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- Holiday Food Safety
- Balancing Work and the Holidays

BecauseWeCare

Healthy Ideas For A Healthy Workplace



“If you don’t understand how you got where you are, things will all pile up again pretty quickly.”

Chaos Theory Your Holiday Survival Guide

In case you weren’t busy enough with the kids’ soccer practice, yard work, and that report the boss wanted yesterday, now the holidays are upon us again. Juggling holiday activities and your regular responsibilities can leave you feeling overwhelmed and disorganized – which can be harmful to your health.

Vicki Norris, president of Restoring Order and a featured expert on HDTV’s *Mission: Organization*, suggests that you combat disorganization by first figuring out what your real priorities are. “Those priorities will keep you motivated and will help better organization become a habit, not just something you check off a list,” Vicki says.

Another step in the right direction is doing what she calls an “aerial overview.” Go through your home or work space making a list of each area, the activities you do in each, and the items you find there. This will help you begin to analyze how things got so messy in the first place. “If you don’t understand how you got where you are, things will all pile up again pretty quickly,” Vicki says.

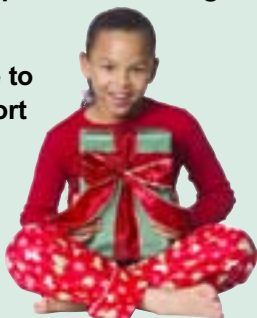
You can even get better organized as you head into the holidays. “Differentiate between obligations and priorities,” Vicki advises. “If you’ve been dragging yourself to the company party every year or struggling to make your house the brightest, best decorated in the neighborhood, make this the year to let yourself off the hook. Put your efforts into the holiday activities that matter most to you.”

By organizing your priorities, you make room for the things that add meaning to your life. “That’s a great gift you can give yourself and that you can hold onto year after year.” *-Jeff Silver*

Get It Together!

Organization Tips From Vicki

1. Don't keep different calendars for family and work activities. Put them all in one place so nothing falls between the cracks.
2. Set up a maintenance schedule to keep things organized in support of your priorities.
3. Write down the holiday traditions that are most important to you. Let go of the ones you don't care about as much.



4. Choose a different holiday – like Valentine's Day or Independence Day – to send out cards. Things won't be as hectic and your message won't get lost in the sea of other holiday greetings.

5. For more of Vicki's tips, visit www.restoreorder.com.



Keep Bacteria at Bay

Unexpected guests can ruin holiday festivities – especially when those “guests” are preventable foodborne illnesses. Foodborne illness affects more than 76 million people each year. But with good food safety practices, you can keep bacteria at bay.

Separate

- Keep raw meat, poultry, and seafood away from fruits and vegetables so juices will not cross-contaminate foods.
- Replace empty platters on buffet tables rather than adding fresh food to a dish that has already been used.

Cook

- Cook foods thoroughly to safe temperatures.
- Place hot cooked foods in chafing dishes, crock pots, and warming trays to keep them 140°F or warmer. Place cold foods in bowls of ice to keep them 40°F or colder.

Chill

- Don't let food sit at room temperature for more than two hours. Put out small quantities of food and replace often.
- Discard any foods that have been at room temperature for more than two hours; don't keep them as leftovers.

Stay Fit and Enjoy the Holidays – Yes, You CAN Do Both!

Think you're doomed to gain weight this holiday season? It doesn't have to be that way if you take some simple steps to keep physically fit while still enjoying the holiday cheer.

Make shopping exercise. Don't try to get the closest parking space to the mall. Park way in the back and hoof it. That way, you'll have to hoof it back with all those bags in your arms. You'll be burning calories almost as fast as money.

Take a break from routine. Look for alternative ways to get exercise other than your usual trip to the gym. If you're visiting out-of-town relatives, for instance,

try to organize a fun game outside that gets the heart rate up.

All things in moderation. Enjoy grandmother's fabulous homemade pecan pie, but don't overindulge. Don't pack in the calories snacking between big holiday meals, and drink plenty of water, a known appetite suppressant.

Stick together. Get a friend or loved one involved in your holiday fitness. Be accountable to each other for eating in moderation and getting plenty of exercise.

Stick with good habits. It's important to remember that holiday foods are for the



holidays only. Try not to think of them as menu options for your daily diet.



Click for more fitness tips for the holidays or any day.

Keep Your Boss Happy this Holiday Season

You've got a thousand places to go. You have to visit family and buy gifts, and you're tearing through your work at the office to get ready for the busy holiday season. But don't let the holiday juggling act stress you out – and jeopardize your health.

Plan ahead. This is no time to put things off. Don't let big projects sneak up on you, creating a last minute panic.

