

# HEALTHY LIVING

Wellness Newsletter from **AAOA**

DECEMBER 2014

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# Party Time: 7 Secrets to Lighten Up the Festivities

Celebrate the season without letting excess calories weigh you down.

The holidays aren't the easiest time to try to lose those extra pounds, but it still pays to be calorie-conscious. You can enjoy yourself and help steady the scale during this season of celebrations.

## **Guests: Party With a Plan**

Before you head out to a gathering, decide your best food-smart strategies. For example, you might try these ideas:

- 1. Head Off Hunger.** Have a snack before an event. A piece of fruit and a small handful of nuts may help you avoid racing straight for the rum cake.
- 2. Find Your Favorites.** Browse the buffet before you dish up. Pick out one or two dishes you can't turn down or can't get any other time of the year. Take small portions of those items to savor. Then fill the rest of your plate with vegetables, fruit or whole grains, if available.
- 3. Aim for Last Place.** Head for the back of the serving line, and try to eat slowly. That way you'll be last to start and finish eating. This stalling strategy may help you be less tempted to go back for seconds, since others will be done eating.
- 4. Mingle the Night Away.** Keep your focus on friends, family and fun. Find a spot away from the food to do your socializing.

## **Hosts: Entertain With Good Health in Mind**

With these tips, you can host a memorable affair where the mood and fare are light:

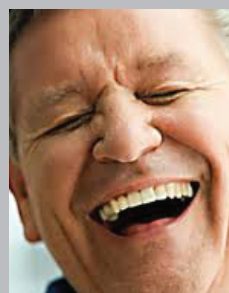
- 1. Set Out a Wholesome Spread.** Again, platters of fresh fruit and veggies will hit the mark.
- 2. Offer Petite Plates.** Smaller dishware can mean reasonable portions.
- 3. Give Parting Gifts.** Don't get stuck with all the excess calories. Stock up on disposable containers and send leftovers home with your guests.

## Check Your List Twice...For Recalls

Find out if any of your child's toys have been recalled for safety issues such as unsafe lead levels, choking risks or other hazards. Visit [cpsc.gov](http://cpsc.gov), and click on "Recalls." Be especially cautious with items purchased secondhand, for instance, at a garage sale or thrift store.

Sources: National Center for Infants, Toddlers, and Families; Safe Kids USA

## Under Pressure: Chuckle, Don't Buckle



Think of humor as stress medicine. In fact, watching your favorite sitcom on TV or streaming a standup act or funny video on your laptop can be more than idle pleasure. The laughter it provokes may help your body fight stress.





## Planning Ahead: 5 Steps to Rock-Solid Resolutions

Make this the year for healthy lifestyle changes that last.

Why are resolutions often so short-lived? Some might be history even before the last of the New Year's Eve confetti is swept from the street.

Experts in human behavior will tell you that lasting change takes more than one shot. It takes time, patience and effort and maybe most important: a solid plan.

### Rock Your Resolutions

Whatever your goals, here are tips to change for the better and for good:

**1. Be Single-Minded.** It's easier to work on one habit at a time than to take on too much. When your first resolution becomes routine, you can tackle another. In fact, think of your efforts as a way of life not just a new-year flurry.

**2. Nail Down Your Goal.** Take a vague or broad idea and make it a clearly stated target.

**3. Set Mini Milestones.** It's good to have an ultimate goal, but smaller successes are what will get you there. So try setting realistic, short-term steps to reach and then build on those.

**4. Study Your Slipups.** Don't let a misstep rattle your resolve or have you calling it quits. Instead, use it as motivation. Keep track of your ups and downs in a journal. You may begin to see trends, triggers and common challenges.

The support of others can help you keep a promise to yourself. And friends and loved ones can make the journey to better health more fun and rewarding too.

You might even inspire those you care about to take better care of themselves. Now that's a happy new year!

## Joyful Holidays: Spend and Stress Less!

Help protect your peace of mind and your pocketbook with these tips for a joyful, budget-friendly season.

Worries about finances are a common cause of stress, particularly this time of year. They can definitely put a damper on holiday happiness.

Of course, there's the other side of the coin, too. Some of us get so carried away with all the merriment that we don't realize just how much we're spending. That is, until the bills and the stress come rolling in.

### Reflect For a Bit

What do the holidays mean to you? For some, it's about connecting with family and friends. For others, it's a time for spiritual reflection or worship. Think about what matters to you. You may realize that you need to shift your mindset to what's most meaningful.

