



# Healthy Holiday Tips & Recipes

BY: Ashley Perrone, Health Promotion Peer Educator

Fall is here and the holidays are just around the corner! We all know what that means – FOOD.. along with the unwanted holiday weight gain. Well don't fret my friends, I have come up with a list of tips to help make this holiday fun filled and stress free!!

**Don't go to a party hungry.** We often eat faster and more when we are hungry - therefore eat a wholesome breakfast and lunch on the day to avoid overeating at the party.

**Watch your portions.** Treat yourself to a nice drink, dessert, chocolate or sweets without guilt, but always watch your portion. Go for small portions. This way you can sample all the different foods. Moderation is always the key.

**Physical activity.** Don't give up on all physical activity just because school is out. Take nice brisk walks with your loved ones and enjoy their company in the holiday season.

**Thanksgiving dinner is not an all-you-can-eat buffet.** Fill your plate half with vegetables, one quarter with a lean meat and the rest with a starch of your choice. Wait 20 minutes before getting another plate. Eat slowly and stop when you are full.

**Go skinless.** Choose your turkey skinless to slash away some **fat** and **cholesterol**. Save your appetite for the side dishes and desserts.

**Make a conscious choice to limit high fat items.** High fat food items can be found in fried and creamy dishes as well as cheese-filled casseroles. If you cannot control the ingredients that go in to a dish, simply limit yourself to a smaller helping size. Again, moderation is the key.

**Watch your beverages.** Alcohol and coffee can dehydrate your body. Drink calorie-free water to help fill up your stomach and keep you hydrated. Alcohol can also lessen inhibitions and induce overeating and non-alcoholic beverages can be full of calories and sugar.

**Take the focus off food.** Turn candy and cookie making time into non-edible projects like making wreaths, dough art decorations or a gingerbread house. Plan group activities with family and friends that aren't all about food.

**Leave what you don't want:** Despite what your parents may have drummed into you as a child, don't feel like you have to clear your plate. When you feel full, stop eating. Simple.

Well there you go, keep these handy tips by your side this holiday season and enjoy a happy, healthy holiday! Don't forget to be realistic, though. Focusing on your weight the whole break will be a bummer, just have a good time and be mindful of what you are putting into your body. Below are a couple of healthier versions of some of your favorite holiday foods.

## Healthy Hawk Hints

November 2009



### Green Bean Casserole

1 can (1 3/4 ounces) 98% Fat Free Cream of Mushroom Soup  
1/2 cup of skim milk  
1 tsp soy sauce  
Dash black pepper  
1 (18oz) bag of frozen green beans  
1 cup of French Fried Onions

Stir soup, milk, soy sauce, pepper, beans, and 1/2 cup of Onions, and pour into 1 1/2 quart casserole. Bake at 350 for 25 min. Stir the bean mixture and sprinkle with remaining onions. Bake for 5 more minutes.  
Serves 6.



### No Bake Pumpkin Cheesecake

1 (8 oz) package of reduced fat cream cheese, softened  
1 cup canned pumpkin  
1/2 cup sugar or Splenda  
1/2 tsp. pumpkin pie spice  
1 tub (8oz) Fat Free Cool Whip, thawed  
1 reduced fat graham cracker crust

Beat cream cheese, pumpkin, sugar, and pumpkin pie spice until well blended. Gently stir in 2 1/2 cups of Cool Whip. Spoon mixture into crust. Refrigerate 3 hours or overnight. Serve with remaining whipped topping. Store leftovers in fridge. Serves 8.



## Say “GOODBYE” to Sleepless Nights

By: Dr. Walt Laughlin

Medical Director, Abrons Student Health Center

For many people, falling asleep and staying asleep is a natural process. Behavior, diet, substance abuse, light, noise, and other environmental factors can disrupt sleep. If you are having trouble with your sleep, chances are you can alleviate this problem by evaluating your sleep habits. Many people do not want to change the way they do things, they just want a “pill” to take care of the problem. Unfortunately, medication for sleep problems in general can only be a temporary fix, and then it’s back to you again. Here are the rules:

**Rule #1: Stay clear of stimulants!** That includes caffeinated coffee, non-herbal tea, caffeinated soft drinks, chocolate, nicotine, and many prescription and non-prescription drugs. In case you haven’t heard, *nicotine is bad for you*, and by the way, bad for your sleep! If you do quit smoking, you may experience withdrawal symptoms that may disturb your sleep but that will only be temporary.

