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# CIGNA FIT DAYS

## FIT Holidays

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CIGNA in partnership with Healthy Kids Challenge  
Providing tools for employers, schools, and physicians



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## INTRODUCTION TO THE FIT HOLIDAY TOOL KIT

Holidays provide opportunities to create wonderful memories of special times and good foods with family and friends. However holidays can also be a time of stress. Too often people “shop ‘til they drop” and eat past the point of enjoyment and comfort. Too many times the day after a big holiday brings feelings of guilt.

Realistically, holidays are not a great time to lose weight or start major life-style changes. However, by being mindful of some stress causing pitfalls, and adopting a few healthy tips, holidays can be more enjoyable.

The following employee tip sheets provide a guide for individuals to look at holiday eating and physical activity levels and develop simple actions for work and at home. *FIT Holiday* actions are sure to put more JOY into the enjoyment of the holidays.

### Ideas to Kick Off the FIT Holiday Event

Hold a “Fall” into Wellness for a *FIT Holidays* event using one or all of the following ideas!

- Kick off the *FIT Holiday* event with holiday music and a special healthy menu in the employee cafeteria. Highlight fruits and vegetables. Consider taking ideas from the holiday tip sheets to “decorate” your menu with red and green apple slices, orange pinwheels and other colorful fruits and vegetables.
- Design *Fit Holiday* bulletin boards with something as simple as:
  - A background made of a checkerboard of primary colors
  - Lettering that reads: *FIT Holidays!*
  - Some of your employees’ tips for healthy holiday eating and physical activity.  
Either have wellness committees interview employees for the tips or ask employees to volunteer tips. It is even more fun if you can take a picture of the employee to post beside his or her tips.
- Suggest employee groups use ideas in the tool kit to plan *FIT Holiday* foods and activities.
- Consider raffling a bicycle or other active time equipment like tennis racquets or badminton sets. Use profits (if any) for staff wellness.
- Make the tip sheets easily available.
- Award “Holiday Fit Bucks” for employees who participate in a planned event, such as a “Kick Off Walk”. Or consider “after work walks”, a series of 20-30 min. organized walk and talk classes. Of course the “talk” during the classes is *FIT Holidays!* The “Holiday Fit Bucks” could be used to “purchase” healthy cookbooks, Frisbees, and other “get healthy” items.

**Enjoy FIT Holidays!**



# Employee Worksheet

## Holiday Tips

## Fit & Fun Families

### Take 10's for Joyful Holidays

Holidays are meant to be a joyful time with family and friends sharing special times. Too often, holidays are also a time of fatigue, stress, and weight gain. Take "10" this year to find joy, enJOYing your holidays!

Following are ideas that take 10 minutes to help release holiday stress and control your waist. Read through the suggestions and place checkmarks by those you would like to put into action. Or, use the examples to create your own ideas.

### Take 10 minutes to plan for enjoying holiday "tastes" without adding to the waist.

Simple steps help control overeating but still allow to you to enjoy holiday foods!

Things I could do at home or work:

- Eat something healthy before you "hit" the malls to reduce the temptation of "fries and soda" on the run or the "I'm starving munchies" when you get home.
- Add extra fruits and veggies to your shopping list and to your diet. The extra fiber will help fill you up and the extra vitamins will help give you a boost to protect against holiday cold and flu bugs.
- Quench your thirst through the day with water. For something different, add a twist of lime, lemon or orange to water or sparkling water.
- For work, use Pack-A-Snack ideas to have healthy snacks easily available. At home, have healthy snacks in easy reach.
- Eat a healthy snack or meal before going to parties. It is hard to resist the urge to munch a bunch with an empty tummy.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

#### Pack-A-Snack Ideas

- Apple and Mozzarella Cheese Sticks.
- Almonds, Pretzels, and Grapes.
- Cranraisins, Peanuts, and Low Fat Wheat Crackers.



# Employee Worksheet Holiday Tips

## Fit & Fun Families

### Take 10 minutes to release stress!

Take a break from the “doing, running, and giving”

Things I could do at home or work:

- Sit quietly and breathe deeply.
- Listen to relaxing music.
- Read a book and sip on herbal tea.
- Take a bath.
- Simplify meals.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

### Take 10 minutes to be active!

Physical activity will relieve the stress *and* help control the waist!

