

[IMAGE]

Don't Let the Holidays Defeat You

By Editorial Staff

Yes, another year coming to an end means a final month of holiday celebrations. And of course, that means frantic shopping, last-minute deadlines at work, dessert-packed parties and every reason to finish the year in the least healthy way possible. But that's not the way it has to be. Here are four ways to preserve your health and wellness – and even step it up a notch – as the new year approaches:

1. *You are what you eat*, so treat yourself right this holiday season. That *doesn't* mean avoiding all the goodies you'll be tempted with throughout the last month of the year. It *does* mean practicing moderation, not stressing about enjoying a few of your favorites and reminding yourself that the physical and mental health you've earned all year shouldn't be sacrificed by overindulgence.
2. *Move it or lose it*, a premise supported by research suggesting if you migrate from high levels of exercise to low or no levels of exercise, you'll gain body fat and lose muscle in just 14 short days. So pull out your calendar and find time for exercise, even if it's scaled down a bit during the holiday season hustle and bustle. Trust us, you'll feel great and look great, too.
3. *Take a deep breath* and pull out all the stress-reduction tips we've taught you this year (and every year). Make To-Do lists, prioritize your priorities, find some "you" time and most importantly, recognize that stressed out is never good for anyone, least of all you.
4. Write down your New Year's resolutions early and make sure the list doesn't focus on any of the three areas above. After all, you've got your diet, exercise and stress reduction handled year-round!

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