

Can't "Weight" for the Holidays

'Tis the season to be jolly, well fed, over-stuffed, and somewhat blobish! What is a person supposed to do when well-intended friends share gifts of glorious chocolates, homemade cakes, pies, breads and holiday cookies brimming with festive decorations and screaming—"Try Me!"

The PCSB Wellness Team is not immune to the season or its gluttony. Although there are days we feel compelled to surrender to holiday treats, we each have a survival plan that does not waiver too far from the ordinary. Here are our holiday recommendations to prevent extra "junk in the trunk!"

Moderation and portion control: Allison is a firm believer in portion control. A box of chocolates makes a wonderful gift. Be prepared to limit yourself to only one or two at a time. This lets you enjoy the gift for weeks instead of a day or two! She further recommends not stuffing yourself. "If there are 10 desserts on the table pick your top two and just have a small serving of your favorites," she said.

Don't skip meals: Jennifer stresses the importance of 5-6 small meals throughout the day so that you do not arrive at the holiday gathering starving. "I am going to focus on eating like I normally do—small meals with snacks in between. If I want to have a treat, I am going to have a small piece right after a meal."

Don't drink your calories: Janet emphasizes the number of empty calories in eggnog and other holiday favorites. "One small mug of eggnog has at least 450 calories, and is laden with fat," she said. The added problem is that no one stops with one drink. Alcohol weakens your resistance to say "No" to other sumptuous temptations. Plus, it temporarily lowers your metabolism, so your body is not burning calories efficiently.

Choose your poison: Jan's family avoids the high-calorie pitfalls of casseroles and those drenched in butter. They enjoy roasted sweet potatoes and steamed green beans, which allows them to splurge a little on desserts instead. Jan says, "We apply those saved calories to dessert, and try to keep the holidays healthier!"

Make reservations: Betty does not go to the trouble of making a huge holiday meal for two because she does not want the added temptation for several days with leftovers. Instead, she makes reservations, and recommends ordering from the menu. "We avoid the buffet and order directly from the menu; we still have enough food to take home for another meal. We also split a dessert to avoid the extra calories."

Healthy substitutions: Debbie recommends replacing high fat, high calorie ingredients for healthier options. When baking, two egg whites is the equivalent of one egg, but without the fat. Applesauce can be substituted for oil in breads and cake recipes. Use low fat or fat free sour cream, half and half or milk in place of the full-fat version. "In most recipes, you can get by with a healthy substitution and not compromise on taste or texture," she adds.

Exercise, exercise & exercise: Without a doubt, the Wellness Team exercises throughout the year, but adds extra workouts during the holidays. From starting their day with a run, walk or sun salutation, some enjoy a family walk or basketball game after "the big meal," and others will end their day with a stroll around the lake or double-up for an extra caloric burn! "It helps digestion and sets a good example for living a Wellness lifestyle," Jan says.

One thing for sure, if you let down your guard, fall off the wagon, or give into temptations on Christmas or Hanukkah, start fresh the next day with renewed enthusiasm. Congratulate yourself that "you" are in control, and one day of eating pleasure will not sabotage your weight loss efforts. Enjoy this edition of Wellness Matters and more recommendations on how to keep your holidays healthy!

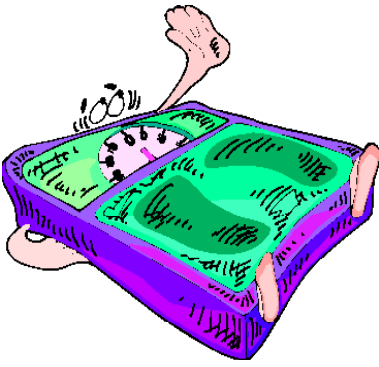


Spotlight of the month shines on the Wellness Team

What's inside

Don't Sabotage Weight Loss Efforts	2	Food Mania?	3
Developing a Healthy Relationship w/ Food	2	ABCs of Diabetes	4
New Approach to Gift Giving	3	Holiday Safety for Pets	4
Will the Grinch Steal Christmas	3	Cancer Screenings	4
Who is Calling You?	3		

Don't Sabotage Weight Loss Efforts



It can be very frustrating trying to eat right, exercise and hardly see the scale budge! Some dieters may not have the results they're hoping for because of these common mistakes. Could any of the following habits be sabotaging your weight loss efforts?

