



**Holiday Hacks:**

**27 Tips for Staying Healthy**

**During the Holidays**

Has this ever happened to you? You're in a routine of eating well, exercising, and making time for activities that keep you emotionally and mentally well... and then the holiday season arrives and all your healthy habits seem to fly out the window. If this sounds like you, you're definitely not alone. To help, here are 27 tips to keep the holiday weight gain and stress at a minimum this year, while helping you feel as good as possible going into the new year.

## Helpful Tips Before the Holidays Hit



**#1.** Rather than accepting every single holiday invitation that comes your way, pick and choose carefully. Politely decline all but the most important invitations with the people who mean the most to you. At this ultra-busy time of year, quality is more

important than quantity. For example, if you receive invitations to more than one work-related function, choose the one you most want to attend.

**#2.** Make a commitment to yourself to eat as healthfully as you can during the holidays. Of course, this is also a time for enjoying your favorite holiday foods. Just ensure that you only indulge when you really want to. Do it mindfully, and in moderation. Make sure to include plenty of healthy fruits and vegetables, and very few refined, sugary, or prepackaged foods. Completely abstain from eating fast food. All of this will have a positive impact on your waistline, your emotional health, and your energy levels.

**#3.** Forget trying to be perfect. The house really doesn't need to be scrubbed from top to bottom in preparation for the holidays. Clean and tidy, yes, but not perfect from wall to wall. Presents do not have to be perfectly wrapped – after all, they are going to be torn to shreds in seconds anyway! No one is going to judge you (and if they do, do you really don't want them as friends?). This year, try to let go of caring what others might think of your home and decorating skills and just enjoy the season.

**#4.** This is a good time of year to appreciate others. If someone for whom you feel gratitude is in your daily life, you don't have to buy them a present (unless you want to and can easily afford it). Send a quick message or call them to let them know that you appreciate them and all the things they do for you. They will enjoy being told that they are appreciated and you will make their day.

**#5.** Limit time with difficult family members. Most of us have a person in our family who seems to make it their personal goal to push all our buttons. If that sounds all too familiar, make a plan ahead of time for how you can limit your time with them. If avoidance isn't an option, a good strategy is to plan in advance whether or not you will respond to any comments that make you feel angry or hurt. A good option might be to resolve to keep the peace, and not let their bad attitude affect you. Just smile and politely ignore them.

**#6.** Schedule in some reflective time, such as meditation or prayer, and don't ditch the yoga or stretching routine. Taking some quiet time for yourself during the holiday season is helpful on so many levels, and will definitely increase your inner peace.

## Healthy Holiday Tips – Before a Party

**#7.** Do a quick but intense 5-15 minute workout prior to the party. This could be a brisk walk or running up and down stairs. The workout will not only help you to feel good and look great, it also raises your heart rate and offloads a few calories before any party indulgences.

**#8.** Have an organic green juice or smoothie before going to the party (such as this [heart-healthy smoothie](#) or this [green detox smoothie](#)), so that you will not be starving when you arrive. This will also give you a wide range of healthy and protective antioxidants and phytochemicals as a good base for whatever else you consume at the party.



## Holiday Hacks – At the Party

**#9.** For every cocktail, glass of wine, or beer you drink, have a glass of filtered or sparkling water. This helps to slow down the intake of empty calories and keeps you from getting tipsy too fast. If you add a squeeze of lemon or lime or a drop of a citrus essential oil to your water, you will also be [supporting liver detoxification along the way](#).

**#10.** Try to eat mindfully. Carefully choose what you want to eat beforehand and then stick to that. Don't stay too close to the food table, grazing continuously. Once you've eaten, don't go back to the food table unless you are truly hungry.

**#11.** When filling your plate, choose cut vegetables, fruit, and nuts over fried foods, chips, or other carb-laden foods. This will help fill you up with healthier options that actually provide your body with nutrients.

**#12.** When it comes to dessert, choose special homemade treats over store-bought goodies that you can get anytime. In other words, if you're going to indulge, make sure it's for something that's worth it.

**#13.** If you have the opportunity to do so, get up and DANCE! Not only will you be benefiting your body with movement, it's fun and helps to offload stress.

**#14.** Don't stay at the party so long that you miss out on several hours of [precious sleep](#). [Decide beforehand when you would like to leave, and then stick to that time as closely as possible so you can get to bed as close to your usual time as possible.](#) Be aware that for every hour of sleep you lose, it can take several days to catch up. Also, loss of sleep during this time of year impacts your immune system and can put you at a higher risk for catching colds and flu.

**#15.** Before hitting the hay, take some digestive enzymes. This will help your digestive system better cope with all the extra food and beverages you've just consumed. You'll likely sleep better and will be less likely to wake up with a "food hangover" the next morning. Not familiar with what digestive enzymes do? [Click here to read more.](#)

## Health Tips for the Morning After



**#16.** Add a scoop of collagen powder into your morning coffee or juice – your joints, digestive tract, skin, nails, and hair will all be better for it. An added bonus is that if you had alcohol to drink the night before, [collagen supports liver health and detoxification plus so](#)

[much more.](#)

**#17.** If you're feeling a little bloated or unwell from your indulgences, drink a cup of peppermint or ginger tea. Peppermint and ginger both aid digestion, help ease an inflamed gut, and assist with any nausea.

**#18.** When you're able, have another green juice. The wide range of nutrients will help your liver and kidneys with detoxification, give you some instant energy (which is great if you stayed up too late), and an immune boost as well.

**#19.** Take some probiotics if you had a little too much to drink. Alcohol consumption can have a bad effect on beneficial gut bacteria, so for the next few days be extra diligent in [supplementing with a good quality probiotic](#).

**#20.** Follow this tip from the French. After overindulging with rich food, the next day they will have soup laden with fresh vegetable and herbs, and lots of water. This is an excellent way to counteract the excesses from the day before and your gut and liver will thank you for it.

**#21.** If you aren't feeling too shattered, go for a walk, but drink a glass of water first. Drinking alcohol can dehydrate you, and intense exercise will do that as well. A gentle walk combined with a big glass of water is much better for you in the long run after a big night out than a hard gym workout.

## If Holiday Stress Hits Anyway...

**#22.** Lock the bathroom door and take a hot epsom salt bath. Drip in a few of your favorite essential oils along with a cup full of epsom salts (magnesium sulfate), light a candle or two, and take a mini holiday to calm the nerves. The magnesium in the epsom salts is beneficial for sore muscles and has a calming effect on the nervous system.

**#23.** Revisit tip #5.



**#24.** Do some or all of your shopping online. This will save wear and tear on your nerves, your car, and it is easier to stay on budget.

**#25.** Get more sleep.

**#26.** Realize that at any moment you have the right to say “no” when things get too hectic.

Exercise that right whenever you need to.



**#27.** Take a breathing break. Just four or five minutes will make a difference and you can do this exercise anywhere. Sit quietly, close your eyes, and set your phone or watch timer for four minutes. Now breathe deeply: in for a count of five, hold that breath for a count of five, slowly exhale for a count of five, and hold the exhale for a count of five. Got it? In for five, hold for five, exhale for five, hold for five. Even just a couple of minutes of this breathing exercise will lower your blood pressure, alter your brain waves, and help to calm you.

There you have it – 27 tips and ideas for how to stay healthy during the holidays. Pick and choose the suggestions listed above that make sense to you, and don’t worry about the rest. Just do the best you can when you’re not at holiday events to stick to your healthy habits, even if you have to pare them down.

The most important thing is to enjoy yourself over the holiday season, don’t get drawn into the idea that you have to say “yes” all the time, and remember that less is usually more.