



Employee Wellness News

Mercer University/December 2011

Ask Wellness: Can I Out-Exercise Holiday Weight Gain?

Question: *I love the holidays because I love to eat! Between my mother's casseroles, cookie exchanges, holiday parties and baking with my family, I eat a lot! I feel the holidays are my one chance to really eat the things I enjoy. But what I don't enjoy is the weight gain. If I increase my level of exercise over the next month, can I offset the calories I'm taking in and make it to the New Year at the same weight?*

Answer: The answer is, "it depends." Research, including this [recent study](#), indicates that people who increase their physical activity can mitigate diet-related weight gain. Remember that exercise is the output while food is the input – when we gain weight, we take in more calories than we burn (like during the holidays). You can offset that (to some degree) by increasing your time spent exercising and by increasing the intensity of your workouts. But there are two important things to remember: 1) No amount of exercise can offset an unhealthy diet. So while the holidays are a great time to enjoy favorite foods, sacrificing lean protein, fruits and vegetables for sugar and highly processed foods is not wise and is not healthy. 2) We tend to overestimate the number of calories we burn during exercise and underestimate the number of calories we eat. Remember, the average 150 lb woman only burns 100 calories when walking/jogging a mile. According to www.caloriecount.com, a slice of pecan pie is 500 calories. You do the math.

Attention Parents: Children at Risk of Heart Disease

A new study ([available here](#)) released last month by Northwestern University Medicine finds that today's teens are likely to die of heart disease at a younger age than adults. In addition to a poor prognosis for future health, millions of adolescents are already suffering from high blood sugar (30% of boys, 40% of girls) and high cholesterol (25% of boys, 35% of girls). These chronic conditions once reserved for older adults are being seen in teens in large part due to high rates of obesity (35%), terrible diets and extremely low levels of physical activity. The good news is that parents can help to prevent these conditions in their children. Take action; don't doom your child to an unhealthy future:

- 1) Healthy eating habits established during childhood last a lifetime. Promote the consumption of fruits, vegetables and lean protein while reducing the number of sweetened beverages and highly processed foods your child eats.
- 2) Make physical activity a priority. Children and adolescents need at least 60 minutes of physical activity most days of the week. Limit time spent in front of the computer and television and encourage more exercise. Family walks, bike rides and even sports are a great way to make sure everyone is staying healthy.
- 3) Know your child's numbers. Many parents do not recognize when their child is overweight or obese. Know your child's body mass index and speak with their pediatrician if your child is overweight, then take action by implementing healthy changes for the whole family.
- 4) Most importantly, be a good role model. When you maintain or achieve a healthy weight, eat a healthy diet and exercise regularly, your child will too!

Is Your Work Space Healthy?

Most of us spend many hours each day at a desk but your work space may be contributing to back pain, wrist strain, headaches or eye strain. Improper positioning of keyboards, computer monitors, chairs and even telephones can contribute to chronic conditions. Double-check that your workspace is supporting good health by assessing your desk [here](#). Want to learn more about designing a healthy work space and preventing low back pain and related conditions? Join us for our December Lunch and Learn on the 6th!

[\(Click here for picture info\)](#)



Mindfulness for Health Benefits

In their book *A Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Workbook*, doctors Stahl and Goldstein (2010) say that nearly all of our thoughts can be categorized as either "rehearsing or rehashing": planning for things in the future or recalling events from the past. Instead of rehearsing and reshaping, try mindfulness. Mindfulness is a focus on what is happening in the present moment and can help reduce stress and negative feelings. For some great examples of mindful exercises, click [here](#).

What's Cooking in Wellness: Seasonal Vegetables (In season in the south: APPLES, ARULGULA, BEETS, CABBAGE, KALE, LETTUCE, PEPPERS, SWEET POTATOS, VIDALIAS, TOMATOS) [CLICK HERE](#) for a great cooking tip from Brian Airman!

This time of year is perfect for winter vegetables roasted to perfection. Even kids will want seconds of this healthy dish. **Ingredients:** Vegetables of your choice: Suggested- Brussels sprouts, eggplant, beets, peppers, onions, garlic, asparagus. Olive oil or olive oil cooking spray; Seasoning of choice: salt, pepper, rosemary, basil or parsley. **Directions:** **1)** Preheat oven to 400 degrees, line a pan with foil and coat foil with cooking spray; cut vegetables into bite-sized pieces; **2)** Add vegetables in a single layer to the pan and spray with oil or drizzle with olive oil (about a tsp for every cup of vegetables); **3)** Sprinkle with desired seasonings; **4)** Check vegetables after 25-30 min (probably ½ way point) and turn them. Cook until tender and brown around edges. If they start to dry out during cooking process, drizzle some broth or apple juice over top.