Things I could do at home or work:

- Walk: Hallways, malls, and stairs.
- Stretch: Try some gentle “arm chair” or standing stretches.
- Dance: Practice some fun steps, like line dancing, Macarena, or hip hop.
- Try something new: Yoga, Pilates, tai chi, or kickboxing to name a few.
- Shoot hoops: Miniature or full size! Just MOVE!
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

### Ideas to Simplify Meals

- Prepare a stew or other crock-pot meal that will be ready when you are.
- A month or so before the holiday season, prepare extra servings you can freeze and use for another day.
- Try some quick and easy “skillet” meals such as a stir fry or Spanish Rice.

It is as simple as having the ingredients on hand!

### Finally, Take 10 to be realistic!

Holiday time isn't the time to start a major weight loss plan, but it IS a time when you can feel healthier and find more JOY in sharing special times and foods with family and friends!



## Enjoying Traditional Holiday Foods FIT Holidays with GREAT Taste

### How?

#### Try Out FIT Holiday Tips

- Be reasonable with how much you eat!  
Eat slowly and savor smaller bites.
- At a party, remove temptation by standing anywhere other than by the buffet table.
- After a big meal or party, have plenty of water, fruits and vegetables.
- Make healthy party foods available.  
Colorful platters of fruits, raw veggies with low fat dips, or salsa with baked chips. Red apples, green kiwi, orange slices, yellow pineapple and purple grapes make a beautiful festive platter.
- Balance extra intake by cutting out something you might typically have each day. For example, cutting out a can of soda every day for a week will save a little more than 1000 calories. Or, depending on how you order your “latte”, cutting out 3- 12 ounce lattes during the week may save 300 - 600 calories.

#### Do you know?

You can save around 100 calories every time you

- Drink 8 oz. skim instead of 8 oz. whole milk.
- Substitute a no fat vinaigrette for 2 Tbsp. of regular salad dressing.
- Skip the whipped topping on hot drinks.
- Choose baked chips instead of regular (for approximately 20-25 chips).

FIT Holiday Changes I Want to Make:

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## How?

### **Make Recipe Ingredient Substitutions**

#### **Try Lower Fat Substitutions**

**USE**

Skim, 1%, or 2% milk  
Light (Neufchatel) or nonfat cream cheese  
Nonfat or light sour cream or plain low fat yogurt  
Light mayonnaise  
Low fat cheese  
Unsweetened fruit  
Single crust pie

**INSTEAD OF**

Whole milk  
Regular cream cheese  
Regular sour cream  
Regular mayonnaise  
Regular cheese  
Sweetened fruit  
Double crust pie

### **For Adventuresome Cooks: Make Recipe Changes**

- Reduce fat by 1/3 in gravies and sauces.
- Substitute applesauce for up to 1/2 the fat in recipes. Start by substituting 1/3 the total amount of fat at first. If you like the taste, go for substituting 1/2 the total amount of fat.
- Add whole grains by substituting whole grain flour for 1/4 to 1/2 of the white flour. For example, if the recipe has 3 cups of all purpose flour, use 3/4 cup whole grain and 2 1/4 cups all purpose flour.

Ingredient Substitutions or Recipe Changes I Want to Make:

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# Employee Worksheet Holiday Tips

## Fit & Fun Families

### Fantastically Festive! Fruits and Vegetables

Fruits and vegetables are more than healthy for the eye, they create eye appeal!

Decorate your holiday tables with the best and brightest colors, brought to you by nature!

## How?

### Simple “decorations” are colorful and yummy!

Add fruits to your salads for a special touch!

- Thinly sliced apples.
- Sliced strawberries.
- Dried cranberries or apricot bits.
- Fresh orange slices or mandarin oranges.

