

# Holiday Fitness Survival Guide



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## Introduction

Welcome to the Holiday Survival Guide. The holiday season is meant to be enjoyed. It's a time to give thanks and celebrate the birth of Christ with friends and family members. Unfortunately, the season can also be the most stressed, lonely and unhealthy time of the year.

The average person can gain 6-15lbs from November 1<sup>st</sup> through January 1<sup>st</sup>. Busy schedules, holiday parties and stress lead to this dramatic weight gain. More importantly, this lifestyle is unhealthy and prevents us from our ultimate goal of becoming fit.

Over the next several pages you will read how to best use the Holiday Survival Guide. The manual is not just another "workout" plan. Our goal is that you will not only "survive" but thrive during this wonderful time.

Read over this manual thoroughly in order to get the best results possible from the program. If at any point you have questions or concerns, please email me at [info@fitness-101.com](mailto:info@fitness-101.com) and I'll do my best to help you out. Happy Holidays!

### ***Disclaimer***

***\*\*\*The Holiday Survival Guide is for educational purposes only. It is not medical advice and is not intended to replace the advice or attention of health-care professionals. **Get your Doctors approval** before starting any type of new exercise or nutrition plan – especially if you have existing or pre-existing injuries. \*\*\****

Most of us already know the benefits of proper exercise, nutrition and rest. Unfortunately, during the holidays our priorities can become a bit misaligned and we begin to sacrifice this area.

Exercise, nutrition and rest not only helps prevent weight gain, they also fight the stress and anxiety that commonly accompanies this time of year. When we exercise, eat right and get plenty of rest, our bodies actually produce hormones called catecholamines that help elevate our mood and fight off stress, depression and anxiety. Conversely, when we take our physical bodies for granted, our body actually produces cortisol. Cortisol is the stress hormone and it can lead to increases in fat production and storage as well as stress levels. Needless to say, the holidays are no time to stop exercising.

The next several pages contain workouts, nutrition tips and recipes. The plans are designed to be fast, efficient and effective.

## 4 Fast, Fat-Blasting Bodyweight Workouts

It is possible to become extremely busy over the holiday season. But being busy is no reason to be unhealthy. Below are 4 workouts that you can do anywhere, anytime. All of the workouts are designed to take 15-20 minutes and only use the best piece of workout equipment: Your Body.

Perform the following exercises in circuit format completing one exercise after another with minimal rest. Follow the work-to-rest ratios as closely as possible. The first number is the amount of seconds you will exercise. The second number is the rest time. Therefore a 30/15 represents 30 seconds of work followed by 15 seconds of rest. During the rest time you will prepare for the next exercise. Perform as many rounds as possible in 15-20 minutes. Each time the workout is completed, the work-to-rest ratio changes slightly to increase results. Be sure to make a note of the changes.

### Workout #1

<b>Workout #1</b>	<b>Session 1</b>	<b>Session 2</b>	<b>Session 3</b>	<b>Session 4</b>
Lunges	30/15	30/10	35/15	35/10
Plank Walkouts	30/15	30/10	35/15	35/10
Hip Extension Marching	30/15	30/10	35/15	35/10
V-ups	30/15	30/10	35/15	35/10
Mountain Climbers	30/15	30/10	35/15	35/10
Jumping Jacks	30/15	30/10	35/15	35/10

### Workout #2

<b>Workout #2</b>	<b>Session 1</b>	<b>Session 2</b>	<b>Session 3</b>	<b>Session 4</b>
Step out Squat	15/15	20/15	20/10	25/10
Push ups	15/15	20/15	20/10	25/10
Superman Hold	15/15	20/15	20/10	25/10
Single Leg Deadlifts	15/15	20/15	20/10	25/10
Spiderman	15/15	20/15	20/10	25/10
Burpees	15/15	20/15	20/10	25/10

### Workout #3

<b>Workout #3</b>	<b>Session 1</b>	<b>Session 2</b>	<b>Session 3</b>	<b>Session 4</b>
Lateral Lunges	30/15	35/15	40/15	45/15
Cross Mountain Climbers	30/15	35/15	40/15	45/15
X- Situps	30/15	35/15	40/15	45/15
Single Leg Hip Extensions	30/15	35/15	40/15	45/15
Plank Jacks	30/15	35/15	40/15	45/15
Jump Squats	30/15	35/15	40/15	45/15

### Workout #4

Perform the following workout in a circuit format. Complete the repetitions listed for each exercise resting only as needed between exercises. Complete as many rounds as possible in 15-20 minutes.

