

Squeezing in exercise over the holidays

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(HealthDay)—With a hectic holiday schedule, exercise often falls by the wayside. But finding ways to sneak in activity will help you avoid weight gain and ease some of the stress this season can bring, according to

University of Maryland researchers.

First, don't give up cardio [exercise](#) just because you don't have time to do your usual daily workout. Steal 5 minutes here and there a few times a day to get close to your goals. And opt for the most convenient choices, like running in place wherever you are. And even when you have to cut down on time, don't ease up on the intensity.

Turn holiday chores into fitness opportunities. Before you start your [gift shopping](#) at the mall, walk its length for 30 minutes. Take the stairs rather than an escalator or elevator. And remember little tricks like parking farther from your destination.

Engage your kids and holiday houseguests in fitness. Plan a family run or cross country ski adventure. Go sledding, snowshoeing or ice skating, or build a snowman. Instead of driving to see neighborhood holiday displays and decorations, organize a walking tour.

If a vacation is part of the plan, consider a mountain [holiday](#) with skiing, skating and tobogganing.

No matter the destination, if you're traveling by plane or train, once you get to the terminal, walk the perimeter instead of watching the TV monitors.

Take these steps to step up exercise now, and you won't have to worry about making it one of your New Year's resolutions.

More information: Children's Hospital Colorado has [more ways to stay active as a family](#) during the holiday season.

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