### Do you know?

*Studies show...older people eating diets rich in beta-carotene, vitamins C, and E, and the mineral zinc may greatly reduce their risk of age-related macular degeneration – the most common cause of irreversible blindness in the U.S.!*

### Do you know?

*Orange and yellow fruits and vegetables help to maintain a healthy immune system! Choose mangoes, oranges, squash, tangerines, sweet potatoes, carrots and more!*

*Add regular activity to give yourself even more of an immune boost!*

### Make it special. Dress it up with fruits and vegetables!

#### Merry Berry Topping

2 cups fresh (or unsweetened, frozen) berries  
e.g. strawberries, blueberries, raspberries

2 teaspoons undiluted frozen apple juice concentrate

Combine 1/2 cup berries and 2 teaspoons apple juice concentrate in a blender; process to a smooth sauce.

Pour over remaining berries.

Use the topping on pancakes, waffles, angel food cake, low fat pudding, or toss in bananas and pineapple to use as a fruit compote!

### Festive Veggie Toss!

Slice (in pieces about the same size) carrots, zucchini, onion, broccoli, and other veggies of your choice. For each two cups of veggies, toss with 1 tablespoon of olive oil and 1/2 teaspoon chopped garlic. In a skillet, stir fry until tender.



# Employee Worksheet Holiday Tips

## Fit & Fun Families

### Build the Party Around Fruits and Vegetables!

#### SALSA Your Holidays!

Start a new tradition. Hold a “Salsa Party”! In your invitation, challenge family and friends to find and prepare a special salsa recipe. Suggest they search for exotic or unusual recipes, like a tropical mango salsa or Caribbean salsa with black beans. At the party, provide baked chips and veggies for tasting the wonderful creations. This makes a great challenge for the workplace. Challenge co-workers and publish recipes in a company newsletter!

#### Decorate a Pizza!

Buy pre-made crusts and sauce or make your own. Create a “smorgasbord” of fruit and veggie toppings. Have guests “decorate” their pizzas with tasty morsels like red and green pepper slivers, onion, mushrooms, chopped broccoli, sliced tomatoes and more!

Round out your meal with salad and a delicious apple dish. For the apple dish: In a microwave safe baking dish, combine unpeeled, thinly sliced green and red apples with raisins or “cranraisins”. Sprinkle with graham cracker crumbs. Cover with microwave safe lid, and microwave until tender.

### My fruit and veggie holiday plans!

Ideas I want to try, and fruits and veggies to add to my holiday grocery list:

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# Employee Worksheet Holiday Tips

## Fit & Fun Families

### FIT Fun!

Give your family, friends, co-workers, and *yourself* the gift of physical activity during the holidays!

Physical activity is not only a wonderful gift of sharing and fun with others, it will help you handle stress *and* balance out the extra “goodies” you’ll be eating.

A good holiday FIT goal is for you to be active 30 to 60 minutes most days of the week.

## How?

### Do you know?

Regular physical activity helps you

- Feel energetic.
- Relieve stress.
- Feel good about yourself.
- Have healthy fun with family and friends.

### FIT Tips for Being Active:

Be prepared! Keep your walking shoes in the car for opportunities as they come along:

- A couple of extra “laps” around the mall before you shop.
- Park and walk. Park further from your final destination and enjoy the hike!
- After a big holiday meal. Get everyone out to walk and talk!
- For “walking” meetings, e.g. at work or for volunteer or professional meetings.

### Opportunities I Could Take To Be Active

<u>Type of activity</u>	<u>Where - How Often - When?</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



# Employee Worksheet Holiday Tips

## Fit & Fun Families

### Give the GIFT of Physical Activity!

#### Active Fun Gift Ideas:

- Gift certificate for a round of miniature golf.
- A basketball hoop that fits on a door.
- A Frisbee or Hula Hoop.
- A gift certificate for a month to a Family Y or gym.

Next time you go to a discount store, look around. Make a list of all the ACTIVE PLAY gift ideas you find:

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### Active Play for Holiday Work Parties!

Who said holiday work parties just have to be about food!

#### If you have parties away from the worksite, consider:

- Miniature golf.
- Ping pong.
- Indoor volleyball.
- Laser tag.
- Softball.
- Basketball.
- Badminton.

#### *Do you know?*

Regular physical activity helps

- You sleep better.
- Build strength and endurance.

#### If you have parties at the worksite, consider developing your own miniature "Holiday FITNESS Course":

- Shoot balls into a miniature basketball hoop.
- Walk the "balance beam", a straight line (made with string or yarn) on the floor.
- Musical chairs.
- Toss hoops over bottles of water.
- Toss bean bags through a hole.



