

We are coming around to that time to be with the people we love, make new friends, and visit places. It is also that time of year when we don't question our partying and may start to procrastinate on our wellness goals and add them onto a list of the new year's resolutions.

This Christmas let us try something new, fully enjoying the festive season while still work on staying healthy. Here are a few of our tried and tested holiday survival tips to get you through the holiday season feeling fit and having fun!

1 Practice Mindful Eating

The holidays make it difficult to not overdo it when it comes to food, and unfortunately this makes it easy to add a few kilos by the end of it. During the festivities there is so much to eat and drink, most of it delicious but not the healthiest option.

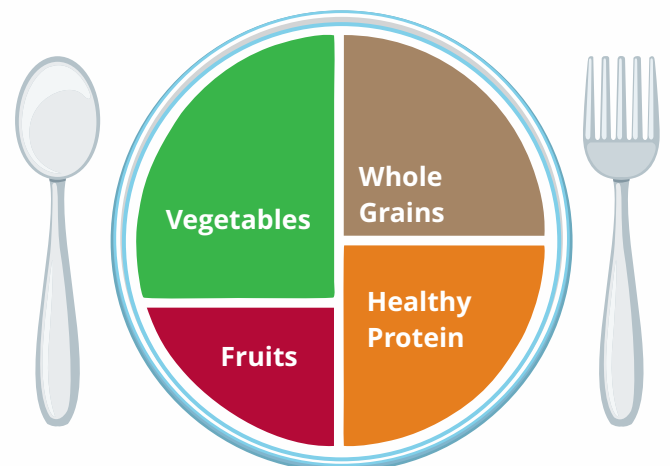
✔ Enjoy everything but avoid over indulging, have a taste of whatever you want but think about it before you have that second helping!

✔ **Stay hydrated** - There shall be plenty to drink but still remember to stay hydrated as usual, limit your intake of carbonated drinks, Sugary drinks, and alcoholic drinks. Healthier options include fresh fruit juices, low fat/whole milk, pure/mineral water, [infused water](#). Normally, it is easy to confuse thirst with hunger and as we are trying to stay healthy and maintain a healthy weight during the holidays, it is important to note the [difference](#).

✔ **Watch the portions** - keep half of your plate for veggies and fruits, a quarter for proteins (meat, chicken, fish etc.) and the other quarter for carbohydrates. Go slow on oily salads and coleslaw.

✔ **What about food for later?** - Stock your fridge with healthier options, more veggies, and fruits rather than Ice cream and cakes. You can also save your leftovers and reheat them well next time you need to have some food or use [healthy creative](#) ways of transforming any food leftovers.

Healthy Eating Plate



Healthy Oils



Water

💡 **HealthX tip:** Grab a smaller plate instead of a larger one, serve enough just what you can finish then wait for 30 mins and then go for second helpings if you still want some more.

2 Watch That Alcohol

As a lot of us know, too much alcohol can weaken our willpower and make us prone to making poor eating decision. Research has also shown that too much alcohol [affects immunity](#) (N.B recommended daily alcohol intake: 2 drinks or less in a day for men or 1 drink or less in a day for women).

✔ **Stay hydrated**- According to the [National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine](#), the required daily fluid intake for an adult is as follows: **Females: 2.7 liters (11.5 cups), Males: 3.7 liters (15.5 cups)**

✔ Swap your bottle of beer with a healthier option like water or some lime water.

✔ Choose low-calorie chaser or mixers such as tonic water or lemon and lime wedges, to help reduce added calories.

✔ Use a fruit of your choice to [make your water tastier](#) and more festive!



💡 **HealthX tip:** Alternate every alcoholic drink or soda with a glass of water!

3 Stay Active

Focus on that feel-good feeling after exercising. Exercising boosts production of [endorphins](#) which are a good natural stress [relievers](#). The holidays can be quite demanding and a bit stressful, so don't let your exercise habit lapse over the holidays and plan to make it up in 2022! Keep it up, every little bit helps! Exercise also plays a key role in weight.

💡 **HealthX tip:** Mix it up but keep it up, do some **High-intensity interval training (HIIT) at home**, or take a walk with a friend or family member and use the [HealthX app](#) to count your steps. You can set yourself a daily steps target (walk with your phone while at it) – or make it a family challenge!



4 Get Enough Sleep

In the excitement and celebrating, sleep is often the first thing to be neglected, with late nights, long nights, early mornings, and long days.

Poor sleep for a period of weeks or days leads to [poor functioning](#): It impacts your immune system, ability to concentrate and your mood. So don't neglect sleep, it's important!

✔ Watch the tea and coffee – the caffeine in both can affect your sleep. Try to avoid any caffeinated drinks after 3.00PM

✔ Create a good environment for sleep: your sleep will be better in a space that is dark, quiet, and cool.

✔ Avoid screentime (phone and TV) - do not use your phone or watch TV too close to bedtime – those photos can be posted in the morning! 😊

✔ Treat yourself to a good warm bath before getting to bed.

✔ Have your dinner early so you do not go to bed on a stomach that is too empty or too full.

✔ Use this holiday season to get in 7-8 hours of sleep daily maintaining a routine in sleeping and waking hours.

💡 **HealthX tip:** Instead of electronics, try some family time before bed (games, like Monopoly or even cards). The excitement and enjoyment thrill that comes with it releases endorphins which will help you relax and sleep well.

This Christmas, don't forget to enjoy yourself but keep your mental health, physical health, and overall wellness at check. HealthX Africa is here for you every day and every night, even through the holiday season, so if you feel yourself slipping and would like some advice, support, or have any health needs reach out to us through the HealthX Africa app or any day, anytime on our toll-free number **0800 720 795**.

From all of us at HealthX Africa, we wish you a happy, healthy festive season!