

# HOLIDAZE SURVIVAL GUIDE

---

TARA RYAN HEALTH

---



## STAYING HEALTHY OVER THE HOLIDAYS: 12 WAYS TO STAY ON TRACK THIS YEAR

I get it. Staying on track over the holidays is *haaaard*. And the mere fact that IT IS the holidays, almost makes it the perfect excuse **not** to stay on track! ...But then January comes, and we feel like shit. Both physically (because we've gained weight), and mentally (because we're mad at ourselves for throwing away all of our hard work). But not this year!!

Eating well is not about perfection, *especially* over the holidays! We are human and perfection is impossible (and so NOT fun!). Let that idea go!

A better approach to the holidays and your health in general, is to know (and prioritize) what serves you, while also recognizing what doesn't. It's about doing simple, little things to help keep you on track. Just like anything else in life, balance and preparation are key to staying healthy. Below I've given you 12 strategies to help you navigate the holidays without feeling deprived AND without throwing away all of your hard work! I've tried to make them as easy as possible to ensure your success. I really hope this helps! ~ Tara xo

# HOLIDAZE SURVIVAL GUIDE - TARA RYAN HEALTH



## HYDRATE!!

Hydrate! I cannot stress the importance of hydration enough. I constantly see people who do lots of great things for their health but still fail to drink enough water. Water is essential for so many things!! Including energy levels, proper digestion and efficient metabolism function (all so important over the holiday season!). Water also plays a huge part in regulating your appetite, so be sure to drink up throughout the day! And, if **you've indulged the night before**, there's no better way to reset than by starting your day with a warm glass of lemon water. Simply squeeze the juice of half a lemon into a glass of warm water and drink up! This naturally detoxes your body, and promotes elimination.



## GET YOUR SLEEP

"Those who don't sleep, overeat!". Lack of sleep has been linked to overeating - **especially the** overeating of junk food. The 2 hormones that regulate hunger, ghrelin and leptin, are affected by sleep. Ghrelin stimulates hunger and leptin decreases it. When the body is sleep deprived, ghrelin levels spike and leptin levels fall, causing an increase in hunger...making it virtually impossible for you not to overindulge on Christmas goodies! Do yourself a favour and make sleep a priority this holiday season.



## ADD IN A DIGESTIVE ENZYME AND PROBIOTIC

With all the different foods and overindulging going on, you could likely use a little help with your digestion. **Adding in a digestive enzyme** will help your stomach digest your food. This gives you more energy because **a)** you'll be better able to absorb the nutrients in your food (which provide you with energy), and **b)** you won't be using all your precious energy digesting your meal. **Adding in a probiotic** will help to improve the balance of healthy bacteria in your gut. This aids in immune function, weight loss, digestion, nutrient absorption, and promoting a happy mood. Fa-la-la-la-la!



# HOLIDAZE SURVIVAL GUIDE - TARA RYAN HEALTH



## THINK ABOUT YO' DRINK!

We often forget about what we're drinking when we're trying to improve our health or lose weight. But drinks are just as important! Ditch (or strictly limit) high sugar drinks such as juice, fancy coffees, sugary cocktails and pop. They are all incredibly high in sugar and wreak havoc on your body. Sugar negatively affects your mood, suppresses your immune system, and not surprisingly, leads to weight gain. You should be primarily drinking water (as I've already mentioned!). Of course, the occasional drink is fine, just be mindful of the sugar you're consuming through drinks alone.



## EAT FAT

Healthy fat that is! Eating healthy fats can help crush your cravings while also providing your body (and brain) with a positive boost. Sarah Wilson, author of "**I Quit Sugar**", eats two tablespoons of coconut oil after lunch or dinner, to satisfy her sweet tooth. Naming it her "full proof trick" that "kills her appetite for about four to five hours". (I do this with MCT oil and **IT WORKS!!**). Other healthy fats include avocados, extra virgin olive oil, nuts, seeds, fatty fish and omega 3 oil's.