**Rule #2: Beware of the “nightcap”!** Alcohol can help people fall asleep, but can have a tendency to disrupt sleep later in the night. Avoid alcohol 6 hours before bedtime.

**Rule #3: Exercise!** Exercise about six hours before bedtime has been shown to help lead to a good night’s rest. The converse can also be true: that limited activity during the day can contribute to insomnia.

**Rule #4: Be sure you have an environment conducive for sleep!** Generally, a firmer bed is more conducive to good sleep than a softer bed. Light and noise tends to disturb sleep, so heavy shades or curtains, avoiding bright night lights, and making it clear to the night owls that they must be quiet can all help. Also, avoid loud aggressive music, a book or TV program that keeps you on the edge of your seat, or very “active” conversation before bedtime.

**Rule #5: Eat lightly before sleep!** Avoid eating closer than two hours before bedtime, especially hot, spicy, fatty, and acidic foods. A light snack at bedtime, particularly involving milk or milk products, seems to help promote sleep.

**Rule #6: Don’t Worry, Be Happy!** When under stress, we tend to do things that, at least temporarily, seem to help reduce stress: naps, excessive caffeine, alcohol at bedtime, working at night, smoking, and irregular sleep times, to name just a few. Those same things tend to lead to problems with sleep, long after the stressful situation has abated.

**Rule #7: Don’t be a clock watcher!** Set the alarm for when you want to awaken in the morning and hide it so you can’t see the time on it.

**Rule #8: Take control and schedule a time to worry!** Going to bed while worrying about things can make it difficult to go to sleep and stay asleep. Designate a specific time every day to “worrying” (in a helpful and constructive way), and then you are off the hook!

For more detailed information, visit:

[www.cpap4u.com/faqs.html](http://www.cpap4u.com/faqs.html)

## November Health Promotion Events

**Mon. 9**

**FREE HIV Testing  
11-3pm  
Student Health Center**

**Tues. 10**

**Iron Chef, 5:30pm  
Madeline Suite  
Next to Wagoner**

**Thurs. 12**

**Sweet Dreams are Made  
of These, 5:30pm  
Student Rec Center 114**

**Tues. 17**

**Who You Gonna Call?  
Stressbusters!, 5:30pm  
Student Rec Center 114**

**Wed. 18**

**Eating Mindfully  
5:30pm  
Student Rec Center 104**

**Mon. 30**

**FREE HIV Testing  
11-3pm  
Student Health Center**

**Health Promotion  
Student Rec Center 104  
910-962-4135**

[uncw.edu/healthpromo](http://uncw.edu/healthpromo)

## **BUSTIN’ STRESS!!!**

Getting ready for finals? Or getting ready for the holiday break! This time of year can be stressful, so we have a few tips to reduce & even prevent stress:

### **1. Utilize Positive Self-Talk.**

Come up with a positive way of looking at stressful situations. Being optimistic takes away a lot of the negative, meaningless worries. Develop a mantra for yourself like, “the more I’m prepared, the better I will perform,” or “I will not be taking this class forever,” and “when holiday break comes, I will be ready.”

### **2. Learn to Let it Go!**

Don’t waste time & energy worrying over little things that can’t be changed. We can’t always change the situation, but we can change how we react. The more positive energy you put out, the more will come your way!

### **3. Breathe Slowly and Deeply.**

I know this may sound silly, but if you try to fit in some kind of structured breathing in your day, it will help calm your nerves. Breathe in for five seconds, breathe out for five seconds. Try this for a few minutes and you should feel more relaxed!

### **4. Time Management.**

Allow yourself a reasonable amount of time to get things done. Giving yourself time to actually get things done will allow you not to be so stressed about getting things done on time.

### **5. Know that NO ONE is Perfect!**

Expecting everything you do to be absolutely perfect 100% of the time just causes more stress. Just do your best!

We all deal with daily stressors.

Sometimes they are huge, a bunch of smaller things, or just one simple issue that didn’t go as planned.

Next time a stressful situation comes up, pull out this list of tips!