This Holiday Season Smile More and Stress Less!

The holidays can be a stressful and demanding time of year. Many of us find ourselves forgetting to prioritize self-care as we struggle to juggle a never-ending to-do list: holiday cooking and baking, entertaining guests, cleaning, shopping, and much more. According to the American Psychology Association, at least 61% of Americans experience increased levels of stress during the holidays. The good news is that there is still time to be proactive and strategize how not to become a “stressed out statistic!” Below are some of the leading holiday stressors and some strategies to keep up on your self-care and manage your stress this holiday season:

Lack of Time: Starting early with holiday prep eases the stress of the season. While there is still time between now and the upcoming holidays, the calendar is your secret weapon! Take a moment to slow down decide what gatherings are important for you to attend, plan menus and consider gift ideas. Make lists of items you will need and stores you need to go to. By organizing and grouping tasks together ahead of time you can minimize the stress of last minute scrambling.

Lack of Money: The atmosphere that we all love about the holidays (the music, lights, toys, food, etc.) can also cause us to break our normal spending habits. Setting boundaries on your spending before the holidays is a great way to beat the seduction of holiday temptation. Stretching your holiday budget can be easier than you think. Make a spending plan which may include gifts, holiday food, wrapping paper, decorations and travel. Decide how much you want to spend on each person and track it by writing it down. Always shop with a list and shop early as last minute shoppers tend to spend more. Last but not least, remember that the holiday memories that last aren’t the gifts you buy but the traditions you create and the time you spend with family and friends.

Staying Healthy: This holiday season is packed with gatherings, work parties, and family events which almost always revolve around food. Making healthy choices doesn’t have to be a stressor and can fit into your schedule if you have a plan. Staying active can help you manage stress and burn off extra holiday calories. Even just 10 minutes of movement per day is beneficial, such as a walk or short online workout video. To balance out your treat intake consume one “splurge” food each day and focus on eating protein, fruits, vegetables and healthy snacks throughout the rest of the day. Eating well and staying active during the holidays can be just as enjoyable as splurging on treats.

Quick Tip: Try to avoid being at stores during peak times such as the post office at lunch time or mall on the weekends.

Quick Tip: Focus on socializing, not on food. Conversation is calorie free! Get up and mingle at parties, helping you eat less and enjoy your company more!

Simple, Meaningful and Affordable Gift Ideas

- Potted Plants
- DIY Tea Bags!
- Beauty Products For Her
- Flavored Toothpicks
- Beard Oil For Him

Be Well is an employee wellness program provided through Eastern Highlands Health District with funding through the CT Dept. of Public Health. The goal of the program is to make the healthy choice the easy choice.

Phone: 860.429.3361
Fax: 860.429.3321
Email: be_well@ehhd.org

Garlic-Parmesan Roasted Vegetables

Ingredients:
- 2 pounds Brussels sprouts, Asparagus and/or Turnips
- 1 small lemon, sliced
- 4 cloves garlic, sliced
- 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme or 1 teaspoon dried
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground pepper
- 1/3 cup finely shredded Parmesan cheese
- 1/4 cup toasted pine nuts

Instructions:
1. Position racks in upper and lower third of oven; preheat to 425 degrees.
2. Toss vegetables, lemon, garlic, oil, thyme, salt and pepper in a large bowl. Divide between 2 large rimmed baking sheets and spread in even layer.
3. Roast without stirring for 10 minutes. Switch the pans top to bottom and continue roasting, without stirring, until lightly browned and tender, about 8-10 minutes. Transfer to a serving dish and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese and pine nuts.

Source: www.eatingwell.com

Winter Health and Safety Tips

Although winter in New England can allow us to participate in many fun winter sports and it creates a beautiful landscape, there are still precautions we need to take such as keeping an emergency supply kit on hand and being prepared for the lights to go out.

Click Here to Learn More!

QUICK TIP: Health In a Shaker Bottle

Making time to eat healthy can be challenging around the holidays, “Blender Bottle” smoothies are a tasty, quick and nutritious solution to getting lots of nutrients in on the run. Click Here to Learn More!

How to Stay Hydrated and Prevent Dry Skin this Winter

During the summer we're very aware of how dehydrated we can get. In the winter, dehydration is just as dangerous. Symptoms associated with dehydration include headaches, body aches, confusion, and/or dry, flaky skin. If you don’t have any of these symptoms you will be able to tell if you’re dehydrated if your urine is dark or even yellow. Follow these simple steps to keep your body well hydrated this winter:
- Use a humidifier in your house
- Take a long shower or bath and then seal in the moisture with lotion or a natural oil such as coconut oil. Very hot showers can worsen dry skin
- Grow plants indoors. Plants can help keep moisture in the air (be sure to water them frequently!)
- Eat hydrating produce such as apples, celery, carrots and melon
- Be creative with your water intake. Keep an electronic kettle in your office for hot tea (try to consume caffeine free tea)
- Avoid eating processed, sugary and salty foods

Based on last month’s poll, people are most thankful for family, friends and good health!

This Month’s Poll:
Do You Plan On Setting a New Year’s Resolution? If so, what is it?!
Click Here to Take Poll!