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Finding Time for Fitness Over the Holidays

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The holiday season is almost here. Trying to balance holiday parties, shopping, baking, cleaning, entertaining and work may lead to some stressful times. What about eating healthy or physical activity? Finding time for fitness over the holidays may be hard because of the cooler weather and busy schedules.

Including physical activity during the holiday season can help you prevent weight gain and release stress. Here are three tips to help you fit in fitness over the holiday season.

Tip #1: Schedule activity into your daily routine

Schedule your physical activity in advance by putting it on your calendar and treat it like an important appointment. Incorporate physical activity you enjoy doing at the most convenient time to accomplish your fitness goals during the busy holiday season.

The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans issued by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommend adults aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity each week. Set a goal for 30 minutes of physical activity on most days. Do not worry about getting all 30 minutes of exercise done at one time. As long as the aerobic activity is performed at a moderate effort for at least 10 minutes at a time, it still counts towards your 30 minutes.



Tip #2: Incorporate easy activities to get moving during the holidays

Including these activities will help achieve your physical activity goals:

- Park at the far end of the parking lot.
- Take extra laps around the store before checking out.
- Use the stairs instead of escalators.
- Include mall walking to enjoy the decorations while window shopping.
- Dance to your favorite holiday music.
- Work out at home to an exercise DVD.

Tip #3: Create healthy holiday traditions

Adding seasonal activities to your holidays can be fun and also create healthier holiday traditions. Walk around your neighborhood instead of riding in your car to look at holiday lights and decorations. Incorporate winter activities such as sledding, ice skating, snow skiing, or taking a winter nature hike. After a holiday dinner, organize a walk, basketball or football game to catch up with family members while incorporating fun physical activities.