<b>Workout #4</b>	<b>Session 1</b>	<b>Session 2</b>	<b>Session 3</b>	<b>Session 4</b>
Burpees	8	8	10	10
Russian Twist	8	8	10	10
1 Leg V-ups	8	8	10	10
Hip Extension/Leg Curls	8	8	10	10
Skaters	8	8	10	10
Lunge w/Overhead Reach	8	8	10	10

## Holiday Nutrition Guide

I love holiday food! Big meals with turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, sweet potatoes, macaroni and cheese are some of my favorites. Don't forget about the desserts (my grandmother's pecan pie). Every party and gathering of the season will have a limitless supply of baked goods to enjoy.

Unfortunately, we can't eat these foods all of the time and maintain a healthy weight and lifestyle. Proper nutrition plays a major role in being able to perform our daily activities to the best of our abilities. Continually eating foods that aren't "good" for us will not only lead to unwanted weight gain but cause an increase in lethargy, emotional instability and motivation.

The following pages will help you make better nutritional decisions over the next 2 months. Food is a major part of the holiday season and is to be enjoyed. However, we must practice restraint if we are going to stay fit.

The 80-20 rule is great for this time of year. None of us will eat perfectly during the holidays. But if we are able to eat well at least 80% of the time, we should be able to maintain our current fitness level. The remaining 20% should be used with discretion. Use it to treat yourself to something that you may have only during Thanksgiving or Christmas or as a way to keep you motivated to be disciplined during the "tough" days.

The 80-20 rule should not be applied on a daily basis but rather weekly or bi-weekly. For example, it is more beneficial to eat well 4 days in a row with a treat on the 5<sup>th</sup> day (80/20) than it is to stick to the plan for 8 hours a day and splurge each night.

Apply as many of the following tips as possible to your current eating habits.

1. Be Realistic – The holiday season is filled with many temptations and time restraints. Setting goals is important but it is important not to set ourselves up for failure. Determine a goal that is challenging but doable. For example, maintaining my current weight or losing 2-5 lbs until Christmas is a good goal for me. Losing 20lbs by January 1<sup>st</sup> is not. Do not limit your goals to weight loss. Performance goals are great this time of year. I will exercise 24 times by the end of the year or I will do 2 more pull ups by Christmas are excellent examples of challenging but doable.
2. Plan Ahead – Failing to plan is planning to fail. This is not the time of year to fly by the seat of your pants. Making grocery lists, planning what you will take to the holiday party, packing healthy snacks for a long day of shopping will go a long way in maintaining fitness during the holidays.
3. Avoid Processed Sugars – Highly processed sugars are in abundance all year long but especially during the holidays. Because of the possibility of increased caloric intake, it's important to avoid these sugars as much as possible on a daily basis. If you'd like to have a dessert or baked good, feel free. Just remember the 80/20 rule when eating this way.

4. Eat Your Fruits and Veggies – As always fruits and vegetables should be the staple of a solid nutritional plan. The vitamins and nutrients are unmatched and the fiber content will help you feel full. The natural sweetness of fruit will help eliminate the cravings for all of the cookies and cakes you'll be seeing.
5. Eat the Christmas Nuts – Peanuts, almonds, walnuts, sunflower seeds are great snacks. Don't believe the hype that they are "too fatty." The fats in these types of foods are healthy and they help with reducing hunger pains. Natural peanut butter and other nut butters are great as well.
6. Stick to Lean Meats and Eggs – Getting quality protein is important. Lean meats and eggs provide the best source of protein to help with a variety of functions not the least of which is helping you feel fuller longer. Because protein takes longer to digest, it stays in the digestive system longer, limiting hunger. This is important when we are staring at the homemade pies that Aunt Sally made. If you are a vegetarian, get your proteins from beans, nuts and other products.
7. Eat a Healthy Breakfast – A solid breakfast gets the day started properly. Skipping it or eating a sugary cereal is a recipe for a bad day. You'll become tired, unmotivated and overstressed in no time if you continually live this way. Start your day with eggs, oatmeal, fruit, vegetables and other healthy options.
8. Drink Water – Water helps with energy levels, digestion and hunger. It also has no calories. If you are eating increased calories, the last thing you want to do is add in high calorie drinks like sodas, punches and alcohol. Aim for 8-10 glasses of water per day
9. Limit the Alcohol – Although alcohol is prevalent during the holiday season, it's important to limit your intake. Not only is it high in calories, it's a depressant. Mental and physical performance will be decreased which will increase stress levels.