Going on a diet: "Diets" often infer restrictions and giving up your favorite foods, desserts, or dining out. Sometimes telling yourself you can't have something makes you want it more! People that lose weight by creating a long-term healthy lifestyle are more successful than short term "dieters."

Overhauling eating habits overnight: Instead of making drastic changes all at once, try to eat more of the foods that are good for you. Small changes like switching from 2% milk to 1% are easier to stick with.

Giving up certain foods: Don't restrict yourself to never eating ice cream ever again. This may make you REALLY crave it! Allow yourself to have a small portion on occa-

sion. Remember, everything in moderation.

Only caring about calories. Don't be so focused on the calories, that you ignore the nutrition. For instance, there are 133 calories in $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of almonds. That's a better snack choice than a 100 calorie pack of Oreo Crisps.

Focusing on the scale. The scale doesn't tell the whole story. You could gain lean muscle mass, lose inches, be better hydrated, and be more fit without losing any pounds!

Only dieting and not exercising. You can lose weight by simply adjusting your food, but it is harder. Exercise plus changing food habits is the best combination for weight loss. If you leave out exercise, you're missing out on all the great benefits such as increased energy, better muscle tone, and a healthier body!

Trying to eat as little as possible. If you eat less than 1200 calories a day, you trick your body that is starving! Your body goes into starvation mode which means it holds on to every calorie you take in!

Giving up too easily. Everyone has setbacks. Don't throw in the towel if you have an off day. Look for extra support or additional ways to keep you motivated.

Confusing "healthy" with "low-calorie." Any food that is organic, gluten-free, or all-natural doesn't mean it's low in calories or an ideal choice. Just because Lay's Salt and Vinegar chips now say "All-Natural" doesn't mean it's an ideal afternoon snack!

Unrealistic expectations. Don't set goals that are impossible to achieve. Losing 1-2 pounds a week is a healthy rate of weight loss. If you aim for a 10 pound loss in one week, you will most likely be very disappointed! Too few calories may also decrease the "feel-good" brain chemical, serotonin, leading to depression or cravings.

Developing a Healthy Relationship with Food

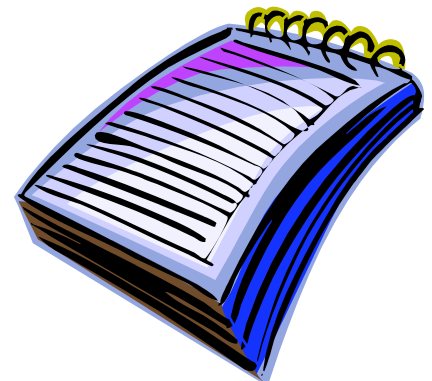
With the holiday just around the corner, why talk about developing a healthy relationship with food? After all, your best nutritional intentions will be thwarted by delicious and indulgent temptations during the holidays, from Thanksgiving week till the New Year.

Keep in mind that there are 365 days in the year and not every day has to be a picture perfect diet. After all the holiday hoopla is over, it might be tempting to go on the latest diet craze like the shake of the month, but let's be realistic. Can you really drink shakes for the rest of your life? Instead of restricting yourself, find a healthy balance.

Start where you were before the holidays. Identify changes in your eating habits that are realistic and sustainable. Take an inventory of your eating for the day by writing down everything that goes in your mouth- IF YOU BITE IT, YOU WRITE IT.

Look for opportunities to make small changes. Do you pack a healthy lunch and snacks? If so, give yourself a pat on the back. Or maybe after a closer look, those daily trips to get handfuls of M&Ms from the secretary's desk are adding up. At first, it may be difficult to deal with the stress without the M&Ms, but after awhile you won't miss the sugar high and sick stomach.

