



SAUNDERS HOUSE

MAIN LINE SENIOR CARE ALLIANCE

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Exercise Tips to Avoid Holiday Weight Gain

Registered dietitians tell us that moderation is key for seniors to avoid weight gain during the holidays. But if your sweet tooth and your love of holiday feasts are more than your willpower can handle, there is another helpful solution – Exercise! The article, “[Exercise and Fitness for Seniors](#)” by **Deborah Elbaum, MD**, offers useful tips for exercises you can do during the holidays. For example:

- **Endurance exercises** increase the heart rate and breathing. Including walking, jogging or dancing, help improve the cardiovascular system.

After your holiday meal, try taking a walk with family and friends. If it isn't safe to exercise outside during the holidays, go to the mall and walk around. Exercise will also get you moving, keep you focused on your goals, and give you a welcomed break from being surrounded by treats. Exercise is also a great way to lower your blood sugar levels.

- **Strength exercise** such as weight training can help build up muscles and reduce age-related muscle loss while also keeping you fit.
- **Stretching exercises** help keep the body flexible and enable you to exercise more easily.
- **Balance exercises** help improve balance and can reduce the risk of falls.

If you have difficulty finding time to schedule an exercise program during the busy holidays, try incorporating exercise into your regular daily activities.

- Try getting exercise while you do all the things you need to do. If you have to shop for groceries, walk around a little longer or park further away than you normally would. If you are carrying groceries inside from the car, instead of struggling to get everything in one trip, make multiple trips.
- Any exercise is good exercise, no matter how long it's for. If you want to keep holiday workouts short and sweet, it might be a good time to try interval exercises. These can include short bursts of walking, jumping jacks or even stationary biking. If that doesn't work for you, try walking for 10 minutes at three different times throughout the day.
- If you usually lift hand weights at the gym, find some heavy soup cans and do what you normally do! If you have stairs and it is safe for you to do so, walk up and down the stairs repeatedly. According to **Reader's Digest**[®], vacuuming burns about 240 calories per hour. You can clean your house and keep yourself healthy at the same time. If you enjoy baking, did you know that using a whisk can burn up to 140 calories per hour? Bake some dishes to take to your holiday parties and keep up your exercising at the same time.



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Discover Our Healthy Tradition of Care and Wellness

Located adjacent to Lankenau Medical Center, Saunders House – [part of Main Line Senior Care Alliance](#) – has a celebrated tradition of providing [exceptional care and services](#) to seniors and their families. It's a tradition we're proud to continue.

Today, Saunders House offers a range of services – including [short-term rehabilitation](#), [traditional nursing care](#), [restorative care](#), [memory care](#), [respite care](#) and specialized care for individuals with visual impairments – all in a setting that is warm, welcoming and nurturing.

For more information on Saunders House, our Short-Term Rehabilitation program and other professional services, please call us today at 610.658.5100 or [contact us online](#).

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