



# Countdown to Health



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## 'Tis the season for healthy hearts

'Tis the season for holiday parties, shopping, baking, cards and WHEW – a chance to relax? With holiday season in full swing, overlooking healthy eating habits can be easy. The high-stress from chaotic schedules and poor diets can expose us to potential health issues. However, there are ways to be mindful of maintaining a healthy lifestyle, while still enjoying family holiday traditions.

### Stock Up on Seasonal Produce

A cornerstone of any healthy diet is consuming fresh, vibrant and seasonal veggies into most (if not all) meals of the day. Eating vegetables offers vital nutrients and lowers the risk of many chronic diseases. While veggies should be at the top of your menu list, you can't forget the fruits! You should eat five servings of both fruits and vegetables a day. Support your local farmer and get the benefit of flavorful, high-nutrient produce. Better yet, your local farmers provide the best produce for the season: Winter squash, apples, sweet potatoes and kale, to name a few.

### Get active

Exercising just one hour per day is a great way to burn off steam, stress and those extra calories you may be consuming during the holidays. Take advantage of outdoor recreational activities with your family. Bundle up and enjoy a walk through the park, go ice skating or sledding, and don't underestimate the power of making a snow angel! If you don't have 60 solid minutes for a workout, try breaking it up into 10 minute intervals. Incorporating workouts within your holiday chaos will help you keep a healthy mind and body.

### Stay Hydrated

The holidays are abundant in beverage indulgences just as much as they are in food. While popular during the winter season, hot chocolate, white chocolate mocha lattes and eggnog are loaded with sugar. Sugary drinks are both high in calories and dehydrating. Instead of these empty calorie drinks, water should be your beverage of choice. Drink 4-8 cups of water per day. Add fresh fruit or choose sparkling mineral water to make things a little more exciting. Try herbal teas made with warming spices such as cinnamon, cardamom, coriander and nutmeg.

## Roasted Apples and Brussels Sprouts

### INGREDIENTS

2 pounds Brussels sprouts, trimmed and halved  
2 Jonagold apples, cored and cut into wedges  
6 shallots, peeled and quartered  
10 fresh thyme sprigs  
3 tablespoons avocado oil (or other high heat oil)  
Salt and pepper  
Juice from 1 lemon (about 2 tablespoons)

### DIRECTIONS

Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 400 degrees. Toss together Brussels sprouts, apples, shallots, thyme, and oil on a large rimmed baking sheet. Season with salt and pepper. Arrange Brussels sprouts mixture in a single layer on the baking sheet. Roast until golden brown, 20-25 minutes, shaking pan every 10 minutes. Remove from oven and season with salt and pepper.



For more recipe ideas and advice, check out our [Healthy Times Blog](#).