Eating well is hard work, but in the end it will be worth it. You are creating a lifestyle that will promote longevity and quality of life. You will have more energy in all areas including work, home and your social activities. Give yourself the greatest gift in 2012, your health.



**IF YOU BITE IT...
WRITE IT DOWN**

New Approach to Gift-Giving this Season

The holiday season traditionally includes giving and receiving gifts. But you don't have to spend a lot of money to show how much you care. Here are some creative ideas for low-cost gifts you can make yourself:

- **Recipe book.** Collect some of your favorite family recipes. Put them together in a small book that highlights your family tree.



- **Photos.** One way to make a special photograph even more special: Carefully cut a picture into four equal squares, then paste them onto four sheets of canvas or heavy paper. It creates a nifty effect for a four-piece picture that can hang on any wall.

- **Personal gift cards.** Make your own "gift certificates" that the recipient can redeem for personal (or romantic!) purposes: a day free of chores, a back or foot massage, or something similar.

- **Scrapbooks.** Another use for photos: Create your own scrapbook around a family theme, a special place, a variety of activities, or anything else that has significance for your recipient.

- **Calendars.** Create a calendar using photos of family members—many photographic websites and print shops can help you do this. Or take a standard calendar and highlight special days throughout the year: birthdays, anniversaries, important events, etc.

- **Music.** Burn a CD of the person's favorite songs. Or have a child sing his or her parents' favorite song and record it.

Will the Grinch Steal Christmas?

How much do you plan to spend on gifts this holiday season? As you might imagine, economic turmoil has forced many Americans to cut back on their shopping. Still, in November 2010, Americans said they planned to spend an average of \$714 on presents, according to figures from the Gallup Organization.

That was actually an increase from the previous two years, when consumers said they anticipated spending an average of \$638 (2009) and \$616 (2008). But it's a fairly deep dip from the good old days of 2007, when Americans were looking at an average of \$866 on gifts for family and friends.



Who is Calling You?

It's only natural to get worried when a debt collector calls you about an overdue bill. Just don't panic. In a recent alert, the Better Business Bureau warned consumers about con artists who frighten consumers into surrendering their debit card numbers to pay off debts they don't really owe.

Scammers may have personal information about you that makes them seem legitimate, but don't be fooled. If you're not sure about the debt, you can request—or demand—written documentation of the bill before paying it. And never give your credit information to someone over the phone whose identity you're not sure of.

Food Mania?

Is your relentless sweet tooth, hankering for salt, or is the passion for fries all in your head? The many faces of addiction are recognized as more than a lack of self-control, and are linked to brain chemicals that drive compulsive behaviors. Consider dopamine; when stimulated, this brain chemical communicates satisfaction to the individual. Dopamine is triggered by exercise, sexual activity, cocaine, heroin, alcohol, nicotine, sugars, fats, and salt to name a few. When addiction is present, the amount of one's chosen substance must be continuously increased to exert the same level of satisfaction for the user; hence excessive behavior sets in.

Not only do brain chemicals drive behaviors, but behaviors in turn drive brain chemicals. One recent study from the Archives of General Psychiatry, using brain imaging showed similarities of the 'cerebral' response between compulsive eaters viewing milkshake images and alcoholics talking about martinis. In another study at Princeton University, rats were given sugar water daily. When the sugar effect was blocked with a drug, withdrawal symptoms occurred and addiction-like changes were noted in dopamine levels.

Depression and anxiety is also tied to brain chemistry and more prevalent among addictive personalities. Reversing unhealthy patterns begins with awareness. Embracing a healthy diet, regular activity, and adequate sleep will help to sustain a healthy chemical balance. Choose a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, unsaturated fats, lean meats and low fat dairy on a regular basis. Thirty to sixty minutes of activity throughout the day goes a long way, as does a good night's sleep. Need personal assistance? Contact your Wellness professionals at 648-3057.



