



# eat crunchy veggies.

healthy changes  
everything:



BlueShield  
of Northeastern New York

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# Stop Germs. Stay Healthy. Wash Your Hands.

Hand washing is like a do-it-yourself vaccine—it involves five simple, effective steps: wet, lather, scrub, rinse, and dry. Regular hand washing, particularly before and after certain activities, is one of the best ways to remove germs, avoid getting sick, and prevent the spread of illness to others.

### Always wash your hands:

- Before, during, and after preparing food
- Before eating food
- Before and after caring for someone who is sick
- Before and after treating a cut or wound
- After using the toilet
- After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After touching an animal, animal feed, or animal waste
- After handling pet food or pet treats
- After touching garbage



### Did you know?

Keeping your hands clean is one of the most important things you can do to stop the spread of germs and stay healthy.

### Do one thing.

When washing your hands, scrub for at least 20 seconds (instead of watching the clock, hum the Happy Birthday song from beginning to end twice).

# Enjoy the Holidays Without the Weight Gain

On average, Americans gain approximately one to two pounds during the holiday season. Research shows these pounds tend to accumulate over the years.

With these strategies, you can still enjoy friends, family, and the holiday feast.

To avoid holiday weight gain:

- Don't skip meals. Before leaving for a party, eat a light snack like raw vegetables or a piece of fruit to curb your appetite. You will be less tempted to over-indulge.
- Survey party buffets before filling your plate. Choose your favorite foods and skip your least favorite. Include vegetables and fruits to keep your plate balanced.



- Eat until you are satisfied, not stuffed. Savor your favorite holiday treats while eating small portions. Sit down, get comfortable, and enjoy.
- Be careful with beverages. Alcohol can lessen inhibitions and cause overeating, while non-alcoholic beverages can be full of calories and sugar.
- Plan time for exercise to help relieve holiday stress and prevent weight gain.

### Did you know?

To burn off the calories from one 8-ounce glass of egg nog, you will have to do 2,100 jumping jacks – that's about 35 minutes.

### Do one thing.

Instead of a high-calorie drink, enjoy water infused with fruit.

## Get Fit – Give Yoga a Try

With the cold weather approaching, it's the perfect time to change up your fitness routine.

Yoga is a great way to exercise and has many benefits, including:

- Increased flexibility and strength
- More energy
- Weight loss
- Improved circulatory health

### Did you know?

The classic techniques of yoga date back more than 500 years.

### Do one thing.

Take a class to learn more about yoga; it's generally low-impact and safe for healthy people when practiced under the guidance of a well-trained instructor.

## Eat Fit – Pomegranates 101

You know it's the holiday season when you see a big bin of pomegranates at the grocery store. Pomegranates are picked when ripe so when they reach the stores, they're ready to enjoy; they're available September through January.

If you've never purchased a pomegranate, here's what to look for:

- The heavier the fruit, the juicier it will be.
- Whole pomegranates keep well at room temperature, away from direct sun, for several days or in plastic bags in the refrigerator for up to 3 months.
- The arils (the juice sac containing the seed) can be refrigerated for up to 3 days. Freeze in single layers on trays, then up to 6 months in airtight containers.

### Did you know?

Pomegranates are high in vitamin C and potassium. They are also a good source of fiber and low in calories.

### Do one thing.

Add some tasty, healthy pomegranates to your diet.

## Live Fit – Avoid Extra Holiday Stress

- Be realistic. The holidays don't have to be perfect or just like last year. As families change and grow, traditions and rituals often change as well.
- Take a breather and make some time for yourself.
- Plan ahead. Set aside specific days for shopping, baking, visiting friends, and other activities.
- Stick to a budget. Before you go gift and food shopping, decide how much money you can afford to spend.

### Did you know?

The holiday season can often bring extra stress.

### Do one thing.

Instead of buying individual family gifts, start a family gift exchange to save on time and money. It will be a fun way to start a new tradition.

## Arugula with Pomegranates, Blue Cheese, and Pistachios



### Ingredients (makes 2 servings):

- 4 cups arugula
- 1/2 cup pomegranate arils
- 1/4 cup crumbled blue cheese
- 2 tablespoons pistachios, shelled

### Pomegranate Vinaigrette:

- 1 teaspoon pomegranate juice
- 1 teaspoon balsamic vinegar
- 2 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil
- Salt and fresh pepper

### Preparation:

Whisk vinegar, pomegranate juice, olive oil, salt, and pepper in a small bowl.

Place arugula on two plates, top with blue cheese, pomegranates, pistachios, and vinaigrette.

### Nutritional information:

Nutritional Info: 195.3 calories, 13 g fat, 6.7 g protein, 13.7 g carbohydrates, 3.9 g fiber

Source: [skinnytaste.com](http://skinnytaste.com)