

LIVE WELL. WORK WELL.

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HEALTH & WELLBEING TIPS FOR YOUR WORK & LIFE

PRESENTED BY IRONWOOD, A MARSH MCLENNAN AGENCY LLC COMPANY



Prioritizing Your Emotional Well-being During the Holidays

While the holiday season and end-of-year parties can be full of festive fun, they can also be stressful and take a toll on your emotional well-being. Putting your emotional wellness on the backburner may cause mood changes and feelings of irritability, hopelessness and isolation.



The holidays can be a stressful time due to the intensified focus on family, work and money.

As holiday celebrations pick up, consider the following tips to help prioritize your emotional well-being:

- **Practice healthy habits.** Maintaining a consistent sleep schedule and eating a balanced diet will help ensure you have enough physical and mental energy to tackle responsibilities and challenges.
- **Stick to a routine.** It's important to keep a daily schedule for both work and personal time. Checking items off your to-do list can also help you feel accomplished on a daily basis.

- **Decrease caffeine and alcohol use.** Although alcohol and caffeine often appear at celebrations, these substances can provoke feelings of depression, anxiety or other mental health challenges.
- **Maintain your boundaries.** Your calendar may quickly fill up with work, personal and social events. Get comfortable saying “no” and reducing extra activities or tasks so you aren't overloaded.
- **Incorporate positive activities.** Get into the habit of taking care of yourself and doing activities that make you happy. During a fast-paced month, it's vital to slow down and prioritize self-care.
- **Recognize your holiday stress triggers and relievers.** Financial pressures and personal demands are common triggers. Stress may cause you to lean on harmful stress relievers and fall into unhealthy habits like smoking or drinking.

It's essential to stay in tune with your feelings and care for yourself. If you have concerns about your emotional well-being, contact a mental health professional or contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline by calling or texting **988**.

SQUASH-APPLE CASSEROLE

Makes: 6 servings

INGREDIENTS

2 ½ cups winter squash (such as acorn, butternut or hubbard)

1 ½ cups apples (cooking, such as Macintosh, Granny Smith or Rome)

½ teaspoon nutmeg

1 teaspoon cinnamon

PREPARATIONS

1. Wash and prepare squash and apples (for extra fiber, keep peel on apples).
2. Alternate layers of squash and apples in 8x8 inch pan; end with apples.
3. Sprinkle spices over top layer.
4. Cover with aluminum foil.
5. Bake at 350 degrees for 45-60 minutes, until squash is tender.

NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION (per serving)

Total calories	35
Total fat	0g
Protein	1 g
Sodium	2 mg
Carbohydrate	9 g
Dietary fiber	2 g
Saturated fat	0 g
Total sugars	4 g

Source: MyPlate

Giving Your Favorite Recipes a Healthy Makeover

Food is part of holiday traditions, and your family may look forward to certain recipes. Luckily, there are some ways to make your favorite holiday recipes a bit healthier. Consider the following tips to transform your holiday recipes:

- **Fat**—For baked goods, use half the butter or oil and replace the other half with unsweetened applesauce, mashed banana or Greek yogurt.
- **Salt**—Gradually cut back the salt to see if you can taste the difference. You can reduce salt by half if baked goods don't require yeast.
- **Sugar**—Reduce the amount of sugar by one-third to one-half. Instead, add spices like cinnamon, cloves, allspice and nutmeg, or flavorings such as vanilla or almond extract to boost sweetness.

Healthy swaps can also increase the nutritional value of your classics. Get creative and experiment with other ways of creating healthy recipes for your most beloved holiday traditions.

Healthy Holiday Baking Tips

Boost the nutrient value of your recipes with these substitutions



Fruit

Shred or puree apples, pears, carrots, banana or pumpkin



Whole-grain flours

Either full substitution or mix half whole-grain and half refined flour



Nuts and seeds

Sprinkle in chopped nuts and seeds or top before baking

Walk to Lower Your Risk of Chronic Disease

You likely already know that walking is good for your health, but how much do you need to walk daily to produce health benefits? You've also probably heard that a 10,000 steps-per-day goal is good for you. However, that number originated from a Japanese marketing campaign rather than health research.

A new study from Vanderbilt University Medical Center explored how many daily steps a person should take to promote good health. The research studied fitness trackers and revealed that walking 8,200 steps a day was the threshold at which a person begins to significantly lower their risk of developing various chronic diseases. Specific chronic conditions noted included obesity, sleep apnea, gastroesophageal reflux disease, major depressive disorder, diabetes and high blood pressure. The study also concluded that walking more steps than the threshold continues to increase the proven benefits of walking.