ABCs of Diabetes

The *ABCs of Diabetes* is a proactive course through the Wellness Program that provides educations, screenings, and discounts for diabetes supplies and prescriptions. Here are a few of the benefits ABCs of Diabetes participants enjoy:

Benefits:

- Free eye and foot exams
- Free lipid, HbA1c, kidney function, and blood pressure screenings—two times each year
- Free glucose monitor

Reduced Rx Copayments:

- Generic tier copay \$4* retail or mail order
 - Preferred tier copay \$37.50* mail order
 - Non-preferred tier copay \$62.50* mail order
- *90-day supply

Save \$600 per year!

Education/Winter Haven:

- Medical Issues in Diabetes 01/05/12
- Nutrition & Exercise 01/12/12
- Advanced Diet Planning 01/19/12
- Hypertension & Heart Disease 01/26/12

Classes will be held at the Mark Wilcox Center, 611 Post Avenue SW, Winter Haven 33880.

All classes start at 4:30 PM, and registration is required.

Diabetes Screening:

The next diabetes screening will be held January 21, 2012, at Phillips, Salomon & Parrish, 215 First Street North, Winter Haven. Appointments are required.

Please email allison.sullins@polk-fl.net or call Allison Sullins, RD, LD/N at 648-3057 for more information or to schedule a diabetes screening appointment.

Holiday Safety for Pets

The hectic holiday season can be stressful for many people, but what about your furry, four-footed companion? Keep your canine safe and happy by following these tips from the American Kennel Club:

- Though humans enjoy cookies, chocolate, raisins and other sweets, these rich treats are dangerous for your canine. Chocolate can be harmful and sometimes fatal.
- While we may indulge in holiday libations, no dog should ever have access to alcohol.
- Onions, which are often a part of holiday cooking, can destroy a dog's red blood cells and lead to anemia. In addition, poultry bones can splinter and cause intestinal blockages.
- Avoid decorating your tree with strands of popcorn, or other items that might tempt your dog's appetite. Tinsel and angel hair can lead to upset stomach and possible intestinal blockage if ingested.
- When decorating with holiday lights, keep in mind that your dog or cat may try to chew the wires, causing electrocution. Tape wires to the wall or sides of the house or room.
- Both cats and dogs may find the tree water tempting to drink, so be sure to use pet friendly preservatives in the tree's water.
- Immediately dispose of wrapping paper, bows, yarn and curling ribbons after presents are opened to prevent ingestion.
- Poinsettias, holly and mistletoe may make your pet sick if the leaves, flowers or berries are chewed. Place holiday plants out of Fido's & Frisky's reach.



Source: www.akc.org

Cancer Screenings Can SAVE Your Life!

On-site cancer and osteoporosis screenings are provided to you by the Polk County School Board (PCSB) Wellness Program in conjunction with Lakeland Regional Cancer Center (LRCC). This **FREE** benefit is available to all employees and spouses who have PCSB Blue Cross/Blue Shield health insurance. For an appointment, please contact the Cancer Screening Coordinator at each location at least two weeks prior to the screening date. There are no age restrictions for cancer and osteoporosis screenings on the LRCC screening bus.

December 2011

- 12/1 KINGSFORD EL
- 12/2 MEDULLA EL
- 12/5 BEN HILL GRIFFIN JR. EL
- 12/6 MULBERRY SR
- 12/7 POLK CITY EL
- 12/8 DAVENPORT SOTA
- 12/12 PADGETT EL
- 12/13 DANIEL JENKINS ACAD

January 2012

- 1/5 FROSTPROOF MID/SR
- 1/6 FROSTPROOF MID/SR
- 1/9 ROOSEVELT ACAD
- 1/10 BARTOW EL
- 1/11 DUNDEE EL
- 1/12 DENISON MID
- 1/13 ALTURAS EL
- 1/17 LAKE ALFRED EL
- 1/18 BARTOW MID
- 1/19 BARTOW MID
- 1/20 ELBERT EL
- 1/24 BETHUNE ACAD
- 1/25 R. B. WAGNER EL
- 1/26 EASTSIDE EL
- 1/30 WINTER HAVEN SR
- 1/31 WINTER HAVEN SR

Get On The Bus!