Holiday Tips for Diabetics

*Helpful Tips for Those Without Diabetes, Too!*

When January rolls around, will you be satisfied and proud that you did not let your eating get out of control? Here are a few time-tested tips from the American Association of Diabetes Educators to help you manage seasonal stress and the holiday food parade.

- Decide that you will enjoy the fun but still be healthy this season. *Spend a few quiet moments planning out this goal.*
- Make a written contract with yourself—literally, in writing, and sign it to help you stay motivated.
- Plan your plates to increase the veggies and reduce the starches, and choose the lean, nonfat meats on party trays that come your way.
- Alcohol—it’s everywhere. If your doctor says you can drink alcohol, remember it can interfere with some medications and insulin. Go with the light drinks—spritzers. Avoid the mixed drinks.
- Keep moving and stick with your exercise routine. After a meal, steer clear of the couch or lounger—take a walk instead.
- Consider a volunteer activity during the season. It will keep you moving, and the payback is comradeship while helping others and inspiring positivity and gratitude.
- Purposely plan time to unwind. Stress can wind you up like a clock spring.

If you’re traveling, be sure to plan your diabetic supplies (double up) to prevent problems with travel delays and disease management mishaps. The holiday season doesn’t need to take us off track when it comes to our need for healthy eating. Using these tips and making plans will help you enjoy the holidays and feel good about starting off the new year on a healthy and positive note!

Source: http://www.diabeteseducator.org (search “holidays”)

*Article Resource: Frontline—Employee Wellness, Productivity & You! Frontline newsletter is courtesy of the New York State Employee Assistance Program.*

See page 10 to learn how to request a copy before they are all gone!
Write Your Performance Improvement Plan

Having performance-at-work issues? Consider writing your own performance improvement plan. Don’t shy away from this tool that you may associate only with employees who have bigger performance problems. Employees who are proactive and take initiative when performance lags are an impressive and rare group. Join them in this process:

1. Make a list of deficiencies you believe need attention.

2. Ask yourself these diagnostic questions: a) Did you receive appropriate training? b) Do you understand the job expectations? c) Are there communication, workplace, or personal roadblocks in your life impeding success?

3. Discuss your list with your boss. Be open, lay it all out, and ask for input.

4. Now create an action plan. Make your objectives clear, specific, and measurable, and set deadline goals—for example, “Within 30 days, I will produce five product reports on time by each Friday at 10 a.m.”

5. Devise interventions to address your roadblocks. Consider needs, resources, time, training, and coaching to meet your goals. Finally, request short meetings with your boss at regular intervals to ensure accountability.

Taking steps like these to improve your performance shows initiative and supports your efforts to keep growing professionally. If you’d like to learn more about enhancing your work performance, check out these resources that are available through the EAP Lending Library. Book titles on this topic include:

- The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People
- 50 One-Minute Tips to Better Communication
- Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes Are High
- Getting Things Done
- Switch: How to Change Things When Change is Hard
- Time Management From the Inside Out

Contact the EAP Office at 442-5483 or bseckerson@albany.edu to make arrangements to stop by to browse, or you may request materials be sent to you via campus mail. To discover what other materials are available, go to: http://www.albany.edu/eap/eap_library.htm

Article Resource: Frontline—Employee Wellness, Productivity & You! Frontline newsletter is courtesy of the New York State Employee Assistance Program.
Sometimes an issue at home or work can have an effect on your ability to be as productive as you need to be. You don’t have to deal with it alone. Support is available through UAlbany’s Employee Assistance Program (EAP). The mission of UAlbany EAP is to provide services to support a healthy, productive workforce. Available to all employees is the voluntary, confidential Information, Assessment, and Referral Service provided by UAlbany EAP Coordinator, Brenda Seckerson. Take advantage of this confidential assistance available as an employee benefit.

To schedule an appointment for confidential Information, Assessment & Referral session, contact:

Brenda Seckerson  
EAP Coordinator  
442-5483  
bseckerson@albany.edu

Employee Assistance Program-sponsored events and services are open to UAlbany and Research Foundation faculty, staff, family members, UAS employees, GSEU members, and retirees.

Disclaimer: Material presented in this newsletter is intended for educational or informational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice of your qualified health professional.

"Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow; it empties today of its strength.”