## Healthy Holiday Party Guide

There are more parties to attend between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day than any other time of the year. Although the community and fellowship is good, constantly eating party food doesn't do much for our weight and stress levels. The following pages contain tips and recipes to help you spread some healthy holiday cheer at this year's festivities.

1. **Snack Before the Party** – Going to a holiday gathering on an empty stomach is like asking for 3 servings of everything. 30-60 minutes before attending the party, grab a healthy snack like an apple and a handful of nuts. The snack will curb your hunger and help you from over-indulging.
2. **"Mingle" All The Way** – Make it a point to socialize with others at the party. Talk to some old friends. Ask your uncle how he's doing. Listen to your boss tell his favorite story. Talking and mingling during the party is a great way to build community and relationships and it also keeps you away from the buffet table. On another note, make sure you do more listening than talking. Good listeners are hard to find these days.
3. **Drink Up** – Alcohol and a variety of fruit punches will be flowing freely at most parties. Start each party off with 2 or 3 glasses of water. The water will keep you feeling full, keep you hydrated and quench your thirst. It will prevent you from over-indulging in higher calorie, less healthy choices.
4. **Eat The Good Stuff** – Fill your plate with healthy favors and appetizers such as shrimp, salmon, unsalted nuts, fruits, vegetables, salsa, whole grain chips and low-fat cheeses. Limit consumption of chips, dips, greasy finger foods, cakes, pies and pastries.
5. **Just "Bring" It** – If you are attending a covered dish party, take a healthy option. Check out the recipes below.

### **Spinach and Artichoke Dip**

A typical serving of spinach and artichoke dip contains up to 1,100 calories and 100 grams of fat, which is almost a day's worth of calories! Substitute high-fat cheese for fat-free Greek yogurt to keep the creamy texture while slashing more than half the calories and artery-clogging saturated fat.

#### **Ingredients:**

- 3/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 6-ounce container nonfat Greek yogurt (such as Fage or Chobani)
- 1/3 cup reduced-fat mayonnaise
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 (14-ounce) can artichoke hearts, drained and chopped
- 1 package (10 ounces) frozen chopped spinach, thawed, well drained
- 1/2 cup part-skim mozzarella, shredded

**Directions:**

1. Heat oven to 350 F.
2. Mix ingredients; spoon into 9-inch quiche dish or pie plate.
3. Bake 20 minutes or until heated through.

\*Serve this dip with the roasted vegetable chips or whole-wheat pita chips

**Serves:** 8 (1/4 cup)

**Nutritional Content per Serving:** 126 calories, 8 g carbohydrate, 2 g fiber, 10 g [protein](#), 6g fat, 03 g sat fat, 264 mg sodium

**Roasted Vegetable "Chips"**

Potato chips are a popular salty snack and a classic favorite of many, but a typical serving of potato chips [runs](#) around 250 calories, 20 grams of fat and only 1 gram of dietary [fiber](#). This dish combines the benefits of high-fiber vegetables while satisfying a salty, crispy craving at the same time. For only 40 calories, 0.5 grams of fat and more than 2 grams of waist-slimming fiber, you can still enjoy a salty and tasty snack without excess calories. Serve this dish in bowls during a family get together or party to give your guests a guilt-free, tasty snack to enjoy.

**Ingredients:**

Cooking spray

2 medium zucchini, sliced crosswise into 1/8-inch thick slices

2 medium yellow summer squash, sliced crosswise in 1/8-inch thick slices

3 large carrots, peeled and sliced diagonally into 1/8-inch thick slices

1 teaspoon salt, or to taste

1 tablespoon oregano, or to taste

**Directions:**

1. Preheat oven to 200 F. Coat 2 large baking sheets with cooking spray.
2. Place zucchini and squash in a single layer on one baking sheet.
3. Place carrots on other sheet in a single layer.
4. Coat vegetables with cooking spray and season tops of vegetables with salt and oregano.
5. Roast for 1 hour, then rotate trays. Roast until vegetables are crisp and dry, about 30 to 60 minutes more.