How to Prevent Gas When Cooking Cabbage

By Brian Airman, eHow Contributor



Removing the tough outer layers of the cabbage head will leave behind the less fibrous center.

If you season cabbage while [cooking](#), you add flavor and prevent flatulence. High fiber foods like cabbage and legumes commonly cause a buildup of gas in the digestive system. Carminative herbs are those that contain essential oils to soothe the digestive tract. Adding carminative herbs and seasonings during the cooking process aids in the digestion of these foods and effectively reduces gas.

Season your next cabbage dish strategically to taste great and prevent unwanted intestinal gas after the meal.

Things You'll Need

- Head of fresh cabbage
- Cutting board
- Chef knife
- Colander
- Stockpot
- Water or stock
- 1 tbsp ground seasonings (cumin, sage, tarragon, fennel, caraway, lavender, thyme, aniseed, marjoram, basil, bergamot, chamomile, nutmeg, dill, cloves, garlic, coriander, allspice, cinnamon, ginger, juniper, rosemary, savory, oregano, mint or peppermint)

1 Peel away the darker outer leaves of the cabbage head and discard them.

2 Hold the peeled cabbage head firmly with both hands as you slam the root end onto a cutting board. Grip the loosened root end with your fingers and twist as you pull it out.

3 Cut the cabbage head in half, and lay the flat sides on the cutting board as you cut both halves into thin strips.

4 Slide the cabbage strips into a colander and wash them thoroughly under cold running water.

5 Turn the clean strips of cabbage into a stockpot, and add enough water or [stock](#) to cover them completely.

6 Add a tablespoon each of one or more of the carminative herbs (see Things You'll Need) according to the [flavor](#) of the recipe.

7 Bring the seasoned liquid to a boil over medium-high heat then reduce to low and simmer for 30 minutes uncovered.

- [IBS-C Management Info](http://www.IBS-Cinformation.com)www.IBS-Cinformation.com
Do you have IBS with constipation? Get helpful information here.
- [Type 2 Diabetes Food Tips](http://merckengage.com)merckengage.com
- Recipes, Meal Planners, and Tools to Help Lead a Healthier Lifestyle.
- [Upset Stomach Relief](http://www.Pepto-Bismol.com)www.Pepto-Bismol.com
If You Overdo It This Holiday Season, Pepto® Has You Covered*
- [Stomach Bloating Treatment](http://HoneYourHealth.com)HoneYourHealth.com Research Stomach Bloating Treatment. Take Control. Hone Your Health!

Read more: [How to Prevent Gas When Cooking Cabbage | eHow.com](http://www.ehow.com/how_6098948_prevent-gas-cooking-cabbage.html#ixzz1fCJRQUeu) http://www.ehow.com/how_6098948_prevent-gas-cooking-cabbage.html#ixzz1fCJRQUeu

12 Days of Christmas Challenge:

- Dec 1— Visit the UC Gym for a workout or a tour. Get Card Initialed by student at desk.
- Dec 2— Bring a piece of cedar to the University Center with your name attached. (Give to Pam Simpson or Rachel May)
- Dec 3—Take a brisk walk for 20 minutes (shopping does not count)
- Dec 4—Eat a healthy 6 servings of vegetables today (list them on your card)
- Dec 5—Drop in at Wellness & get your BMI
- Dec 6—Send your Subway sticker to Rachel May in Wellness (*the one that says what kind of sandwich you had!*)
- Dec 7—Drop in on Rachel and perform 20 repetitions of the exercise she assigns to you.
- Dec 8—Walk to Benefits & Payroll and ask someone to initial your card.
- Dec 9—Walk the UC track at least 5 times today. Get UC student to initial your card.
- Dec 10—Rake the leaves for 1 hour or walk briskly for 30 minutes.
- Dec 11—Attend a Christmas event with friends or family and make a date with at least one person to exercise.
- Dec 12—Walk to the UC (IN GYM SHOES) and bring your card and log book to Rachel to complete the Bonus Challenge!

Return completed Certification sheet to Rachel May in Wellness to receive 25 Bonus Points!



Name _____ CWID _____

Dec 1	Dec 2	Dec 3	Dec 4	Dec 5	Dec 6
Dec 7	Dec 8	Dec 9	Dec 10	Dec 11	Dec 12

Honestly, I completed the 12 Days of Christmas
Challenge _____!!!

Signed _____ Date _____