~Corrie ten Boom (1892-1983)
Master the Teachable Moment

A teachable moment is an opportunity in which circumstances make teaching easiest. This is a powerful tool in parenting and therefore deserves strong consideration. Since teenagers are typically the most resistant to parental advice, parents value teachable moments; however, may seem few and far between. The good news is that you can facilitate their appearance. The key is increasing the number of activities that put you in close quarters with your teen. For example, cook together with your teen. Talk with your spouse or partner in front of your teen about something important like finances. Ask what your teen thinks about an emotional or shocking news story, or tell a story about yourself and a hard lesson you learned. Think about teachable moments whenever you are together, and you will spot more of them as they present themselves.

Stop Drowsy Driving

Sixty percent of adult drivers admit to driving a vehicle while feeling drowsy in the past year, and more than one-third have fallen asleep at the wheel—many repeatedly. Drowsy driving is a problem contributing to an estimated 1,500 deaths per year. Young adults, parents with small children, and shift workers are in the highest risk groups. Men fall asleep behind the wheel twice as often as women do.

Caution: If you decide to pull over to nap, a motel is the way to go. If you decide to use a rest area, only use a safe, appropriate rest area. Follow commonsense rules to stay safe. Never park on the shoulder of a highway to nap, and never sleep in a running car.

Source and for more information: National Sleep Foundation drowsydriving.org.

“Wisdom is knowing what to do next, skill is knowing how to do it, and virtue is doing it.”

~David Starr Jordan
Educator, Eugenicist, & Peace Activist (1851-1931)
Avoid Holiday Heart Syndrome

Researchers and members of the medical profession have long observed that the holiday season is notorious for heart attacks, heart failures, and newly diagnosed arrhythmias. Don’t ever second-guess or hesitate to treat what might be symptoms of a heart attack—dial 9-1-1.

Many factors may play a role in cardiac events, but one little-publicized phenomenon is called “holiday heart syndrome.” The term was coined to describe the sudden onset of cardiac reactions linked to heavy drinking. These may include:

⇒ a racing or pounding heart, possibly to the point of feeling dizzy or faint;
⇒ chest pain;
⇒ panic;
⇒ arrhythmia;
⇒ severe tachycardia; and
⇒ shortness of breath.

While socializing with alcohol, be aware that heavy drinking affects metabolism and is especially demanding on the heart. Casual drinkers, too, can be at risk for holiday heart syndrome as they try to keep pace with family and friends at all-day drinking gatherings that may last into the evening. Holiday heart syndrome can be a serious condition for someone who already has heart disease, too. Avoid alcohol abuse and binge drinking. Take care of your heart.

Source: [Link to source]

Resource: Frontline—Employee Wellness, Productivity & You! Frontline newsletter is courtesy of the New York State Employee Assistance Program.

Speaking of alcohol...

With the holiday season upon us, many will be partaking of some holiday cheer, namely alcoholic beverages. New York State has some of the toughest laws when it comes to driving under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs. It is illegal to drive with a blood alcohol content (BAC) of 0.08% or higher. Are you aware of some of the potential legal implications of getting a Driving While Intoxicated (DWI) or Driving While Ability Impaired (DWAI) violation?

- Average cost of first DWI/DWAI approximately $5,000—$10,000
- Revoking of license
- Possible jail time
- Impounding of vehicle
- Installation of Interlock System
- Loss of transportation and independence
- Leandra’s Law—First time offenders driving while intoxicated (.08 Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) or more) or impaired by drugs while a child of younger than 16 years old is in the vehicle may be charged with a class E felony punishable by up to 4 years in state prison.

This information can be very sobering! Be smart and have a designated driver. For more information about DWI/DWAI penalties, go to: [Link to website]
Aggressive Driving and Road Rage

Article Submitted by Inspector Jennifer L. Baldwin, UAlbany University Police Department

Bad driving behavior can happen during any time of the year. With many people feeling extra busy and in a rush, the holiday season can prompt even more of this type of behavior. We’ve all seen those occasional fights over a mall parking space!

**Aggressive driving** is a term often used for dangerous driving behaviors. These may include: failing to stop at stop signs, following too closely, passing school buses, driving on the shoulder or weaving in and out of traffic to pass, and other reckless, irresponsible behaviors. **Road rage** is often the result of extremely aggressive driving. Behaviors associated with road rage consist of running vehicles off the road, harassing confrontations, threatening behaviors and physical assault.

