

# HOLIDAY WELLNESS CALENDAR DECEMBER 2017



**Ease into the holidays with these strategies to keep your energy up, weight down and mind satisfied this holiday season!**

Keep your body healthy and happy with these easy-to-follow tips and facts. Track the days you read or completed a wellness tip or fact by circling that date.

Return your completed calendar to the Wellness Desk by January 2, 2018 and become eligible for a raffle featuring a BZ t-shirt, free smoothies and more..

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# Happy Holidays

## DECEMBER 2017

**1 Make your season brighter** by eating foods that nourish you and indulging in activities that help you relax.

**2 Keep moving.** Don't let the busy holiday season sidetrack your regular exercise routine. Working out can boost energy and mood and squeezing in a workout may actually help you be more productive. You'll experience the mood boosting benefits of exercise in as little as 15 minutes. Any kind of heart-pumping aerobic activity, like climbing stairs, will give you a burst of bliss.

**3 Avoid the weight gain.** You don't have to deprive yourself of your favorite foods during the holidays; just remember to enjoy them in moderation.

**4 Make holiday cards gratitude cards.** Instead of signing your cards with a generic "hope all is well," take time to express to friends and family what they really mean to you. Studies find that showing gratitude increases your own happiness by as much as 25%.

**5 Plate it SMALL.** Trick yourself into eating sensibly. Smaller plates encourage you to eat smaller portions, which mean you eat less (no seconds). Research shows that people eat almost 60% less when they put their food on smaller dishes.

**6 Aim for seven servings** of fresh fruits and vegetables per day. There are plenty of great options usually available throughout the season, such as squashes, fresh berries, tangerines, grapes, green beans, sweet potato, asparagus, and leafy greens.

**7 Eat regular meals.** Saving up all of your calories so you can eat what you want at the holiday party? Skipping meals before the big event might seem like a good idea, but it's a recipe for disaster. You'll be so hungry by the time you arrive at your event that you won't care what you eat.

**8 Do the math.** The trick to eating what you want without putting on the pounds is making sure calories in are less than calories out. If you have a treat, balance extra calories with exercise (for example, if you have a 100 calorie treat it will take a 25-minute walk to burn it off).

**9 Plan ahead.** Set aside specific days for shopping, baking, visiting friends and other activities. Plan your menus and then make your shopping list. That'll help prevent last-minute scrambling to buy forgotten ingredients or gifts.

**10 Stay hydrated.** Do you tend to stuff yourself silly at the dinner table? Here's a trick to fill you up fast and help you lose weight. Drink water. Research shows that people who drank two glasses of water before mealtime ate nearly 100 fewer calories per meal. Over the course of 12 weeks, that resulted in an extra five pounds of weight loss. People often mistake hunger for thirst, so if you're craving food, try drinking a glass of water before rummaging through the fridge.

**11 Don't waste time** waiting for the elevator. Save a few minutes and burn seven times the amount of calories by taking the stairs. Stair climbing burns about 10 calories a minute — and even more if you're carrying a couple of groceries or recently purchased gifts. Research indicates that walking up and down two flights of stairs a day is enough to keep off five or six pounds of yearly weight gain.

**12 Pick up your pace.** Have only 15 minutes to spare? No problem. Make the most of your workout by doing interval training. For every three minutes of moderate-intensity exercise you do, add 30 seconds of high-intensity activity. Not only will it keep things interesting, research shows that interval training can get you fit faster too.

**13 Listen to the people around you.** You can't eat fast if you're engaged in a good conversation or even a bad one! After all, talking to your friends is the main purpose of social events.

**14 Do alternate between wine and water.** Never drink two glasses of any alcoholic beverage in a row—alternate every glass of wine with one, preferably even two, glasses of water with lime.

**15 Get on a roll ...** a foam roller, that is. This fitness tool has many uses: rolling on it to massage tight glutes, deltoids, triceps, and hamstrings.

**16**

**Start healthy holiday traditions.** Holidays are all about tradition, so why not begin a few healthy holiday traditions. Getting kids involved is always a great idea — not only does it set a good example for them, but also kids naturally have more energy, so spending time with them (and letting them set the pace) can really energize us. Some examples include taking an after breakfast or dinner walk; design your own snow Olympics or a family team challenge.

**17**

**Give yourself the gift of rest.** It's easy to run yourself ragged during December. Not getting enough sleep can increase your susceptibility to colds and viruses. Take some time away from shopping, wrapping gifts, baking, etc and unwind in the tub. A warm bath relaxes your muscles and helps you settle your mind and sleep more restfully. These are your body's natural defenses against stress.



**18**

**Don't ditch the basics.** Just because it's the holidays doesn't mean you should give up the healthy habits you've been practicing all year.

**19**

**Keep the evidence.** If you do enjoy a few sweet treats save the wrappers. They give you a realistic reminder of how much you ate. This helps you stay mindful about how much you're putting in your mouth. It also helps avoid the, "There's no way I ate the whole bag!" scenario.

**20**

**Prioritize.** You've heard this a million times. It really does work. Setting priorities can help prevent that overwhelming feeling that we experience during the holidays. Decide what's most important to you and what's necessary. Then make choices that move you towards accomplishing everything. This can go a long way to feeling more balanced and less stressed in your life.

**21**

**Hang out with happy friends.** Go for quality rather than quantity in your social life. During the holidays, hang out only with friends who make you laugh, feed your soul, or in other ways delight you. You'll have plenty of time for your other friends in February.

**22**

**Volunteer.** Give your community the gift of you, even if all you can volunteer is a smile or a compliment. Consider volunteering at a local charity. In addition to benefitting from what experts identify as "helpers' high," you may also meet new friends and make lasting connections that will enrich your life throughout the entire year.

**23**

**Smile ...** at strangers. It boosts the "feel-good" factor for both the "Smiler's" and the "Smilee's." Keep trying. Somebody will smile back!

**24**

**The power of flowers.** People feel better and perkier when they see a bouquet first thing in the morning, and the energy boost lasts throughout the day.

**25**

**Try a mood lifting trick ...** such as flipping through old photos, inhaling a calming scent, opening your shades, doing a good deed.

**26**

**Laugh.** Laughing is a great tension reliever. It burns calories, reduces stress and usually means that you're enjoying yourself.



**27**

**Peel yourself a clementine.** Researchers mapped the moods created by certain fragrances and found the scent of this sweet, juicy fruit more likely to boost joy. Not only will a whiff of one help keep you happy, the vitamin C, calcium, and potassium in it will help keep you healthy too.

**28**

**Make friends with hot cocoa.** According to research just holding a warm beverage makes us more generous and friendly. Turns out warm hands are linked to warm hearts by way of a part of the brain called the insula, which helps process both physical temperature and emotions.

**29**

**Resolution planning.** Instead of the tired old promise to lose weight, try some other healthy resolutions such as practicing regular mindful breathing or stop snacking just to snack. Practice mindful eating, do 10 minutes of Yoga on a regular basis, do one thing a week just because you want to, prioritize sleep, practice better posture...you get the picture, try something new.

**30**

**Plan your next vacation.** Looking forward to a trip can boost your mood for as long as 16 weeks prior to the departure date.

**31**

**Go for a moonlight walk.** Shake things up: eat breakfast for dinner, reroute your commute, or take a new exercise class and go for a walk in the moonlight.