Stay in the loop. There's nothing worse than needing someone's approval on something and finding they're out of town and can't be reached. Make sure you and your co-workers are all on the same page about what is expected of each other during the holiday season.

Synchronize your schedules. Try to stay flexible with your plans so everybody can make the most of the holidays. If you

have an event in your holiday plans with a flexible date, find out what your co-workers' holiday plans are before you set the final date.

Be flexible. Offer to help each other wherever possible. Not only is that in keeping with the holiday spirit, but it makes the holiday time crunch a little easier for everybody!



Healthy Holidays Around the World

Every culture celebrates its own unique holidays, but in all traditions, nutritious food brings families together.

- **HANUKKAH:** Hanukkah is the Jewish Festival of Lights or Feast of Dedication, which begins on December 7 this year and continues for eight days. Potato latkes (pancakes) and dairy foods are traditionally served.
- **LUCIA DAY:** On December 13, the Swedish celebrate Lucia Day. Popular food eaten on this day includes saffron buns, known as Lussekatter, and gingerbread cookies.
- **KWANZAA:** Kwanzaa is an African American holiday based on the traditional African festival of the harvest of the first crops. It begins on December 26 and lasts for seven days. Traditional fare includes sweet potatoes and banana custard with raisins.

HEALTH – the Gift that Keeps on Giving

Giving a healthy gift this holiday season doesn't have to be a "bah! humbug!" experience for the person on the receiving end. Use your imagination to come up with some great gift ideas your loved one will appreciate and use over and over again.

- Give a subscription to a health or fitness magazine.
- Go one step further and give a membership to a local health club.

- Go online to find a fruit of the month club.
- Select dried fruits and nuts instead of candies.
- Give a gift certificate from a bakery that offers healthy, low-fat muffins.
- Offer to baby-sit or pet-sit so your loved one can enjoy a quiet night out or a relaxing getaway.



Potluck without the Extra Pounds

Did you know that the average American gains one pound between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day? That may not seem like a lot, but researchers say that for most people the weight never comes off. And over the years, those pounds add up. Planning a healthy holiday office party is one way to help put a chill on winter weight gain.

- If your office is having a potluck, be sure to include salad, whole grains, fruits, and vegetables on the sign-up list.
- Having a catered affair? Select a variety of entrees and side dishes so that your menu offers lots of choices and something from all the food groups.
- Avoid serving alcoholic beverages. They pack loads of extra calories.



Click to find healthy, festive holiday recipes with *Celebrate! Healthy Entertaining for Any Occasion.*

Brown is Beautiful!

WHOLE-GRAIN RICE

Arroz Brasileiro (Brazilian Rice)

This colorful and nutritious dish is a great way to add South American flair to any holiday celebration.

3 tablespoons olive oil, divided
 1/2 pound fresh mushrooms, sliced
 1/2 cup onion, chopped
 1/2 cup cabbage, finely chopped
 1 clove garlic, minced
 1 6-ounce can tomato paste
 1/3 cup water
 1 teaspoon fresh basil or 1/2 teaspoon dried basil
 1/2 teaspoon salt (optional)
 1/4 teaspoon pepper
 1/8 teaspoon celery seed
 1 1/2 cups uncooked brown rice
 3 cups hot water

Heat 1 1/2 tablespoons olive oil in a medium skillet over low heat. Add mushrooms, onion, cabbage, and garlic, and sauté for 10 minutes. Add tomato paste, 1/3 cup water, basil, salt, pepper, and celery seed and mix well. Simmer, covered, for 20 minutes. Heat remaining 1 1/2 tablespoons olive oil in a large skillet. Add rice and sauté until light brown. Add 3 cups hot water, then stir in vegetable mixture. Simmer, covered, for 10 minutes longer or until rice is tender. Makes 8 servings.

Approx. per serving: 195 calories, 4 grams of fat



[Click to order the American Cancer Society's *Healthy Eating Cookbook*.](#)



While no one can agree on exactly when and where rice was discovered, nutrition experts agree that whole-grain rice is a healthy choice. Brown rice is a great source of minerals such as manganese, selenium, magnesium, and phosphorus; vitamins B6, B3, and B1; and dietary fiber. The process that converts brown rice into white rice destroys at least 11 essential nutrients that are not replaced in any form even when white rice is enriched. So when you prepare your festive rice dishes this holiday season, remember: brown is beautiful!

In The Next Issue

- Say "Yes" to Yoga
- Embracing Lifelong Learning
- Healthy Hobbies

Articles contributed by Allison Davis, Virginia Ng, David Noel, Jim Ryan, Liz Taylor

All content for BecauseWeCare is provided by the American Cancer Society.

Meeting the growing consumer and employee demands for increased health services on the job, the American Cancer Society Workplace Services program provides corporate tools and resources to initiate or enhance existing employee health and wellness services.

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