

**2** **Take time to relax.** A recent survey finds that, in addition to holiday pressures, 80 percent of Americans are stressed out over the economy or work and family issues. Of those polled, 60 percent say they're angry and irritable—not exactly feelings conducive to holiday cheer. Even more cause for concern, 53 percent admit that they're fatigued and 52 percent aren't sleeping well. That makes it all too easy to overeat, overimbibe, or take stress out on others.

"People can't multitask very well," says MIT neuroscientist Earl Miller, PhD, "and when people say they can, they're deluding themselves." Turn off the cell phone, computer, and television. Actively practice stress management techniques: deep breathing, meditation, t'ai chi, visualization, or yoga.

Treat yourself to a massage or a manicure. Take breaks with relaxing herbal teas, and watch your caffeine intake. *Taste for Life* editorial advisor Ann Louise Gittleman, PhD, CNS, recommends drinking a naturally caffeine-free herbal coffee, Teecino, made from herbs, fruits, grains, and nuts.

If you're having trouble sleeping, make sure you're getting enough calcium and magnesium (along with vitamin D), especially at bedtime. A number of herbs (California poppy, hops, kava, lemon balm, passionflower, and valerian) help induce sleep, as do many homeopathic sleep formulas. Rescue Remedy is a terrific stocking stuffer, even for four-legged friends who may be agitated and confused by all the holiday activity.



# 7 sure-fire tips

FOR HEALTHY HOLIDAYS

**T**he season of giving is upon us. But if you've been watching your college fund or investment account drop faster than a lead balloon, you may need to be mindful of holiday spending.

For some, the flurry of holiday activities can seem like one more ball to juggle in an already frenzied schedule. If you're unable to be with family, you may need to work even harder to fight the blues this time of year. Mix in stress and the tendency to over-indulge, and it's no wonder that health suffers this time of year—whether that's as benign as acne outbreaks or as serious as heart attacks. Consider these commonsense ways to enjoy the holidays—and stay healthy—no matter what the world throws your way this December. ▶