

# Foodsense **Surviving the festive season**



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**W**ITH THE festive season fast approaching we start to ponder the many tasks ahead of organising the perfect family Christmas. So how can you stay on top of things - here are some helpful hints for you and your loved ones.

**1** The golden rule is to plan. Make a list of events you are definitely going to and factor in a day in between to recover. Make a list of presents to get, things to do and start ahead of time. Leaving it all to the last minute will not only cost you more but can wear you out

**2** Ensure you get plenty of sleep. Sleep deprivation will put you in a stress mode instantly and even if you skip a few of hours of sleep ever so often, you will not look your best for social occasions. So catch up on this

vital resource by taking short naps (with some meditation thrown in) in between

**3** Eat a little snack before going out. This can be something small like celery or a carrot stick dipped in humous or taramasalata, a tiny Spanish sausage, a quail's egg or a few nuts. This will stabilise your blood sugar and buffer your system against getting a bad hangover the morning after

**4** Ensuring you drink a few glasses of water (mineral or filtered) before having a drink as alcohol makes you dehydrated very fast

**5** If you know there will be a set menu with particularly rich foods that tend to sit on your stomach for a while, eat a piece of fresh papaya or pineapple and a

teaspoon of lecithin prior to going out and/or a capsule of plant digestive enzymes at the beginning of the meal. You will find your energy will not be drained by your digestive function. But eating little of everything and finishing only half full is the key!

**6** Once you are back home and feel you have overindulged, have a drink of ½-1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda mixed into a glass of water with a little apple or lemon juice. At the next meal eat a few pieces of fresh fruit with skins (apples are good as they are high in pectin to absorb toxic alcohol metabolites) and a big portion of vegetables to provide lots of antioxidants and other vitamins and minerals to rebalance the body.

Once you prepare yourself this way, you can enjoy the season knowing that you will survive it in style.

Merry Christmas and a happy New Year!

## Yoga class

**Gail Willis continues her series of simple hatha yoga moves**

YOGA INSTRUCTOR Gail Willis has recruited her mother Janet Rogers to help demonstrate yoga exercises in *Choice* every month.

In each picture Janet, who is 79, illustrates the basic position for each exercise - the easiest one for the beginner. Gail illustrates the maximum position for each exercise.

You should start following Janet's position and try to increase gradually towards Gail's advanced level.

"Only build up to a level that you are comfortable with," says Gail, who is a full-time yoga instructor in Kettering. "With some exercises you will be able to do the maximum level

of stretch, but with others you will achieve only the basic move. It doesn't matter - even the easiest will be good for you and make you feel good."

### Find out more

- To contact Gail, tel: 01536 515311, mobile: 07762 575118
- To find a yoga class where you live, ask at your local library, county council offices, tourist information centre, sports centre, a local school or anywhere that runs evening classes.

### Calf stretch



This not only stretches the calf muscles but also the back of the knee tendons and Achilles tendon.

Janet and Gail have exactly the same pose. Step back on one leg that is bent with your other leg extended in front and straight with your toes pointing up. You should feel a nice stretch in the calf of the leg at the front.

For the gentle version keep your hands on top of your thighs like Janet or for a more challenging version take your arms back and straight like Gail. Hold for five to ten seconds and repeat on the other leg. Repeat again three more times.