## CHEW YO' FOOD!

This may sound silly, but most of us only chew our food 3-4 times before swallowing. This puts a **HUGE** strain on our digestive system (hello bloating and post meal exhaustion!). Our mouths are the first stop in the digestion process. By chew-chew-chewing your food, you take advantage of your natural digestive enzymes, which are secreted in your saliva as you chew. Aim for 20 chews per mouthful. Plus, paying closer attention to the pace at which you chew your food, can make a huge impact on the total amount of food you consume (not that you're trying to avoid eating, just **overeating**).



# HOLIDAZE SURVIVAL GUIDE - TARA RYAN HEALTH



## PLAN AHEAD

If you're going out to a party, eat a healthy meal before leaving the house. That way, you're not tempted to binge or overindulge in foods that won't serve you. And when eating out:

- Read the menu online ahead of time so that you make your decision when you're not starving.
- Be the first one to order so that you're not tempted by what others choose.
- Avoid getting "extra cheese" or "extra sauce" added to your meals.
- Always make sure that what you've ordered contains vegetables!!



## DON'T RELY ON WILLPOWER ALONE

Keep junk foods out of the house. The stress of the holidays gets the best of us, and stress is one of the major causes of overeating. Stress also leads us to eat foods that we normally wouldn't. So don't rely on willpower alone....keep junk food as far away from your cupboards as possible! Believe me, you'll have plenty of opportunities to eat treats over the holidays, so you won't be missing out just because you don't have it in your house!



## INDULGE WISELY

Indulging is absolutely ok when you're indulging in something you **ACTUALLY want, love or crave**. But often we go into autopilot when there are Christmas goodies around and we just eat because they're there. It's tempting to sample everything, but try to say no to the things that you don't *truly* want, and save your indulgences for the foods that you really love and will thoroughly enjoy! **When you are about to indulge, ask yourself: is this something I really want, love or crave?** If the answer is no, move on. And if the answer is yes, enJOY the crap out of it and savour every bite!



# HOLIDAZE SURVIVAL GUIDE - TARA RYAN HEALTH



## HALT

This strategy is from Keri Gans' book, *Small Changes for Long Term Success*. There are 4 major reasons that people will eat. They're either: Hungry, Angry, Lonely, or Tired. Ask yourself before eating, am I **really** hungry? Or am I angry, lonely, tired (bored, stressed, etc)? If you ARE hungry, then of course, eat. If you aren't "really" hungry, try addressing the root cause instead. Maybe you're stressed or tired and actually just need some a nap or long, hot bath. Maybe the holidays bring up sad feelings for you and you're eating to avoid feeling them. Really try to pause before snacking and ask yourself: Am I *really* hungry?



## DON'T PICK - MAKE A PLATE

It's undeniably very easy to lose track of your intake, when bites of food float straight from the serving dish and into your mouth with no plate in between! If you want to sample the spread, go for it. Just make yourself a plate, and sit your cute butt down to enjoy it! That way, you'll a) slow down and savour the food, and b) have a better idea of how much you're eating.



## BAKE YOUR OWN GOODIES

Satisfy your sweet tooth with homemade goodies. By baking your own treats, you will avoid eating all the toxic ingredients and mounds of sugar that are present in almost all store bought treats. Plus (and this is the best part!), you'll be able to enjoy the eating festivities, without any of the guilt or stomach aches that often follow Christmas cookie indulgences. And don't worry, I've got you covered. On the next few pages, there are some of my favourite Christmas baking recipes! If you make any of them, tag me on Insta @tararyanhealth, I'd love to see your creations!