### Get Real About Your Budget

Now that you've put things in perspective, sit down and set a realistic budget. If you have children, you might talk with them about their expectations for gifts, and then you can consider what's manageable.

Depending on the age of your kids, this can also be an opportunity for a chat about responsible spending. Try to keep these conversations upbeat so children don't become anxious about family finances.

Focus on inexpensive ways to enjoy the season together. You might walk your neighborhood to see the festive lights. Or, bake cookies for a local senior center. This can help children understand that the holidays aren't about expensive gifts or piles of presents.

### Think Outside the Gift Box

Here's a fun and affordable idea for those on your list: Give the gift of time, your time, with redeemable coupons. Make them thoughtful and person-specific. Remember: If you go this route, it's not just the thought that counts. Be sure to follow through on your gift.



# Holiday Cheer: Drink Responsibly

*Do you plan to ring in the holidays with a cup of cheer?*

When you enjoy the festivities this year, be sure you do so with an eye toward responsible drinking.

## These Three Tips Can Help:

**1. Practice Moderation.** Moderate drinking generally means no more than one drink a day for women and no more than two for men.

Some people should drink less — or not at all (see tip No. 3). One drink is about:

- 12 ounces of beer, ale or wine cooler
  - 8 or 9 ounces of malt liquor
  - 5 ounces of wine
  - 1.5 ounces of 80-proof distilled spirits or 1 ounce of 100-proof distilled spirits
- Be especially careful with mixed drinks, such as homemade punch. It can be hard to tell how much alcohol you're getting.

**2. Never EVER Drink and Drive.** Even if you don't feel buzzed, your skills behind the wheel may be impaired. So, make sure you have a designated driver before going out. Or, find

another safe way home, such as by taxi or public transportation.

If you're hosting the party, look after your guests. Recruit nondrinkers to help get others home safely. Have phone numbers for local cab companies or shuttles handy. Serve plenty of nonalcoholic beverages, too.

**3. Know When to Skip It.** You should avoid alcohol altogether if you:

- Are younger than 21
- Plan to drive
- Are or may be pregnant or are trying to become pregnant
- Take medications that can interact with alcohol
- Have a health problem that could be affected by alcohol
- Are especially sensitive to alcohol's effects
- Have trouble controlling your drinking or are recovering from alcoholism

### When It's a Problem

Do you have questions about alcohol use and your health? Or, is drinking in moderation difficult for you? If so, be sure to talk with your doctor for answers and help.

## DECEMBER WELLNESS TIP



Sheridah Bennett  
(AAOA Wellness Champion)

## Wellness Tip

### Feeling Fried?

Are you feeling caught up in the holiday frenzy? Take a few minutes to list five things that you are most thankful for. This will help to redirect your mood and your focus during the holidays.

# Turkey Lasagna

Give your leftover turkey an Italian twist with this easy, healthful and hearty lasagna.



### Ingredients

- 6 whole-wheat lasagna noodles
- Canola oil cooking spray
- 1 medium onion, chopped into medium pieces
- 1½ pounds (4 to 5 cups) cooked turkey breast, diced
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 15 ounces low-fat ricotta cheese
- 1 large egg, beaten
- 1 10-ounce package frozen spinach, cooked per package directions, well-drained
- 3 cups low-sodium marinara sauce
- 1 cup part-skim milk mozzarella cheese, shredded

### Directions

1. Preheat oven to 375° F.
2. Cook lasagna noodles according to package directions. Set aside on cloth towel.
3. Spray large skillet with cooking spray. Over medium heat, cook onion until soft. Add turkey. Cook until heated through. Stir in oregano.
4. In medium bowl, mix together ricotta, egg and spinach.
5. Place 1 cup sauce in the bottom of 13-by-9-inch baking dish. Spread to cover the bottom. Layer with 3 lasagna noodles, half the ricotta cheese mixture and half the turkey mixture. Repeat

layering, starting with sauce. Follow with cheese, then turkey mixture. Top with mozzarella.

6. Cover with aluminum foil. Bake for 40 minutes. Remove foil. Bake for an additional 10 to 15 minutes or until bubbling and top is golden-brown. Let stand for 10 minutes before serving.

### Nutrition Facts

Yields 8 Servings

Amount Per Serving

Calories 290 g	Fiber 3g
Fat 8g	Protein 34g
Sodium 280mg	Carbohydrates 22g

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