide to serving sizes.
- φ Use fresh zucchini or cucumber sticks, broccoli flowerets, carrot curls, red and green peppers. Serve with low fat dip or spreads such as hummus, yogurt with herbs, fat free sour cream or fresh salsa.
- φ Serve crispy pita triangles, flatbread, Naan or Melba toast as alternatives to salty, high fat crackers.
- φ Consider a beautiful tray of fresh fruit as a wonderful and refreshing end to any meal.
- φ Track your eating and activity level over the holiday season to help you stay on track. Dietitians of Canada EATracker at [www.eatracker.ca](http://www.eatracker.ca) is a convenient and easy to use tool.

**Sources**

**and Additional Resources:**

Dietitians of Canada – [www.dietitians.ca](http://www.dietitians.ca)

Health Canada - <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/iyh-vsv/food-aliment/holiday-fete-eng.php>

**Pharmacist: Medication Survival Tips**

- 1) **Make a list. Check it twice.** It's always a challenge to take medications as prescribed and on time. The hectic Holidays make this even more difficult. Try making a list of what you need to take each day and the best time to take it.
- 2) **Don't drink and drive.** I think we all get that message. How about don't drink and take pills? Many medications don't mix well with alcohol. Sometimes one drink is okay. If you're not sure, check with your Pharmacist, Doctor or Nurse Practitioner.
- 3) **Be a squirrel.** After the first week of December, make sure that you have enough of your medications to last for at least one month.
- 4) **Hide the presents well.** Young children (and adult males) will go through every inch of the house to find Christmas presents. Make sure your medications are stored safely.
- 5) **The twelve days of Christmas.** Some Family Practices are closed for an extended time over the Holidays. It's best to give two to three weeks notice if you require any prescription reorders.
- 6) **Ho Ho Hold the course.** We may have great progress in managing our chronic illnesses like diabetes, chronic pain and depression. But the overeating, running around, stress and late nights that usually come with the Holidays can lead to huge setbacks.



Tom, Pharmacist

### Psychotherapist: Stress Solutions

The holiday season should be a time of peace and joy, but for a lot of us it is also a time of stress and feeling overwhelmed by our “to-do” list. The strategies below can help you manage holiday stress and successfully navigate through the holiday season.

- φ **Organize and delegate.** Have a 'family meeting' and make a commitment to share tasks. Rather than have one person cooking the whole meal, have family and friends bring a dish. Children can help with gift-wrapping, decorating baking or addressing cards.
- φ **Stay within your budget.** Plan your holiday spending, and stick to it! Financial strain has been reported as one of the most significant components of holiday stress, and the fall out of overspending can continue well into the New Year.
- φ **Take care of yourself.** Attend to your needs and feelings during the holidays. Engage in activities that you find fun and relaxing.
- φ **Games, movies, and activities** that make you laugh can help reduce stress.
- φ **Spending just 15 minutes alone**, without distractions, may refresh you enough to handle everything you need to do. Find something that reduces stress by clearing your mind, slowing your breathing and restoring inner calm.



Amanda,  
Psychotherapist

### Sources

#### and Additional Resources:

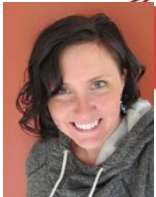
Canadian Mental Health Association [http://www.cmha.ca/bins/content\\_page.asp?cid=6-20-21-965-828](http://www.cmha.ca/bins/content_page.asp?cid=6-20-21-965-828)

Mayo Clinic <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/stress/MH00030>

### Health Promoter: Active Living throughout the Holidays

There are many valid excuses to avoid your exercise routine over the holidays, but exercise does not have to be routine. Consider active living and recreation as ways of keeping fit this holiday season. Keeping active will help deal with the stress, the extra eating and will help you sleep better at night.

- φ **Finding the time.** Between the cooking, cleaning, traveling, decorating, shopping, and entertaining, how can you fit in your normal exercise routine? Perhaps the solution is forget the routine! Add some fun and exercise by coordinating friends and family for a walk, a Wii night or a game of boot hockey (1 hour = 508 calories approx.)
- φ **A Balancing Act.** Physical activity will help burn the extra calories consumed over the holidays, so it is important that you strive for at least 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity per week.
- φ **Stuck Inside.** Every bit of activity counts; if you cannot get outside consider stretching, push-ups, sit-ups, using the stairs or treadmill inside. Consider asking Santa for some exercise DVD's for Christmas.
- φ **Winter Wonderland.** Plan outdoor activities for everyone. Here are a few options; Tobogganing, Skating, Cross Country Skiing, Snowshoeing, build a snowman or a Winter Hike.
- φ **A Healthy Gift.** Add a yoga video and mat, golf lessons, a pedometer, weights or an exercise ball to your wish list or consider as a gift for the hard to buy for person on your list.



Elisha,  
Health Promoter

### Hepatitis C Coordinator: Hep C Prevention

The Holiday season is a time where friends and family come together to celebrate. Whether you are travelling or staying at home, here are some tips help you prevent contracting Hepatitis C:

1. **Avoid sharing personal items** like nail trimmers, razors, and toothbrushes with friends and family members. These items can come into contact with blood, and if shared, can transmit hepatitis C.
2. **Take precautions.** You should learn your partner's past sexual history, especially if he/she is from a region where hepatitis C is endemic .Using a latex condom and avoiding blood-to-blood contact during intercourse can reduce your risk.
3. **Tattoo, body piercing, or acupuncture**, ensures that all equipment is sterile. NEVER allow anyone to use homemade or used equipment on you. If there's any doubt that a needle is sanitary -- avoid it.
4. **Avoid or limit alcohol intake.** Alcohol consumption in people who have chronic hepatitis C increases the risk of developing liver damage and decreases the effectiveness of treatment.
5. **Don't do drugs.** Sharing needles, straws, pipes, or any other drug-related equipment increases your risk of contracting hepatitis C. Since recreational injection drug use (IDU) continues to be the predominant risk factor for hepatitis C, avoiding dirty needles is the single best way to stop the spread of hepatitis C.



Anik,  
Community Coordinator  
Hepatitis C Program