



Winterize Your Health



Staying Healthy Through Holidays & Cold Months

Holiday season means holiday foods. The time for seemingly endless dishes and baked goods galore has arrived bringing with it increased salt, fats and sugars. To keep yourself, your family and your friends healthy while still indulging in holiday eating, try some health conscious substitutions [click here](#): The dishes will have the same great taste and will leave everyone satisfied; it's a win-win!

What don't we want to have in common with the Thanksgiving Turkey and Santa?



Answer: Holiday weight gain!



To eat the recommended servings of vegetables this winter, try buying those [in season](#), local or on sale. These vegetables are delicious, can be prepared in a [variety of ways](#) and their local nature may lower costs. Remember, vegetables are an essential part of your diet and they will help you stay illness free!

To compensate for the lack of sunshine during winter, vitamin D supplements or fortified foods may be needed to keep your body's levels



up, especially in latitudes above 40° (Los Angeles). [Deficiency in vitamin D](#) has been linked to type 2 diabetes, chronic illness such as asthma, osteoporosis, a variety of autoimmune diseases and certain types of cancer. A simple, inexpensive blood test can measure vitamin D levels. Talk with your health care provider about vitamin D and see if supplementation is needed to keep you from being "D"eficient.



A lack of sun exposure in winter months has also been linked to temporary episodes of depression in some people, termed [Seasonal Affect Disorder \(SAD\)](#). This depression may have drastic effects on health and can promote weight gain by increasing appetite. Treatment for SAD includes light therapy (phototherapy), counseling and medications.

Both food and exercise directly effect our mood. Unhealthy eating paired with inactivity has been shown to negatively affect health, both mentally and physically. In order to keep yourself and your family healthy and happy this winter, eat smart and get out and enjoy the many winter activities Montana has to offer!

Eat Smart Program-Missoula City-County Health Department
 Questions or comments? Contact Rebecca Morley, MA
 (406)258-3827 www.co.missoula.mt.us/HealthServices/EatSmart
 To Opt-out of Subscription: [Click Here](#)

