

Christmas Season Survival Guide

Christmas is a wonderful time to invest in family and friends, relax and have a bit of fun but sometimes our traditional habits can take its toll on our health. December can be a time of reduced activity levels, overindulgence of food, alcohol and late nights. Here is a quick survival guide to make the most of this wonderful time of the year.

Optimise your energy

- Eat light wholesome nutritious meals in between feasts with plenty of vegetables.
- Take breaks from sugar, sweets, alcohol, refined carbohydrates, gluten and dairy in between feasts.
- Keep well hydrated with water and herbal teas.
- Vegetable juices can support your liver.
- Take exercise or a walk in the fresh air each day.
- Aim for 7-8 hours of sleep each day.
- Don't overheat your home. 18-21 deg and cooler at night is about right.
- Include a good magnesium and B complex in your supplement regime.



Keep your tummy happy

Indigestion, bloating and gas are common symptoms of overindulgence.

- Eat slowly and chew thoroughly (at least 15 times for each mouthful).
- Avoid overeating and poor food combinations.
- Don't drink too much with meals.
- Allow some time between courses.
- Have a tbsp of apple cider vinegar or bitters in some water 30 minutes before your meal.
- Take a broad spectrum digestive enzyme supplement
- If these are persistent problems consider a digestive health program in the new year. I would be happy to help you with this.

Avoid headaches and hangovers

Excess alcohol depletes a large amount of nutrients and can lead to dehydration the combination of which often results in a headache or hangover.

- Boost your nutrient levels with a good magnesium and B complex supplement. Take an extra dose before you go out and again before you go to bed after your night out.
- Drink a glass of water in between alcoholic drinks and before you go to bed.
- Don't drink on an empty stomach. Fatty foods are usually good to reduce the risk of a hangover. Opt for healthy oils in salmon, mackerel, tuna, avocado, olive oil, coconut oil.
- The day after eat plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables and ideally give yourself a few days break before consuming alcohol again.

Avoid Colds and Flu

Do you find you get sick as soon as you stop and relax? This can be part of a healing crisis as your body reduces levels of the stress hormones adrenaline and cortisol and begins to repair otherwise

neglected parts of the body. If this is you it may be a good idea to get professional help but if you want to minimise your risk of getting sick over the holidays support your body as much as possible.

- Wash hands regularly with soap and water, especially if you have been out and about.
- Colloidal silver spray is a healthy alternative to anti-bacterial hand gels.
- Avoid touching your hands to your mouth, nose or eyes.
- Eat a wholesome diet with plenty of fruit, vegetables and wholegrains.
- Minimise sugar, sugary food and drinks and alcohol.
- Get plenty of exercise and fresh air. A walk outdoors is ideal.
- Get plenty of sleep, relax, have fun and laugh a lot.
- Take a good multi vitamin and mineral, additional vitamin C and Echinacea.

If you do succumb to a cold, I find the following natural remedies work best and get me back on my feet the quickest:

- Take a multi vitamin and mineral supplement.
- Take extra vitamin C, zinc and Echinacea.
- Regular hot drinks with honey, lemon and fresh ginger.
- Spicy food with plenty of garlic, chilli, cayenne pepper, cinnamon and turmeric.
- If you're brave and not expecting company soon – lightly crush a clove of raw garlic and hold it between your back teeth for 5-10 minutes inhaling the fumes and then swallow.
- Homemade chicken soup using the chicken carcass to make a broth – yes, Grandmother was right!
- Rest!

Avoid dry skin and hair

Changes in climatic conditions and overindulgences can wreak havoc with our skin and hair.

- Moisturise thoroughly. Try using your night cream during the day as these are usually oiler and heavier than day creams. Coconut oil can be used as a natural moisturiser and hair mask.
- If you're in the Northern hemisphere minimise central heating in your home. Rather put a sweater on than crank up the heating too high.
- Consume plenty of oily foods. Oily fish, flax seeds, avocado, nuts and seeds, olive oil, coconut oil and take an omega 3 supplement.
- Eat plenty of leafy greens and red, orange and yellow fruits and vegetables.
- Exercise to increase circulation and nutrients to your skin and hair.

Boost your mood

Often Christmas can be a time of fun, reflection and planning but can also a sad and lonely time for some.

- Spread goodwill to all. Think of others that may be lonely and would appreciate a phone call, an email, a gift or an invitation to dinner.
- Take a vitamin D supplement at this time when light levels are low in the north.
- Eat plenty of fruit, vegetables, wholegrains and protein foods.
- Get fresh air and exercise.
- Spend time with fun people who build you up and enjoy a few laughs.
- Forgive and give thanks.