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Healthyroads® Newsletter

Welcome to Healthyroads!

In this monthly newsletter, you'll find a collection of articles on popular health and wellness topics. If you'd like additional guidance and support in your quest to lose weight, improve nutrition, develop an exercise plan, reduce stress, or quit smoking and haven't discovered our Weight Management, Tobacco Cessation, and Wellness programs, we encourage you to call us today. **Some or all of these programs may have been purchased for you by your employer.** To take advantage of all that Healthyroads has to offer, call us toll-free at **877.330.2746** or visit us online at www.healthyroads.com®.

Wellness & Healthy Living

Skimp on Sugary Treats This Holiday Season

Brownies and cookies and cakes, oh my! It's that time of year again. This is the season when many people find themselves overindulging in sweet treats. But you can enjoy the holidays and still stick to your healthy eating goals. It just takes some planning and some conscious choices.

Let's begin with holiday drinks. Some of your favorite drinks may pack a lot more calories than you realize. Look at how many calories are in just one, eight-ounce glass of these classics:

- Eggnog (nonalcoholic): 343
- Hot chocolate (homemade with whole milk): 190
- Spiced apple cider: 117

Now imagine if you add alcohol, or if you go back for refills. Those calories can add up fast. To help guard your waistline this season, go easy on the holiday

drinks. Better yet, choose water or a diet drink. Offer sparkling water as one option to guests.

Sweets are another area where people often run into trouble. Try sharing a single dessert with a friend. Or bring a low-sugar dessert to a holiday party. Many dessert recipes can be changed to be healthier. Try cutting the sugar in your recipes by one-third to one-half. You could also use a sweet-tasting spice in place of some of the sugar. Try calorie-free cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, or vanilla.

Here are a few more tips to help make your menu lighter this holiday season:

- **Don't arrive to a party or an event hungry.** Eat a healthy snack before you leave home.
- **Drink plenty of water.** This can help keep you from filling up on sugary drinks.

- **Plan what you will eat.** At a party, dinner, or other event, look over all of your food options first. Then choose what and how much you will eat.
- **Step away from the buffet table.** Once you've chosen your food, find a place to eat or visit away from the food. This will keep you from grazing while you chat.
- **Take small portions.** You don't have to deny yourself—just take smaller portions and stop when you're full.

So try to skimp on sugar this season. But don't skimp on your health. Make a few small changes to your menu. The results just might surprise you by keeping you on a healthy track.

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Diet & Exercise

Working Out During the Winter Months

Getting outside to work out during the winter months can be fun and great for your body. An ice skating session or brisk winter walk to look at holiday lights can get your blood pumping and burn calories. It can also help lift your mood. But it's important to follow a few safety pointers when you're active outdoors in the winter.

Here are some tips to help keep your winter workouts safe:

- **Protect your body by wearing several layers of loose-fitting clothes.** As you warm up, you can start peeling layers. You can put them on again when your workout slows down. Also be sure to cover your ears, face, and hands. And keep in mind that mittens will keep your hands warmer than gloves. To warm up the air you breathe into your lungs, try putting a face mask or scarf over your mouth.
- **Cover your head.** Heat tends to escape quickly from your head. So always wear a hat when you step out into chilly air. This will help your whole body stay warmer.
- **Focus on your footwear.** Ice and snow can be slippery. Be sure you choose footwear with good traction. This will help prevent you from falling. Use boots or shoes that are waterproof and insulated. And remember to bring an extra pair of socks along

in case the ones you are wearing get wet. Wool or synthetic fabrics are better than cotton when you're working out in the cold.

- **Stock up on fluids.** It's easy to forget to drink enough water in cold weather. You may not feel thirsty for something cold. But keep in mind that you can still get dehydrated at this time of year. Drink plenty of fluids before, during, and after your workout. If you feel like drinking something hot, make sure it does not have any caffeine or alcohol in it. These types of drinks may make your body lose heat more quickly. Room temperature water works well, too.
- **Wear sunscreen.** Wintry weather probably doesn't make you think of slapping on sunscreen. But the glare of the sun's rays off snow can give you a painful sunburn. Make sure to put sunscreen on any exposed skin.

If you live in a winter wonderland, don't let a little snow get you off track this year. Build a snowman with your kids. Start a snowball fight. Or get out sledding or cross-country skiing. Bundle up, stay safe, and get moving outdoors this season.

Coach Tip:

A great way to ease your stress is to take a five-minute mental vacation. Close your eyes and picture a peaceful and relaxing place.