*Cook's Note:* Use a mandolin to evenly slice vegetables if you have one.

**Serves:** 6

**Nutrition Content per Serving:** 40 calories, 8.4 g carbohydrate, 2.8 g fiber, 2 g protein, 0.5 g total fat, 0.1 g saturated fat, 425 mg sodium

**Spanakopita Frittata "Bites"**

These frittata bites are loaded with protein, fiber, [vitamins](#) and minerals, and taste great, too! Using only the white of each egg saves you more than 200 mg of [cholesterol](#) and 5 grams of fat per egg. Instead of using full-fat cheese, opt for low-fat varieties. Not only will this save you hundreds of calories, but this will certainly decrease your risks for heart disease.

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**Ingredients:**

12 eggs  
1/2 Vidalia onion  
1 (10-ounce) package of frozen spinach  
4 ounces low-fat feta cheese, crumbled  
Nonstick cooking spray  
Salt and pepper

**Directions:**

1. Heat a nonstick skillet over medium-high heat and spray with nonstick cooking spray.
2. While pan is heating, separate the eggs. Discard 6 of the yolks and set aside the other 6 yolks.
3. Place the whites into a bowl and beat with a fork until foamy. Season with salt and pepper.
4. Gently fold the 6 egg yolks into the egg whites.
5. Add onion to the skillet and saute until translucent, approximately 3 minutes.
6. Add spinach and cook until spinach is wilted.
7. Coat a mini muffin tin with nonstick cooking spray. Add a spoonful of vegetable mixture to each cup, and then pour egg mixture over the vegetables. Top each with a few crumbles of feta cheese
8. Bake for 15-20 minutes or until the frittata bites have risen and are golden brown.

**Serves:** 24 mini frittata bites

**Nutrition Content per Serving:** 52 calories, 1 g carbohydrate, .5 g fiber, 4.6 g protein, 3 g total fat, 1 g saturated fat, 141 mg sodium

**Sweet and Spicy Almonds**

Almonds are a great on-the-go snack that contains tons of healthy fats and a good amount of fiber and protein. Now you can enjoy them with a kick of metabolism-boosting spice and a satisfying sweet taste all at once! Nuts have also been linked to decreased abdominal fat storage.

**Ingredients:**

2 1/2 cups unblanched almonds  
3 tablespoons sugar  
1 1/2 teaspoons coarse salt  
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper  
1 1/2 tablespoons honey  
1 tablespoon water  
1 teaspoon olive oil

**Directions:**

1. Preheat oven to 350 F.
2. Spread almonds on a rimmed baking sheet; toast until just beginning to brown, about 10 minutes.
3. In a large bowl, combine sugar, salt, cinnamon and cayenne pepper.

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4. In a large skillet over medium heat, cook honey and water with olive oil, stirring until combined, about 1 minute.
5. Add almonds to the honey mixture; toss to thoroughly coat each almond.
6. Transfer nuts to the sugar mixture; toss to coat almonds thoroughly. Cool in a single layer.

**Serves:** 12

**Nutrition Content per Serving:** 195 calories, 11 g carbohydrate, 3.5 g fiber, 6 g protein, 15 g total fat, 1 g saturated fat, 291 mg sodium

### **Tuna Tartar Wrapped in Cucumber**

Great for dinner parties and special occasions, as most people find it's the perfect finger-food appetizer when tightly wrapped with sliced cucumber. While dining out, tuna tartar is usually one of the lowest-calorie appetizers.

#### **Ingredients:**

- 1 tablespoon mayonnaise
- 3/4 teaspoon soy sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon sriracha (Asian chili sauce)
- 8 ounces fresh, sushi-grade tuna, cut into 1/4-inch dice
- 1 avocado, peeled, cut into 1/8-inch dice
- 1 tablespoon thinly sliced fresh chives, plus 1-inch pieces for garnish
- 2 seedless cucumbers, peeled

#### **Directions:**

1. Using a knife or a mandolin, slice the cucumbers lengthwise as thinly as possible.
2. Mix mayonnaise, soy sauce and sriracha together in a small bowl.
3. Add tuna, avocado and chives, and gently combine with a fork.
4. Spoon 1 tablespoon tuna tartar on the end of the cucumber slice. Roll up and place a toothpick through the middle to secure the filling. Garnish with chives and serve.

