



HEALTH & WELLNESS NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2020

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HIGHLIGHTS for the December 2020 Newsletter

North-Pole Nudge: 5 Habits to Prevent Red-Suit Syndrome

Want to avoid gaining weight during the holidays? You'll have to do a little more than put it on your wish list and send it to the North Pole. Fortunately, a few consistent habits can get you to New Year's without tipping the scale in the wrong direction.

Scratch Summer Sausage Off the Holiday Gift List

Wondering what to send your grandma for the holidays? Or maybe you want to put a little extra something on the veggie platter? Skip the summer sausage, salami, or canned meat. Why? Here's what you need to know.

Propose a Toast to Avoid or Limit Alcohol During the Holidays

How much alcohol is safe to drink during the holidays? If you really want to know the truth, it's pretty simple...don't drink. But if you do plan to drink, propose a toast, or celebrate with alcohol, follow these guidelines.

Y-Axis: Beware of Blue Light

"Don't go towards the light." That line is in a lot of horror movies. And maybe it's about time we listen. If you don't, some scary things can start happening. Like what? Read this to find out.

Recipe: Hot Ginger Tea

Need a way to combat cold weather and improve your health? Research shows ginger can help reduce inflammation, prevent certain types of cancer, and improve gut health. Ginger also helps strengthen the immune system, something we all need in the fight against COVID-19. And it's easy to make.

Take the December Health Challenge!

Manage Stress in Healthy Ways: Make time to relax & reduce stress

Ask the Wellness Doctor:

This month Dr. Don Hall answers the question: How can I prevent COVID fatigue?

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THE Y AXIS



Beware of Blue Light

Don't go towards the light."

That line is in a lot of horror movies. And maybe it's about time we listen.

The average adult spends about 11 hours a day staring into a screen (phone, tablet, TV, or computer).

The problem... Research shows exposure to this blue light may lead to:⁴

- Eye strain
- Neck, shoulder, and back pain
- Headaches
- Sleep problems
- Sugar cravings
- Poor lifestyle habits



The fix: Cut back on screen time. Like right now... and go for a walk.

COMMENTS?

Send comments to the editor: well@wellsources.com

North-Pole Nudge: 5 Habits to Prevent Red-Suit Syndrome

The average adults gains 1 to 5 pounds during the holidays

When Scott Calvin (played by Tim Allen) wakes up one morning in the holiday movie *The Santa Clause*, something isn't right.

His pajamas are tighter. His belly is bigger. He thinks there's something wrong with the bathroom mirror and scale.

You're not going to gain 40 pounds overnight like the guy in the red suit. But research shows the average adult gains about 1 to 5 pounds during the holidays.¹ And most keep packing on a few extra pounds year after year.

How about a little North-Pole Nudge? Here are some things you can do to prevent holiday weight gain.



1. Be active at least 30 minutes a day. Try brisk walking, weight lifting, or aerobics. Or dust off that piece of exercise equipment and actually use it.



2. Eat healthy foods and portion sizes. Keep it simple. Most of your food should come from fruits, vegetables, fish, whole grains, legumes, nuts,

and seeds. Drink more water. And avoid or limit red meats, highcalorie drinks, fast food, and desserts.



3. Start the day with a healthy breakfast. Based on data from the National Weight Control Registry, people who lose weight and keep it off eat breakfast daily. Try whole-grain toast or steel-cut oats, fruit, or Greek yogurt.



4. Track your progress. Weigh yourself once a week. Keep a food diary. Write it down or use a mobile app to record your weight, food choices, and exercise. It's a good way to help you be accountable, and remember to make healthy choices.



5. Be consistent. Eat right and stay active, even on the weekends. If you overeat or skip exercise, it's no big deal. Hit restart and get back on track the next day.

Start now and give yourself the gift of good health this holiday season.

MORE

Avoid weight gain over the holidays <https://tinyurl.com/y53ho4gj>

Scratch Summer Sausage Off the Holiday Gift List

Eating processed meat raises cancer risk

You've seen the summer sausage gift sets. They're wrapped and packaged with holiday cheer, and don't need to be refrigerated. Sometimes they even come with crackers, cookies, and decorative silverware.

And if COVID-19 didn't put the brakes on typical mall shopping this year, you might stumble upon samples of summer sausage served on a toothpick.