## **FIT HOLIDAY...IDEAS FOR FAMILIES**

Creating wonderful lasting memories is one of the greatest holiday gifts families can give each other. FIT activities build fun, holiday memories *and* keep the whole family feeling great! Creative FIT ideas can also help build anticipation and excitement for holidays! A birthday, Halloween, Christmas, Hanukkah, or whatever holiday celebrated, there are FIT ideas to make it enjoyable and healthy.

## How?

### **Holiday Active Time is Not Just Exercise!**

Holidays are a great time for the family to:

- Be active with family walks, sledding, roller skating, and community recreation center events. Check with your community recreation center to see if there are plans for special family active time during the holidays. If there are no plans, make a request for activities now.
- Read and play. Younger kids will enjoy acting out holiday stories as you read. A great way to build anticipation is to go to the library together, and make fun selections.
- Have fun with simple "competitions" for the family during the holidays. Consider the following ideas:

Waste can basketball

Use a trash can (or small bucket) to "shoot" wadded pieces of paper (you can also use yarn balls or rolled-up clean socks)!

For a Halloween twist, try a *Pumpkin Toss*: Use a trash can (or small bucket) to toss paper plates kids have colored as pumpkins - or use orange colored foam balls.

Dance contest

See who can make up the funniest dance to any music you choose!

For a Halloween twist, try a *Monster Mash*: See who can make up the funniest dance to any Halloween music you choose! Switch "songs" at 1-2 minute intervals. Start with (and use intermittently) a fun song like the "Monster Mash".

Walk and see

Take a walk and see who can identify the "most" of anything you choose (red cars, blue doors, oak trees, yield signs, etc).

For a Halloween twist, try identifying anything orange, black, green, or Halloween related like pumpkins.

Write ideas for FIT activities your family will try: \_\_\_\_\_

## How?

### **Together, be creative with healthy treats!**

Use the following healthy holiday ideas to get you started.

Build a Snack in a Cone for any holiday!

Snack in a Cone

#### *Ingredients:*

Small, flat-bottomed ice cream cones

Fresh fruit, such as sliced banana, kiwi, strawberries, or finely chopped apples

Low-fat yogurt (or pudding)

Graham cracker crumbs (or crushed cereal)

#### *Directions:*

1. Place sliced fruit in the bottom of the cone.
2. Spoon low-fat yogurt (or pudding) over the sliced fruit.
3. Top with more sliced fruit.
4. Sprinkle with graham cracker crumbs (or crushed cereal).
5. As appropriate for the holiday, decorate by topping with chopped red, green, or orange fruits.

### **Find healthy treats for Halloween!**

“Trick or Treat Ideas”

- Sugar free gum.
- Miniature snack size bags of
  - Graham shapes.
  - Pretzels.
  - Animal or “people” crackers.
- Play dough.
- Stickers.
- Fun water color markers.
- Nickel, dime or quarter – tape with two sided tape on a square of orange paper with a Happy Halloween message to make it even more special!

For more ideas, check out a great resource!

“Ghoulishly Great Ideas for Halloween Parties and Trick-or-Treating,”

(<http://cspinet.org/new/pdf/halloween.pdf>) from the Center for Science in the Public Interest. CSPI has developed great Halloween tips.



# Employee Worksheet Holiday Tips

## Fit & Fun Families

### Enjoy creating “Food Art”!

For Halloween: Make “pumpkins” from orange pinwheels and kiwi as the stem. Use raisin or cranraisins for the eyes.

For winter holidays: Make a veggie wreath. Use broccoli flowerets and zucchini slices to make a green wreath. “Decorate” the wreath with carrot slices, baby tomatoes, and red pepper slices. Place a low fat dip made of equal parts salsa and plain, nonfat yogurt in the center of the wreath. Enjoy!

For any holiday: Make a “color wheel” fruit platter, using fruits of different colors as the spokes. Ideas include strawberries, green apple slices (peel on), red grapes, orange wedges (peel on or off), orange mango pieces. Dip apple slices in unsweetened pineapple juice to keep them from turning brown.

Write ideas for FIT holiday foods your family will try: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

