

# A Healthier You

Compliments of Health Management & Wellness

Fall/Winter 2017

## Be well

There's a chill in the air, the leaves are beginning to change colors and the days have gotten shorter. These are just a few things that signal a change from fall to winter, a time when it becomes more challenging to maintain your personal best health. Your exercise routine becomes more difficult due to the weather. The hustle and bustle of the holiday season makes you too busy to eat healthy, the way you'd like to – not to mention all those yummy snacks that are so tempting at holiday and office parties. And shorter, grayer days may cause you to feel a little down. It's important to have a plan and be intentional to help you feel your best this winter.



## Beat the winter blues

For many people, the holiday season brings all sorts of emotions. You may feel joy and excitement, but also stress, sadness and everything in between. It's not uncommon to feel down during the holidays. Here are some tips to help you beat the winter blues:

- **Lay off the cocktails.** Alcohol and the holidays may go hand in hand. And you may be tempted to drink more when you're feeling stressed or depressed. Avoid the temptation to drown your sorrows. Alcohol is a depressant. So if you are feeling depressed, it could make things worse.
- **Give from the heart.** Don't break the bank and cause yourself added stress trying to top last year's extravagant gift. Give gifts from the heart.
- **Missing a loved one?** If you always spent the holidays with a loved one who is no longer with you, avoid the temptation to stay home and dwell on your loss. Start a new tradition to help you take your mind off things. Try starting an annual holiday lunch with friends or volunteer to serve dinner to the less fortunate.
- **Practice gratitude.** Make it a habit to start and end your day by reflecting on the things – and people – you are most grateful for.

If you experience feelings of sadness or depression for an extended period of time, contact your doctor. He or she can help you find a solution so you can get back to enjoying your life.



## Get moving

Make exercise a priority. Not only is it good for your physical health, it can do wonders for your mental health. Here are some tips to help you beat the temptation to hibernate during the cooler months:

- **Walk the mall.** Head out to take a brisk stroll through your local mall. (You might want to leave your money at home!)
- **Group activity.** There are group classes for just about any fitness level and interest. Try classes like Zumba, Pilates, kickboxing or any other fun fitness class.
- **Take up a sport.** Activities like ice skating and football are a fun way to get up, get moving and break a sweat, even when it's cold outside.
- **Set a goal.** Register for a winter or spring race such as a 5k walk/run. Signing up for a race can keep you focused on fitness, even in the dead of winter.
- **Two in one.** Put some energy into chores like raking the leaves. Not only do you get your chores done, but you can also burn more than 200 calories with just 30 minutes of activity.



*BlueChoice HealthPlan is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.*



## Beat holiday diet-busters

Healthy food options can be limited at holiday gatherings. Try these tips to help you stay on track during the holidays:

- **Don't arrive hungry.** Have a healthy snack or a small, healthy meal and drink plenty of water before you head out to a holiday party. This can help you maintain self-control and avoid overeating.
- **Watch your portions.** Try using a smaller plate and pile it high with food. If the host encourages a second serving, politely decline.
- **Eat at a slow pace.** It takes 20 minutes for the brain to get the signal that you are no longer hungry. Eating slowly gives the brain time to process the fact that you are full.
- **Stay occupied.** If you attend parties, enjoy the company of others by socializing, networking or dancing to divert your attention from the food. This can help you avoid mindless eating.
- **Host your own party.** Being the host of your own party allows you to plan a healthy menu.
- **Go easy on the alcohol.** Alcoholic beverages have a ton of empty calories and no nutritional value. Replace some of the alcoholic drinks with water to cut back on calories and stay hydrated.
- **Stay motivated.** If you splurge, don't use that as a reason to give up. Each day gives you the opportunity to start brand-new.

Ready to get on track with your health but not sure where to start? Call 855-838-5897 to connect with a coach.