But this year, scratch summer sausage off the gift list. Rethink your plans for sending fancy meats and cheeses to your mom.

Why? Research shows that the risk for certain types of cancer increases by eating processed meats like:²

- Summer sausage
- Bologna
- Salami
- Hot dogs
- Canned meats

In the study, researchers looked at the link between cancer and processed meats. And the results were less than appetizing. Processed meats may raise the risk for cancer as much as tobacco, asbestos, and diesel fumes.



So how much do a few slices of summer sausage raise your risk for cancer?

It depends. The less you eat, the lower your risk. But a lot of people eat processed and red meats at least once a day, and sometimes more during the holidays.



Hot Ginger Tea

Need a way to combat cold weather and improve your health?

Research shows ginger can help reduce inflammation, prevent certain types of cancer, and improve gut health.⁵

Ginger also helps strengthen the immune system, something we all need in the fight against COVID-19. And it's easy to make.

Ingredients

- 3 ounces ginger root, thinly-sliced
- 1 C water
- Honey (to taste)

Directions

1. Add 1 C of water to cooking pot or tea kettle.
2. Add ginger root and heat until boiling.
3. Strain to remove any ginger root pulp.
4. Add honey to taste. Stir and enjoy.

Propose a Toast to Avoid or Limit Alcohol During the Holidays

Holidays might be happier without alcohol

The holidays may be a popular time to drink alcohol. But even one drink comes with some risk.³

- Alcohol is loaded with empty calories, stimulates appetite, and may lead to weight gain.
- It interferes with judgment.
- It's a primary factor in driving-related accidents.
- It even raises the risk for cancer.



About one-third of all adults don't drink alcohol, which is the best way to prevent alcohol-related problems. If you do drink, consider what happens when you mix alcohol and the holidays:

6 minutes. The amount of time it takes for ONE drink to impair the brain.

6 to 9. The average number of hours it takes for the effects of alcohol to wear off.

33 Percent of suicides during the holidays that involve alcohol.

37 Percent of all highway deaths on Dec. 25 linked to alcohol.

WHAT IS A STANDARD DRINK?

12 ounces of beer or wine cooler

5 ounces of wine

1/2 ounces of distilled spirits



If you choose to drink, follow these guidelines:



Women: No more than 1 drink per day. Zero if pregnant.



Men: No more than 2 drinks per day if under age 65.



Seniors: No more than 1 drink daily for people age 65 and older.

MORE

Alcohol during the holidays: Sip smarter <https://tinyurl.com/y2crdzhv>

Scratch Summer Sausage Off the Holiday Gift List (continued from page 1)

- Eating just 1.7 ounces of processed meat a day raises the risk for colon cancer by 18 percent.
- Red meat wasn't much better. Just 3.5 ounces each day raises the risk for colon cancer by 17 percent.

Avoid processed meats: Choose healthier options

MORE

How to eat less red meat <https://tinyurl.com/y4uuh79n>

If you want to lower your risk for cancer, avoid or limit processed and red meats. If you're not ready to give up eating meat, replace red and processed meats with lean meats, fish, and skinless poultry.

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Take the December Health Challenge!

Manage Stress in Healthy Ways: Make time to relax & reduce stress

Ask the Wellness Doctor:

This month Dr. Don Hall answers the question:

How can I prevent COVID fatigue?

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WELLNESS CHALLENGE

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Manage Stress in Healthy Ways

CHALLENGE

Make time to relax & reduce stress

Requirements to complete this HEALTH CHALLENGE™

1. Read “Manage Stress in Healthy Ways.”
2. Create a plan to relax and manage stress in healthy ways.
3. Keep a record of your completed health challenge in case your organization requires documentation.



When Clark Griswold gets a disappointing holiday bonus in the cult classic film *National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation*, it's just the beginning of a stressful holiday season.

There's a near-death experience with a log truck. A power surge nearly burns down the house. The holiday-dinner turkey is a disaster. A killer squirrel and rabid dog tear the house apart. There's a sewer line explosion, and more stressed-out extended family moments.

Does that sound anything like the holidays mixed with COVID-19?

If you're feeling a little stressed out during the holidays, you're not alone.

But we all know it's not just the holidays. Life can be stressful.