Hobbies and Healthy Habits for “Quitters”

Giving up smoking is no easy task. But there are many strategies that can help. One useful strategy is to find something—anything—to do with your hands and your time other than smoke. Picking up a new hobby or starting some new healthy habits are great ways to distract yourself from cravings. Think about something *else* that you might enjoy doing. Then give it a try.

Get Busy With Something Fun

To start, make a list of all the things you like to do. Better yet—ask yourself what you have always wanted to try. Maybe you’ve been meaning to join a local basketball or volleyball team. Perhaps you’ve dreamed about playing the piano or guitar. You could also do simple activities like:

- Visit the mall
- Plan a vacation
- Write a letter to a friend
- Go hiking

The possibilities are nearly endless. When you have a craving, simply go to your list.

Fight Cravings With Healthy Choices

Another helpful strategy is to replace your smoking habit with new, healthy habits. Keep a water bottle with you and sip water when you get cravings. Or, if you are used to having a cigarette in your hand or mouth, try munching on a healthy, low-calorie snack instead. You could try:

- Carrots
- Apple slices
- Sliced bell pepper
- Celery sticks

Break the Connection

Besides forming new habits, you may also need to change a few old ones. For instance, if pairing coffee and a cigarette in the morning has been part of your daily routine, you may want to skip your caffeine fix for a while. The same goes for drinking alcohol. You need to break the link between these habits and smoking. This will help you break free from tobacco’s grip.

Follow the Four A’s

There is no quick fix when it comes to quitting. But there are many things you can do to improve your chances. Remember the four A’s:

- **Avoid:** Pass up situations that may make you want to smoke.
- **Alter:** Mix up your day a bit. Don’t follow the same routine you did when you were a smoker.
- **Alternatives:** Carry sugarless gum, toothpicks, or crunchy veggies with you. This will help keep your hands and mouth busy.
- **Activities:** Start a new activity—make it your new pastime. In time, you may come to enjoy your new activity more than using tobacco.

By making small changes to your habits and picking up some new hobbies, you can help make smoking a thing of the past. And better health can become part of your future.



Serious About Quitting?

We at Healthyroads understand the challenges of quitting smoking. That’s why we offer a comprehensive Tobacco Cessation program that provides you with the best techniques to help you quit—once and for all. From our phone-based coaching program and educational materials to our online resources and discounted nicotine replacement therapy products, we give you every chance to succeed. For anyone considering quitting smoking, take the first step and contact us today at **877.330.2746** or visit www.healthyroads.com.

Echinacea: An Effective Herb

It's cold and flu season again. And when runny noses, sore throats, and fever hit, many people reach for echinacea. The jury is still out on whether this herb is an effective way to fight colds and flu. But echinacea does help fire up the immune system. And, when taken at the first sign of a cold or flu bug, it may shorten the length of the illness.

There are three types of echinacea:

- Echinacea angustifolia

- Echinacea purpurea

- Echinacea pallida

Echinacea purpurea may be the best at helping people feel better faster. One study found that taking this type improved several cold and flu symptoms. These include runny nose, sore throat, sneezing, and fatigue.

You can find echinacea at natural food stores and many drugstores. Echinacea comes in pill form, teas, and tinctures. But not all forms and brands of

echinacea are equal in quality. If you are interested in trying this herb, make sure to buy a high quality product. Ask the staff or pharmacist at your local natural food or drugstore.

Also let your doctor know before you start taking any herbal supplement. He or she can make sure the herb will not react with any medicines you may be taking.



Mind-Body Techniques Say "So Long" to Stressful Holidays

This season is supposed to be about spreading hugs, laughter, and good cheer. But sometimes stress can get in the way of a happy holiday season. Shopping trips, crowds, bills, and family issues can come between you and a relaxing holiday. Add high expectations to the mix, and you have a recipe for high stress.

The holidays don't have to be so stressful, though. Follow these tips to help take the pressure off this season.

- **Make a budget and stick to it.** Plan out how many gifts you will buy and how much money you will spend. Then stick to the plan.
- **Set realistic goals.** You may not be able to live up to your vision of the "perfect holiday." And you don't have to. Do what you can; let go of the rest.
- **Plan ahead.** Plan your menus and holiday activities in advance. Put together a shopping list before hitting the store so

you'll get everything you need. Say "no" to events if it looks like your schedule is getting too hectic.

- **Take care of yourself.** Try not to let your healthy habits slide. Get enough sleep. Take an extra lap around the mall to stretch and exercise your legs. Go easy on the sweet treats. And don't forget to take a breather if you need to.

Keep these tips in mind as you plan events with family and friends this season. They just might help you keep your holidays simple, stress-free, and a lot more enjoyable.

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