

# HOLIDAY HEALTH CHALLENGE 2021

## WEEK 6



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Helloooooo, Holiday Health Challengers!

It's the final countdown...to 2021 and to our Holiday Health Challenge. Week 6 is upon us!

This week's themes align with some of the things that go along with the week between Christmas and New Year's...more free time, enjoying family and friends, getting your house in order, looking back.

We focus on paying attention to those liquid calories, getting more out of your cleaning, incorporating movement ideas from the past, and breathing techniques.

I congratulate all of you for taking part in this challenge, and giving yourself the gift of better health. I hope you found all of our information useful, helpful and encouraging. I want to thank all of the team leaders who helped with this: Tony Casale, Cindy Agan, Teri Somers and Jen McElroy, as well as Taylor Bannish and Ryan Levine for all of their help on the back end. It was a team effort, and one that I sincerely hope you all got some benefit out of.

**This week's bonus challenge:** do a workout on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day

Don't forget:

Raffle tickets should be filled out for every week that you were successful in meeting your goals (if they haven't been already)

If you completed all the bonus challenges, let your team leader know, and also let them know t-shirt size so that we can order them for you

One winner will be chosen at random to win a prize

One team will be randomly chosen, and members will receive a prize

Here's to a happy, healthy new year, and I hope you all start 2022 feeling better about your overall health than you have in the past!

Yours in wellness

Michelle

## **MIX IT UP!**

Your last week to increase that movement! This week, our movement portion will be two-fold. Since it's the last week of the challenge and the last week of the year, we'll have a nostalgic recap, and try to hit up everything we've done since week 1. In addition, I want you to think about putting extra vigor and make effort to work your muscles into every cleaning chore you do.

Dusting – use this as an opportunity to stretch. Really reach those arms up or out, take big lunging steps between areas to stretch out legs and hip flexors.

Vacuuming or mopping – extend that arm and then pull it back as far as far as you can. Switch arms occasionally. And pick up that pace – push with gusto!

Cleaning tub or anything low – really put your back and shoulder into it, and use some elbow grease!

Laundry – squat while you're filling your washer or emptying your dryer. When lifting that basket, put your legs into the lift. Stand and do a partial squat while loading, and make separate trips to put all the laundry away.

### **A look back:**

<b>WEEK 1</b>	Incorporate short daily walk(s)
<b>WEEK 2</b>	Add one extra workout/class
<b>WEEK 3</b>	Walk stairs, do step ups or high knees
<b>WEEK 4</b>	10 squats/10 pushups 3-5X day or mini workouts
<b>WEEK 5</b>	Stretch for 15 mins before bed

You have many different ways to increase that movement, and I hope you will do all of them at least once this week. However, If you found some of these that were particularly effective or worked better for you or, on the flip side, those that didn't work for you, by all means, mix and match whatever works. Hopefully, if you have some extra free time, as many people will, you can fit in several extra sessions of movement!

\*\*\*\*\* RING IN THE NEW YEAR RIGHT! GOOD LUCK! \*\*\*\*\*

## THINK BEFORE YOU DRINK

Many of us are aware of the caloric content of the foods we put in our mouths. But we are often much less likely to factor in the drinks that we consume. Just because we don't chew it doesn't mean it's free of calories!

In this week between the holidays, many of us have more free time and are getting together with friends and family - having get togethers, out for coffee, dining out, shopping for or returning items - and are more likely to consume liquid calories. I think visuals are often the best way to get a really good understanding of things, and I found the two below to be eye opening.

Do these charts mean you abstain from some of your favorites drinks that you might partake in? No, that is not my point! However, awareness should still be key. You can make other minor changes/adjustments during your day or evening. Choose your drinks wisely ("is this really worth it?") and then make adjustments with what you eat.



**Total Daily Calories From Beverages: 848 calories**

## How many calories are you drinking?

**Glass of white wine (5 oz)**  
= Piece of bread



**Pint of beer (16 oz)**  
= Bag of popcorn



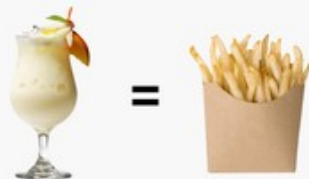
**Pint of cider (16 oz)**  
= Cheese pizza slice



**Margarita (10 oz)**  
= Plain bagel



**Piña colada (10 oz)**  
= French fries (4 oz)



**Mojito (10 oz) =**  
Potato chips (1.75 oz)



## **CATCH YOUR BREATH!**

Christmas is over, and it's time to catch your breath after the flurry of activity and hustle and bustle. Breathing techniques have many benefits, including reducing stress, lowering heart rate and blood pressure, improving sleep quality and strengthening the lungs, among others. Try some of these breathing exercises listed below to help get to a better you!

### **1. Pursed lip breathing**

This simple breathing technique makes you slow down your pace of breathing by having you apply deliberate effort in each breath.

You can practice pursed lip breathing at any time. It may be especially useful during activities such as bending, lifting, or stair climbing.

Practice using this breath 4 to 5 times a day when you begin in order to correctly learn the breathing pattern.

#### ***To do it:***

Relax your neck and shoulders.

Keeping your mouth closed, inhale slowly through your nose for 2 counts.

Pucker or purse your lips as though you were going to whistle.

Exhale slowly by blowing air through your pursed lips for a count of 4.

### **2. Diaphragmatic breathing**

Belly breathing can help you use your diaphragm properly. Do belly breathing exercises when you're feeling relaxed and rested.

Practice diaphragmatic breathing for 5 to 10 minutes 3 to 4 times per day.

When you begin you may feel tired, but over time the technique should become easier and should feel more natural.

#### ***To do it:***

Lie on your back with your knees slightly bent and your head on a pillow.

You may place a pillow under your knees for support.

Place one hand on your upper chest and one hand below your rib cage, allowing you to feel the movement of your diaphragm.

Slowly inhale through your nose, feeling your stomach pressing into your hand.

Keep your other hand as still as possible.

Exhale using pursed lips as you tighten your stomach muscles, keeping your upper hand completely still.

You can place a book on your abdomen to make the exercise more difficult. Once you learn how to do belly breathing lying down you can increase the difficulty by trying it while sitting in a chair. You can then practice the technique while performing your daily activities.

### **3. Deep breathing**

Deep breathing helps to relieve shortness of breath by preventing air from getting trapped in your lungs and helping you to breathe in more fresh air. It may help you to feel more relaxed and centered.

To do this:

While standing or sitting, draw your elbows back slightly to allow your chest to expand.

Take a deep inhalation through your nose.

Retain your breath for a count of 5.

Slowly release your breath by exhaling through your nose.

### **4. Equal breathing**

Equal breathing is known as sama vritti in Sanskrit. This breathing technique focuses on making your inhales and exhales the same length. Making your breath smooth and steady can help bring about balance and equanimity.

You should find a breath length that is not too easy and not too difficult. You also want it to be too fast, so that you're able to maintain it throughout the practice. Usually, this is between 3 and 5 counts.

Once you get used to equal breathing while seated you can do it during your yoga practice or other daily activities.

#### ***To do it:***

Choose a comfortable seated position.

Breathe in and out through your nose.

Count during each inhale and exhale to make sure they are even in duration. Alternatively, choose a word or short phrase to repeat during each inhale and exhale.

You can add a slight pause or breath retention after each inhale and exhale if you feel comfortable. (Normal breathing involves a natural pause.)

Continue practicing this breath for at least 5 minutes.