**Serves:** 12

**Nutrition Content per Serving:** 56 calories, 2.5 g carbohydrate, 1.25 g fiber, 5 g protein, 3 g total fat, .43 g saturated fat, 47 mg sodium

## The Brain Blue Print

Although research has shown that the average American gains 6-15lbs during the holidays, it's important to remember that this time of year causes as much mental fatigue as it does physical. The busyness of the season makes our mind work overtime. Many times we may not be physically exhausted but mentally burnt out. In order for us to enjoy the season we must keep our minds sharp and refreshed. Try adding the following tips into your daily routine to help reduce stress and add enjoyment to "the most wonderful time of the year."

1. Plan Ahead – As mentioned in the nutrition section, careful planning can dramatically reduce stress and mental fatigue. Take 15 minutes each night and plan the next day. Start by writing everything down that you'd like to get done. Next, group each item into categories a, b and c.
  - a. These are high priority items. All "a" items must be completed the next day.
  - b. Activities in this category are not immediate but will need to be completed soon. If not completed, "b" items will go into the "a" list the next day.
  - c. All activities in Group C are important but are not urgent. They are usually completed if there is spare time. Many times "c" items consume our thoughts instead of focusing on categories "a" and "b". Group C is completed only after Groups A and B are checked off the list.

Organizing our thoughts in this manner frees our mind to focus on high-priority tasks and removes background "noise" like Group C items.

2. Use To-Do Lists – This is closely related to #1. Organizing our daily activities into lists help us organize our thoughts and accomplish more each day. Be sure to check off or cross out each item as it is completed. Visually seeing each item removed from the list helps us feel motivated and provides a sense of accomplishment. Be sure to organize the to-do list with Groups A, B and C from Tip #1.
3. Stop Multi-Tasking – Just because our Ipad can complete multiple things at once, doesn't mean we can. Having too many thoughts and projects going at once only leads to more unfinished tasks. Stay focused on one-item at a time.
4. Take a Brain Break – In the busyness of each day, it is easy to just keep going and going. However, a brain break allows us to slow down, regroup our thoughts and get ready for the next task. Just as we exercise in intervals (working hard for a short amount of time and then resting), we should program our minds to do the same thing. Working for a solid 30-45 minutes on a task and taking a 5 minute "brain break" keeps us focused and productive.
5. Take Time to Get Away – Finding 15 minutes of silence each day rests the mind and refuels the body. Ideally, taking 15 minutes to yourself between the hours of 1-3PM help refocus and recharge the mind. This does not have to be a nap. Simply sitting in silence and/or the dark will do. Be sure to control your thoughts and not let them run wild during this time. This is a mini get away, not a working vacation. Put your get away on your to-do list as a Group A to ensure you stick to it.

6. Unwind Before Bed – It is not uncommon for us to pack as much activity into the day as possible. We rush here, rush there and then go to bed. Spend 10-15 minutes before bed unwinding. Turn the television off, shut down the computer and the cell phone. Sit down and relax. This is a great time to drink some warm tea or milk. Both of these drinks aid in calming down the body and relaxing the mind.
7. Get Some Sleep – Nothing recharges the mind (and body) like 7-9 hours of sleep per night. Research has shown us that in order to function at our highest level (our goal) we need to be sleeping. 5-6 hours per night may seem like enough but it is not. Our mind only recharges in the 7-9 hour range.

## Ring Those Bells – A Guide To Serve

Regardless of religious beliefs, most people agree that the purpose of Christmas is to celebrate the birth of Christ. Modeling His life of love and service is a key component to enjoying the holidays. With that in mind, we've compiled a list of resources to make it easy for you to serve your community. Click on the links below to visit the website of each resource or search for locations in your local area.

[The Salvation Army](#)

[Habitat For Humanity](#)

[The United Way](#)

Local Food Banks

[American Red Cross](#)

Local Schools Events

Local Church Events

Local Nursing Homes

Local Homeless Shelters

Local Hospitals