**Should you encounter any driver exhibiting these behaviors it is important to remember to:**

- Not make eye contact.
- Remain calm and relaxed.
- Try to move away safely.
- Not challenge an aggressive driver with increased speed or try to hold your position in your travel lane.
- Wear a seat belt and encourage your passengers to do the same.
- Ignore gestures and shouts and do not return them.
- Report aggressive drivers to law enforcement authorities and give a vehicle description, location, vehicle plate number and direction of travel.

**If an aggressive driver is following you, do not stop or leave your vehicle. Drive to the nearest police station.** It is important to make the distinction that **aggressive driving** is a traffic infraction while **road rage**, aside from gestures and yelling, is a criminal offense. Both can lead to revoked or suspended driver licenses, problems between family members and friends, loss of employment, and costly legal problems.


The University at Albany Police Department is staffed 24/7, 365 days a year. Please make sure you note our emergency numbers and store them in your phone. 518-442-3131 or 911 from any campus telephone. Be sure to visit our website at [police.albany.edu](http://police.albany.edu) You can follow us on Twitter @UAlbanyUPD and like us on Facebook at University at Albany Police Department.
For over 16 years, the UAlbany Secretarial/Clerical Council (S/CC) Executive Committee organized annual professional development workshops for UAlbany secretarial and clerical staff members, including both New York State and Research Foundation employees. The Council’s mission has always been to enhance professional development for all support staff; encourage a higher quality of personal well-being and workplace effectiveness; provide valuable resources and foster peer-networking through annual workshops.

Unfortunately, the S/CC executive committee membership has dwindled due to the retirement of seven members and has not regained its momentum since then. Consequently, there weren’t enough people to help plan and organize a workshop last year. However, we can change that in 2015 with your participation! If you are interested in this rewarding opportunity to join and ensure the furtherance of this valuable and long-standing UAlbany S/CC, I encourage you to do so! Please contact me, Verena Kemp-Nugent, via email at vkemp-nugent@albany.edu. I look forward to hearing from you! Thank you.

**Heating Help - NYS HEAP**

The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) is a federally funded program that issues heating benefits to supplement a household’s annual energy cost. HEAP also offers an emergency benefit for households in a heat or heat-related energy emergency. Additionally, HEAP offers a heating equipment repair and/or replacement benefit for homeowners with inoperable heating equipment.

HEAP may help you or those you know pay for electricity, propane, natural gas, wood, oil, kerosene, coal, or any other heating fuel. For all of the details about the various programs available and the income guidelines, go to: [http://otda.ny.gov/programs/heap/](http://otda.ny.gov/programs/heap/)

How energy efficient is your home? The less efficient your home is, the more money you are losing—not to mention heat!

Get a Comprehensive Home Energy Assessment and receive a customized plan to help you save on energy costs. For more information, go to the NYSERDA website.
‘Tis the Season...to Give Without Spending $$

This month, we may feel the warmth and joy of the season calling to us. “It’s the most wonderful time of the year!” From the Christmas trees decked out in their colorful ornaments to the tinsel and lights strung about, the beauty of the season can sometimes be forgotten as that one word hits us - “PRESENTS!” Suddenly it’s chaos as everyone starts thinking of their budget, creating mental lists, etc. It’s hard to imagine celebrating the season without thinking about giving and receiving presents. We spend hundreds of dollars buying gifts for people; spouses, partners, boyfriend/girlfriend, family, coworkers, bosses, neighbors, friends, and even pets. Pressure is put upon us to give the best present to please the receiver, but there are other ways to give without spending a ton of money. Here are some ideas to consider.

- **The gift of time:** Spend time with someone who you haven’t spoken to in a while. It can be an old friend from college/ high school, a family member, a neighbor, etc. Go for a hike together, walk your pets, go to a movie, get a cup of coffee and relax, etc. Try to catch up on what’s been happening in each other’s lives.

- **Donate your time to a charity:** Volunteer time at a charity of your choice whether it is an animal shelter or a local soup kitchen. Invite family and friends, and do it together! It’ll be a nice way of giving back. Many individuals and families are struggling due to the loss of their home, health, loved ones, and more. To offer help is a heartwarming gesture, and it can bring a smile to both the giver and the receiver. Don’t forget animals are living beings too, and they need love and attention as well! Go to a local animal shelter and volunteer your time. It’s a rewarding experience for you as well as the animals.

