



Chiropractic Miracles

Delivering You the Best Word in Wellness and Natural Health Care

Dr. Bennett's Breakthrough Patient Newsletter...

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Dear Patient and Friend,

For many people, the holidays is a source of boundless joy and connection, whereas for others, it is stressful and difficult – planning dinners, shopping for gifts, coordinating complicated schedules and accommodating everyone else's time crunch can be challenging.

That's why it's essential that you stay consistent with your health and wellness practices throughout the holiday season. Eat well, get enough exercise, and make some quiet time for yourself to still your internal dialogue and dial into the larger meaning of this time of year – to move into a place of peace and love, and to be grateful for all of your many blessings.

The First of January is a culture-wide demarcation point for new beginnings, but those in the know realize that generating some momentum by ending the year strong is an often overlooked advantage that will give you a head start on 2014.

For starters, you can indulge your sweet tooth a bit, but don't go overboard – moderate your food intake, especially sugary foods, and you'll be less anxious. And when you shop, if the weather isn't too bad, park a decent distance from the store, and get a little walking in – it will center you and give you a chance to stretch your legs and tone your muscles. You may want to stop in on your family chiropractor, too – getting a tune-up prior to the hustle-bustle of holiday preparation is smart.

Be thinking about the health habits you'd like to commit to next year, and don't wait – put your toe in the water now and test it out. You'll get through the chaos of the holidays that much better, and hit the ground running in the New Year!

Common Holiday Stresses and How to Cope

'Tis the season to be jolly, but we all know that this time of year carries a good amount of work, not to mention the scrambling to accommodate the changes in work schedule, school schedule, and travel schedule.

Rather than being victimized by the seasonal challenges, you can address them by hitting them head on, and harnessing the power of the holidays to work for you, instead of against you.

For example, holiday shopping is rough physically and emotionally – not only do you spend long hours walking around malls, waiting on lines, and toting heavy packages to the car, but you also have to deal with the decision-making – who gets what, how much can you spend, how do you reward kids without spoiling them, how do you balance your gift-giving with your current financial status, and many other riddles to solve.

Let's take these challenges one at a time, and see if we can come up with some healthy responses to guide you through the holiday tumult.

First, let's look at the physical stress and strain of preparing for the holidays.

If you're going to drive to shop, position your car seat for maximum comfort and support. If you are going to put packages in the back seat, gain easy access, and avoid off-center lifts and struggles. You may be better off using your trunk, which can usually be loaded without any twisting or unbalanced lifting. Clear out your trunk before you go, so you have plenty of room to load in gifts without hurting yourself.

When you are walking around town or in the mall, you don't need to re-invent the wheel... just use some. Most shopping establishments will provide you with a cart or wagon to carry your purchases – accept them and utilize them, to prevent unnecessary lifting and carrying injuries. When you lift items out of the cart and into your car, bend your knees, and let your legs do the lifting instead of your back.

If you have to wait on a long line, adjust your stance so you are not putting all your weight on one leg. Divide your weight evenly over both hips, and if you feel stiff, move around, always coming back to that balanced posture.



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If you have to carry heavy packages, either maintain your balance by separating them into equal weight on both sides, or make more than one trip – most malls have a pick up area where you can drive your car to make it a bit easier to transfer your gifts. Pace yourself, and if need be, ask for help – most stores have someone to help customers this time of year.

When you are preparing for your meals, it may require you to cook dinner for ten, twenty or more guests. When shopping, follow the same rules for gift-carrying – used wheeled vehicles, balance your lifting, get help when necessary, and use good lifting mechanics when you

are called upon to move heavy packages, like turkeys, canned goods, or bags of ice.

Speaking of party preparation, that often produces emotional stress too -- getting your invitations out, remembering who doesn't want to sit near whom, and putting lots of kids in a room at the same time can be unsettling. You may discover that taking a few minutes of quiet time, just to collect yourself and get ready for the extra activity, can be enough to calm your nerves.

Seasonal finances are often at the center of holiday stress, so a little planning can relieve the pressure. As Steven Covey taught us in "The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People" begin with the end in mind – decide how much you have to spend, distribute that amount over those you want to acknowledge with a gift, so you go into the financial end of the holiday season with a game plan.

A quick word about family stresses, perhaps the toughest of all to deal with. Tempers may flare, and differences may be magnified -- that's the time we must remember that the theme of the holidays is peace on earth and good will toward our fellow man and woman – keep it in mind, and be sure to apply it, even if someone you encounter seems to have forgotten it.

Anthony Robbins tells us that nothing has any meaning except the meaning we give it – choose to make your holiday season loving and fun, and you'll find that your stresses melt away like so much frost in the winter sun.

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8 Tips To A Lighter Holiday Dinner

Food Network published this list of pointers from Toby Amidor (Healthy Holidays, Healthy Tips, December 13, 2012), suggesting some simple ways to reshape your holiday eating to make it less fattening.

#1: Baked Ham -- Stick to 3 to 4 ounce portions and lessen the amount of salt added to flavor the ham or use lower-sodium versions.

#2: Jelly Doughnuts -- Opt for 2 or 3 minis and then step away from the dessert table!

#3: Egg Nog -- Swap low or nonfat milk for heavy cream or whole milk. Measure out the alcohol at about 1 ½ fluid ounces MAX per serving or just make it a virgin cocktail.

#4: Holiday Cookies -- Go lighter on the toppings—use half the amount of nuts or other add-ins. You can also choose 60-70% dark chocolate to get more of those good-for-you antioxidants.

#5: Potato Pancakes -- To lessen the calories, swap out some of the potatoes for carrots or parsnips. Keep the size small and stick with 1 tablespoon reduced-fat sour cream or homemade applesauce.

#6: Heavy Casseroles -- Use small amounts of freshly-grated strongly-flavored cheese (like Parmesan or Gruyere) to add flavor—a little goes a long way.

#7: Holiday Cocktails -- It's easy to keep calories in check by ordering simple. Sip on a glass of wine (5 fluid ounces has about 100 calorie) or beer (12-fluid ounces has about 150 calories).

#8: Dips -- Substitute reduced-fat Greek yogurt for mayo in most dips and stick with 2 tablespoon portions to keep calories under control.

Enjoy your holiday dinner, but be smart about cutting the right corners to make your meal healthier – it will still taste great, and you'll have less extra weight to make New Year's Resolutions about!



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