



# Health Break



Fall 2008, Week 8



## Holidays the healthy way

You have come so far! Eight weeks of diligent walking has surely paid off in some way. The holidays, however, are looming on the horizon... How can we maintain our newfound healthy habits amongst all that delicious food? Here are some tips to keep in mind.

### Stress control

More heart attacks occur during the holidays than any other time of year. Keep your work, home and play time in balance. Practice time management, don't over-commit, and ask for help from loved ones. Focus on staying relaxed and having a positive outlook. Remember, stress also impacts your eating and activity.

### Diet

Select 1 or 2 from the most tempting foods. Practice moderation. Choose delicious fruits over sweets. Eat regular meals – fasting all day can lead to binging at night. How about a group soup instead of a baking exchange? (Everyone brings an ingredient, and together you can make a soup.)

### Wash hands often

The BEST way you can prevent from getting sick. Wash at least 20 seconds in warm water and soap.

## Holidays the healthy way (cont'd)

### Handle and prepare food safely

Keep yourself and your family safe from foodborne-related illness. Wash hands often. Prevent cross-contamination by washing surfaces and keeping raw meat and eggs separate from other foods. Cook all foods to proper temperatures, and refrigerate promptly.

### Stay active

You can burn off those calories by continuing to focus on getting activity in your day. Be innovative: Try dancing to your favorite holiday tunes or spend time actively with kids and grandkids. Take the stairs instead of the elevator at the mall.

### Prevent injury

Many injuries occur during the holidays. Take care to hang decorations properly (i.e., use a stepstool instead of furniture). Keep candles away from kids, pets and high traffic areas. Don't leave stoves and grills unattended. Make sure your smoke detector and carbon monoxide monitor are functioning.

### Travel safely

Don't drink and drive. Wear your seat belt, and keep kids and grandkids buckled in seat belts. Many accidents occur within a mile of the home. Don't travel in low visibility or dangerous conditions.

*From the Centers for Disease Control*

**Thanks for a great season. See you next spring!**