

Happy Holidays from Northside Family Medicine!




Saturday appointments are a huge hit and should expand in January!

Given the tremendous response in November and the interest already on the Saturdays we are open in December (the 4th and the 18th), we plan on opening every Saturday in January and will at least offer them through March. For now, the hours will be from 9AM to noon. Thanks for your interest and we are happy to provide another service to help you out!

Tips for a healthy and happy holiday season

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'Tis the season for much time for celebration with friends and family. It can be a very joyous time of the year for most but it can also have its downfalls. According to a recent weight watchers report the average American gains 7-10 pounds during the holiday season and in many cases much of it stays on after the holidays. Then keep in mind the increased rates of suicide, alcohol abuse, and domestic violence and where did all that joy go anyway? Here are some tips to try to keep in mind to prevent some of these downfalls and make your holiday season enjoyable and safe.

Stress relievers for the holidays-

With these tips (if you stick to them) and some planning ahead you can prevent many of the pitfalls that lead to a stressful holiday season. But if you still find it overwhelming you are not alone- we are here to help!

1. **Have realistic expectations-** know your limitations and remember you can spread things out through the whole holiday season. Pace yourself and remember nothing needs to be perfect. It is a time to enjoy each others company not show off the perfect turkey. Also remember that things change- your older children may not be available as much (if at all), and people have other demands and expectations from other family and friends. Enjoy the time you have with people and look for new ways to celebrate and have memories- even if they aren't on Christmas or Thanksgiving!
2. **Don't over commit-** Remember you can't be everything to everyone and you can't do it all.
3. **Learn to say no-** Again know you don't have to do everything especially if it just

northsidefammed@gmail.com but first make sure you are familiar and agree with our online consent form at www.northsidefammed.com!

Ways to watch the weight and still enjoy the season!

"Tis the season" is not the green light to eat your way through the holidays. Just because it is the holidays don't throw your eating habits out the window. Too often, the extra piece of pumpkin pie at Thanksgiving is only the beginning. Then, the mentality of "its the holidays I can splurge" becomes the norm when someone drops some cookies off at your office (not that we are opposed to receiving cookies in the holiday season!). Moderation is still the key and if you say yes to that cookie you may need to say no to something else later in the day.

1. Use a smaller plate – It will help you watch your portion size.

2. Keep up with exercise – Just because you are busy don't use it as an excuse to skip out on exercise that will help keep the pounds off and relieve the stress.

3. Don't stress eat- Exercise or get help but eating when you are stressed (especially poor food choices) is never a good idea.

brings more stress to a stressful time of year when it should be joyful.

4. **Plan ahead, set boundaries and ask for help-** See #2 and 3 above and do your best to prepare and do things ahead of time but don't stress over the planning! If you learn to say no to things you should have time to prepare for other things and still enjoy those unexpected holiday moments like watching Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer with the family!
5. **Exercise-** Don't forget to exercise and keep up with healthy habits. Make sure you also keep some time for yourself to maintain your sanity!
6. **Set a budget and stick to it-** Remember it's not about the toys or presents, it is about the memories. No present is worth the stress it generates if you have to pay for it for the next 6 months or longer!
7. **Holidays are not always full of joy-** If there are family issues it is usually better to address them. However, you want to give family members a certain amount of leeway and understanding as they are likely just as stressed as you this time of the year.
8. **Look for ways to serve others-** What better way to spread holiday cheer than helping others who are less fortunate this time of year.
9. **Free is good!-** Look for free and fun activities like looking at holiday decorations, tree lighting ceremonies, going window shopping, or playing out in the snow and enjoying some hot chocolate at home.
10. **Know when to say when-** Remember alcohol is never the answer. Alcohol is a depressant and will only make things

4. Look for healthier alternatives to your holiday cooking-

It may change the flavor a little but cooking with skim milk (or even 2% instead of whole milk) will make a big difference. Using something like "I can't believe it's not butter" in a recipe instead of butter can cut your calories in half and the taste difference is minimal.

There are lower calorie dressings, beers, and wines as well. All these things will make a huge difference.

5. Don't skip meals- Skipping meals because of the anticipation of a big party with lots of food is a bad idea. This will lead to overeating at the party on high calorie foods out of starvation. A better approach is to have several small healthy meals during the day.

6. A balanced plate is best-

Don't load your plate with all the high calorie items. Try to balance your plate out with some healthy food choices as well.

7. Eat well at other times-

Choose healthier options at other meal times to help compensate for your high calorie outings. When you are out shopping don't just stop for fast food because it is easier- and if you do make good decisions at the drive thru window.

8. Alcohol is a huge source of calories- Throughout the

worse. Using it responsibly or not at all is the best way to go.

11. **Don't feel guilty for feeling sad-** If you recently lost someone close or you are just missing someone this holiday season it is ok to feel this way! Sadness, grief and tears are part of life as well. That being said, if it becomes an issue where you can't enjoy anything, can't sleep, or concentrate or have thoughts of hurting yourself you need to contact us or someone as soon as possible. Using some of these other tips could help as well!
12. **Isolation is not the answer-** Loneliness can be a real issue during this season. It can lead to more thoughts of self pity, inadequacy and depression. Get out and do something, call someone to catch up or come in and we can discuss other options.

Some tips taken from the Mental Health America website and MayoClinic.com

We've added a staff member to better serve you!

Brenda Robles has just joined our staff to give you another familiar face and voice to help you out! She is slowly easing into everything as there is much to learn so if you talk to her make sure you welcome her and let me know if you have any feedback with her or any of our staff!

Have a safe and happy holiday season!

From all of the staff at Northside we want to wish you a safe and happy holiday season! We want to thank you for all of your support and extend our greetings to you and your family!

More newsletters are on

holiday season and beyond remember moderation and how many empty calories you add with alcohol!

9. You can say no!- Don't feel obligated to eat everything on your plate or have seconds to make the cook feel good. It won't make your waistline feel good in the long run!!

10. Give Healthy options at your dinners and parties- Make sure you have healthy alternatives available for you and your guests so everyone can keep things in check!

Some tips taken from BetterHealthUSA- and [www.pivotal advisor.com](http://www.pivotaladvisor.com)

Online scheduling and same day appointments are great benefits at Northside Family Medicine.

Many of our patients are already taking advantage of online scheduling. If you forget to call during office hours or run into a problem in the middle of the night and want to make sure you get an appointment the next day you can schedule it online. Even if an appointment isn't available online just call us after 830AM and before 3PM on a normal business day and we'll get you in that day. Any time of

the way!

This is our Sixth newsletter and we are trying to touch on important topics for lots of our patients. But please let us know if you have other thoughts or things you would like to include. We'd love to hear from you!

the day just go to our website www.northsidefammed.com and follow the easy instructions to schedule online any time.

The greatest compliment you could ever give us is the referral of your family and friends. We thank you for your trust. Northside Family Medicine

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from ac- up to 4/15/10 last 18 months



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