- **Get creative:** Instead of buying a gift, make one of your own! Don’t buy a plaque that has a pre-written poem on it or hire a photographer to take a family photo, DIY (DO IT YOURSELF). This is the time to let your inner talent and creativity flow. Write your own poem! You can decorate your work with glitter, markers, fabric, etc. If you have children, this would be the perfect family bonding time that shows your kids that the season isn’t about BUYING gifts but also about CREATING them. When it comes to that family picture, usually the most unexpected family pictures turn out to be the best and most memorable ones, especially if giving the photo to a loved one.

- **Agree not to exchange gifts:** If your budget doesn’t allow you to buy gifts, inform your friends and family that this year you won’t be giving gifts and that they don’t have to get you one. You can still give a handwritten note/ card or even baked goodies as your way of gift giving. Season-themed cookies in the shape of snowmen, snowflakes, Christmas trees, etc. are sure to be the tastiest gift out there!

- **If you really do want to give a gift:** Do a holiday swap or a Secret Santa. This works especially well with a group of friends/coworkers. Set a price point that way everyone stays within budget. Having a themed holiday swap/Secret Santa is always fun as it allows people to be more creative in the gifts that they get. For example, have a Hawaiian themed Secret Santa! Everyone now gets to think of Hawaiian themed present ideas such as starfish, beach items, sand decorations, etc. It also helps that you only have to get one gift instead of many.

The holidays are a special time to let family and friends know that you care, and giving gifts can be one way to express this. However, not all gifts require money to be spent. Gifts from the heart work just as well if not better! Going this route can put less pressure on you to spend money. Instead, more thought and effort can be placed on creating the “gift.” For more ideas on how to avoid getting caught up in holiday and Christmas consumerism, check out the resource used for this article for a number of novel ideas and alternatives to holiday consumption: [http://www.buynothingchristmas.org/alternatives/](http://www.buynothingchristmas.org/alternatives/) Have fun getting creative with your gift-giving or NON-gift-giving ideas while saving money at the same time!
Holiday Stress?

Choose Not to Buy Into It!

The festive season is here! It is time to take the well-deserved break from a hectic routine, and what better way to ring in the New Year than spending time with your family and closest friends.

Too Much to Do?

However, as you scout around trying to have the perfect holiday, you quickly realize that there is too much to do. Regardless of your multi-tasking abilities, winding up things at work, trying to beat the shopping queues, attending festive parties while also trying to spend time with near and dear ones, can leave you feeling stressed and exhausted.

Holiday Stress Can Be Anticipated

Fortunately, unlike other stresses we face in our day-to-day lives, “holiday stress” is something that can be foreseen and therefore tackled. Take these easy pre-emptive measures to ensure that the time-off leaves you with wonderful memories and a positive frame of mind that extends well beyond the holiday season.

Have a “To-Do” List

Have a “to-do” list for fun, togetherness, and leisure. Sure, the holidays are about maximizing fun and making every second count. Nevertheless, trying to do too much is the number one cause of holiday stress.

This season make a list of things you must do, whether it is an evening out at the holiday light festival, baking your grandmother’s pumpkin pie, or meeting old friends. Involve your family members in planning fun activities that you all can enjoy together. Pace out your planned activities to give you enough time for leisure, which could involve just relaxing with a good book at home.

If You Live With Others, Delegate Responsibilities

Between sprucing up the house, baking holiday goodies, buying gifts, sending festive greetings to friends and colleagues, and planning fun activities for the entire family—whew!—you inevitably find yourself being weighed down and racing against time.

You “Gotta Let Go!”

If you are a “don’t-worry-about-it-I’ll-take-care-of-it” sort of person, stop! You’re helping train a family system that does not think proactively about chores. That means you pick up the slack making yourself exhausted.

Instead of trying to cope with it all, delegate tasks to every member of the household based upon who has the best skills, most potential, or most desire for specific chores. If you are single and don’t have any means to delegate to others, then it’s all about “letting go” of some of the tasks and prioritizing what’s most important to you to do during the season.