There's rush-hour traffic. Your inbox flooded with messages. Tearing through the house looking for your phone...again. Or car problems, financial strain, family matters, parenting, or a serious illness. Stressed out just thinking about it?

Here's the thing...If you don't deal with stress in healthy ways it can lead to bigger problems that can impact your health and happiness. And it doesn't have to be that way. Take the month-long Health Challenge to Manage Stress in Healthy Ways.

What stresses you out?
<http://tinyurl.com/kdt6r2e>

Check Your Stress Meter

How well do you manage stress in your life? Take this quiz to find out.

Y N

1. It's difficult for me to stay calm when I'm frustrated.
2. I feel angry, distracted, or moody often.
3. I worry a lot about work, money, health, or my relationships.
4. I often feel overwhelmed, lonely, or depressed.
5. I often have headaches, nausea, dizziness, bowel discomfort, or rapid heartbeat.

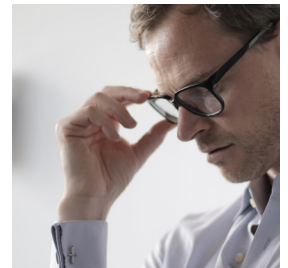
If you answered **YES** to any of these questions, stress may be a problem. Too much stress can impact your mood and behavior. It can even impair memory and judgment. Stress can even lead to serious health problems. The good news... you can learn to manage stress in healthy ways.

The Downward Spiral of Stress

When you visit the doctor for aches and pains, the common cold, or other health issues, stress may actually be the real issue. Research suggests that stress impacts nearly every system in the body.²

When something crazy happens, hormones (adrenaline and cortisol) flood your circulatory system to help you take action. But when you're always stressed out, it's a downward spiral that can lead to:³

- Addictive behaviors
- Anger
- Anxiety
- Certain types of cancer
- Depression
- Difficulty concentrating
- Digestive problems
- Eating disorders
- Fatigue
- Headaches
- Heart disease
- High blood pressure
- Sleep disorders, and more



12 Healthy Ways to Manage Stress



When you start feeling stressed out, pay attention. A little stress now and then is normal. But if you're always stressed out, that needs to change. Here are some things you can do:

1. Take a breather. Take 10 breaths of fresh outdoor air. Deep breathing has a calming effect that can reduce stressful feelings such as anger, anxiety, and fear. Deep breathing can help lower blood pressure, increase energy, and help you sleep better.⁴



2. Move more, sit less. Just 20 to 30 minutes of daily walking, yoga, or another form of exercise can improve your mood and health. Exercise burns stress hormones. It also stimulates the mind to help you relax and think better to solve problems.⁵

3. Do something you really enjoy. Try reading, painting, cooking, or photography. Or maybe you like fishing, playing music, exercise, or getting a massage. This can take your mind off the stressful things in your life and help you see your situation in a different way.



4. Listen and speak up. Listen to what others say. Then give clear, assertive statements about what you need to accomplish your work or improve your relationship. Be realistic and willing to compromise to solve a problem.

5. Get your Zzzs. Aim to sleep 7 to 8 hours a night. If that's a challenge, take a nap during the day. Sleep helps lower stress and restores the body to a relaxed state.⁶



6. Live within a budget. Overspending, debt, and worrying about money are common sources of stress. Create a budget, and live within your means. Or ask a financial advisor for help.

7. Talk it out with a friend, supervisor, or professional. Sharing your concerns often brings relief, support, and courage to carry on. It can also help you cope better with anxiety, stress, depression, illness, and other crises.⁷



8. Eat healthy foods instead of bingeing on comfort foods. You'll cope with stress better by getting the vitamins and nutrients you need.

Eat more fruits, vegetables, nuts, legumes, and whole grains. And drink plenty of water.

9. Delegate or say "no." You can't do everything all at once at work or at home. Learn to say "no" if you need to. Delegate responsibilities. Ask for help. Set priorities and be realistic about what you can handle.



10. Laugh it off. Laugh more. Watch a funny movie. Read a joke book. Or look up funny videos on YouTube. Research shows that laughing reduces stress and releases endorphins that can improve your mood and your health.

11. Chill out. You'll feel better if you don't let things like traffic jams or crying babies bother you. If you get upset easily, practice correcting yourself when something sets you off. If you feel the urge to shout at a careless driver, stop yourself. Replace that thought with something like, "He must be late for an important meeting," or "She must be having a bad day."