# GINGERBREAD MOLASSES COOKIES

## INGREDIENTS:

- 2/3 cup oat flour
- 1/3 cup sprouted spelt flour\*
- 1/3 coconut palm sugar
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp ground ginger
- 1/4 tsp cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 2.5 tbsp coconut oil, melted
- 2 tbsp unsweetened applesauce
- 1 tbsp blackstrap molasses
- 1/2 pure vanilla extract



## DIRECTIONS:

1. Mix all dry ingredients in a large bowl, stirring very well.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together wet ingredients.
3. Pour wet ingredients into dry and mix with a spoon (or hands) until combined.
4. Using your hands, break off small pieces and roll into balls. Place balls on a parchment paper lined cookie sheet.
5. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour (dough balls can also be frozen for up to a month).
6. When ready to bake, preheat oven to 350 degrees.
7. Bake for 10 minutes. Remove from the oven and press the cookies down. They will look undercooked at first but that is what you want, the cookies continue to cook as they cool.
8. Allow at least 10 minutes before removing from the sheet and serving.

SOURCE: CHOCOLATE COVERED KATIE

\*For gluten free cookies, sub Bob's Red Mill GF baking flour for the spelt flour; you can also use regular spelt flour if you can't find sprouted.



# OATMEAL CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

## INGREDIENTS:

- 1/3 cup almond butter or peanut butter (unsweetened)
- 2 tablespoons melted coconut oil
- 1/2 cup maple syrup or brown rice syrup (do NOT substitute for granulated sugar of any kind, cookies will turn out too dry)
- 1/3 cup non-dairy milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup organic sprouted spelt flour (or regular spelt if you can't find sprouted; you can also sub gluten free flour if desired)
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup organic rolled oats (sprouted if you can find)
- 1/2 cup dark chocolate chips
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts



## DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. Lay parchment paper on a baking sheet and set aside. Whisk together first 5 ingredients until very smooth.
2. Add remaining ingredients and stir well to combine (be sure to mix in the baking soda and salt thoroughly).
3. Drop batter by spoonfuls onto baking sheet and bake for about 10 minutes (or until tops begin to crack). Remove from oven and wait 10 mins before transferring cookies to a plate or rack (or mouth!!).

# CHOCOLATE COCONUT TRUFFLES

## INGREDIENTS:

- 1.5 cups unsweetened shredded coconut
- 3/4 cup raw cacao powder
- 1/2 cup pure maple syrup
- 1/4 cup virgin coconut oil
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
- pinch of salt



## DIRECTIONS:

1. Line a baking sheet or dish with parchment paper.
2. Place all ingredients in a large bowl and mix together by hand until well combined (roll up your sleeves - it gets messy!)
3. Roll into little balls and place on baking tray. Place in freezer and let sit for at least an hour.
4. Remove from freezer right before eating.

## NOTES:

These can be kept and eaten right out of freezer. I find they get too mushy if they're kept out on the counter. The fridge is okay too but I prefer to leave mine in the freezer so that they stay fresh in case I don't eat them all right away!



# OATMEAL CHOCOLATE FUDGE BARS

## INGREDIENTS:

- 2 3/4 cup quick oats (GF if desired)
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 cup pure maple syrup
- 1/4 cup peanut butter, or allergy-friendly alternative
- 1 tbsp water
- 1 tsp pure vanilla extract
- 3/4 cup dark chocolate chips
- 1/2 cup peanut butter, or allergy-friendly alternative



## DIRECTIONS:

1. Line an 8×8 pan with parchment or wax paper, and set aside.
2. Stir together the maple syrup, 1/4 cup peanut butter, water, and vanilla until smooth. Stir in the oats and salt.
3. Transfer about 2/3 of the mixture to the pan, and press down very well, using a second sheet of parchment to press it evenly into the bottom of the pan.
4. In a separate bowl, carefully melt the chocolate and 1/2 cup peanut butter. Stir until smooth.
5. Pour this evenly on top of the crust in the pan.
6. Sprinkle the remaining oat crumbles on top of the chocolate layer, then press down. Refrigerate or freeze until firm enough to cut squares.