Make Connections With the “Important People”

Make an effort to connect with “important” people in your life. Positive, nurturing relationships are an essential aspect of our overall feeling of well-being. The holidays offer the perfect occasion to reconnect with old friends and extended family members, reminiscing the past and getting up to speed on the happenings in each other’s lives.

Commit to Helping Someone

There is more happiness in giving than in receiving. In keeping with the spirit of giving during this holiday season, volunteer at a local charity or make a conscious effort to assist someone in need. If possible make it a family activity, with everyone contributing to the cause in some way. A good deed will not only add to your “happiness quotient” but will help you develop a greater sense of gratitude for all that you do have.

Maintain a “Happiness” Journal

This would be an ideal time to start a journal for capturing not only the holiday magic, but also the smaller moments of joy that are interspersed in your everyday life. This journal is exclusively about “what’s going well”. Strange as it sounds, documenting happy events can help you prepare, look for, and act to create more of them. Try it for 30 days and see if you don’t benefit from this exercise.

Holidays are certainly a time to create memories. However, ensuring that you feel truly rejuvenated would require some amount of forward thinking and a positive approach to beating the associated holiday stress. Making a conscious and concerted effort not to “buy in” to the cultural trend, and see how much better you’ll feel!
Merry Food Makeovers...Feasting between Thanksgiving and New Year’s
Go to: http://www.personalbest.com/extras/BUDWC/Images/CC2December14h.jpg

Make a Great Plate...Try dipping with vegetables for an energizing snack.
Go to: http://www.personalbest.com/extras/BUDWC/Images/CC4December14h.jpg

Tired of the treadmill? Why not try this for fitness fun!
Go to: http://www.personalbest.com/extras/BUDWC/Images/CC3December14h.jpg

2015 EAP Wellness Calendars: Order Now!
The supply of 2015 EAP Wellness Calendars is nearing its end. Make plans to order now before they are gone! The calendar offers an array of tips for your health and well-being that will help you throughout 2015 and beyond. To request a copy be sent to you via campus mail, call the EAP Office at 442-5483 or click on the “Special Promotions” icon on the EAP website’s home page. http://www.albany.edu/eap/

One per employee while the supply lasts.
Coming Soon!

UAlbany EAP Committee’s 1st Community Service Project

Next semester, the EAP Committee will be sponsoring several lunchtime craft classes teaching beginners’ crochet and loom knitting. All handmade items will be donated to Grassroot Givers, a local non-profit organization in Albany. This is your opportunity to join EAP in giving back to our community.

Be sure to check EAP’s January 2015 E-news for more information on this exciting project!

Submitted by Pamela Moniz, EAP Committee Member, M/C Representative
Family Matters

YOUR FINANCIAL LIFETIME

Join NPR’s Morning Edition Host David Greene and NPR Planet Money Correspondent Robert Smith for an unconventional discussion about saving for college, home ownership, retirement and your financial lifetime.

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 10, 2014 AT 7 PM
DOORS OPEN AT 6:30 PM

THE LINDA
WAMC’S PERFORMING ARTS STUDIO
339 CENTRAL AVE, ALBANY, NY 12206

THIS IS A FREE EVENT
RESERVE TICKETS AT WAMCARTS.ORG/EVENTLIST.PHP

JOIN THE CONVERSATION: #NPRPRESENTS
As we wind down 2014, we would like to thank you for your participation at the various EAP-sponsored events this year and for the many wonderful comments about the programs offered and the monthly EAP E-News. Your support and involvement with EAP helps to enhance our sense of community on campus and contributes to the overall well-being in the workplace.

The EAP Committee and I wish you and your family a safe and joyful holiday season. We look forward to continuing to support your well-being and serving you in 2015!

Brenda Seckerson, EAP Coordinator

EAP Committee Members:
Jessica Healy & Linda Gallagher (Co-Chairs)
Deborah Altrock
Monica Bartoszek
Jennifer Fila
Kathy Gurney
Merissa Mabee
Maryann Murray-Wygel
Pamela Moniz
Brendon Phillips

EAP-sponsored events and services are open to UAlbany & Research Foundation faculty, staff, family members, UAS employees, retirees, and GSEU members.

EAP is a joint labor/management program and is part of the NYS Employee Assistance Program - CSEA/CB2/GSEU/MC/NYSOPBA/PEF/UUP. Contact Info: 1 Airline Drive, Albany, NY 12235. 518.486.9769