12. Ask an expert. A professional counselor can help you deal with financial worries or personal problems. Or you can work with a dietician, fitness coach, spiritual advisor, or life coach. Getting help is a healthy way to reduce stress.

The next time you're feeling stressed out, resist the urge to honk your horn, send an angry email, or eat to calm your nerves. Instead, take a step back. Recognize you're feeling stress. Then use one of these coping strategies to help you reduce stress, feel better, and improve your health.

5 things you should know about stress
<https://tinyurl.com/zzwnhkr>

How to manage COVID stress
<https://tinyurl.com/tcjcvi4>

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Manage Stress in Healthy Ways

CHALLENGE

Make time to relax & reduce stress

Instructions

1. Post this calendar where you will see it daily (bathroom, kitchen, bedroom, etc.).
2. Record the number of days you exercise 10-30 minutes.
3. Use the calendar to record the actions and choices you make to manage stress in healthy ways.
4. At the end of the month, total the number of days you take steps to Manage Stress in Healthy Ways. Then keep up the practice for a lifetime of best health.

MONTH: _____							HC = Health Challenge™	ex. min. = exercise minutes
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	Weight & weekly summary	
HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____		
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_____ Number of days this month I managed stress in healthy ways
 _____ Number of days this month I exercised at least 30 minutes



Other wellness projects completed this month:

Name _____ Date _____

ASK THE DOCTOR

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Q. How can I prevent COVID fatigue?

A. If you're tired of COVID-19 hanging over your head, you're not alone. Even if you've practiced social distancing, worn a mask, and followed restrictions and guidelines in your area, it isn't easy.

Pandemic fatigue is a real thing

It can make you feel sad, bored, lonely, anxious, fearful, angry, and frustrated.¹ Left unchecked, you might be tempted to ignore warnings from public health officials and put yourself and others at risk.

Is COVID-19 taking a toll on your health and happiness?

It often looks like this:

- You know something isn't right.
- You're sad or anxious.
- You're not sleeping well.
- You're tired of feeling isolated.
- Maybe you don't feel like doing anything.
- Or you're ready to ignore all the warnings and go back to life the way it was.
- If you're feeling any of these things, you might be experiencing COVID fatigue.
- So what can you do about it?²

Make a choice to stay healthy

Wash your hands with soap and water. Scrub for 20 seconds. Rinse and dry.

- Use hand sanitizer if soap and water isn't available.
- When you're out of the house, keep your social distance. Stay six feet apart.



- Follow guidelines in your area for social gatherings and wearing a mask.

Be flexible with changing guidelines

Right now an estimated 60 million people worldwide have tested positive for COVID-19. The virus has claimed the lives of 1.4 million people, and the infection rate is rising rapidly.

Over the next few weeks and months, be flexible as public health guidelines and restrictions may change.

Keep essential supplies on hand

With another spike in COVID-19 cases, many stores are limiting the purchase of things like:

- Paper towels
- Toilet paper
- Disinfectant
- Masks and gloves
- Hand sanitizer

Now isn't the time to rush to the store and buy as much as you can. But having an essential supply will help you keep your environment germ- and virus-free and give you peace of mind.

Exercise

Even if you're following all the guidelines, COVID fatigue can still take a toll on your health and happiness, because:

- You may be spending a lot more time at home.

ASK THE WELLNESS DOCTOR

- You may be watching more TV or spending time online.
- You may not see your extended family and friends as much as you'd like.
- You're worried about COVID-19 spreading to you, your family, or friends

Sound familiar? If you're feeling like you've got the COVID blues, regular exercise, such as brisk walking, can help, too.³

Aim for 30 minutes a day. But if you don't have 30 minutes, even smaller amounts of physical activity can help:

- Boost your mental health
- Improve your mood
- Help you feel more energetic
- Help you feel good about yourself and how you are taking better care of your body
- Prevent many serious health problems including heart disease, cancer, diabetes, and worsening depression
- Strengthen your immune system

Looking for a little help to prevent pandemic fatigue?

Follow these tips to protect your physical and mental health.

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STAYIN' ALIVE

Talking about safety isn't enough.



Head Office: 502 Old Wonderland Rd. London, ON N6K 1L6
info@ewsnetwork.com | www.ewsnetwork.com