On the first day of Christmas my true love gave to me… a fever, runny nose, headache, and the chills. Yes, it's that wonderful time of year when colds are passed along to everyone. Many things contribute to the breakdown of our immune systems, whether it's the colder temperature outside or the swarm of holiday shoppers, all of whom are sick too.

Also, as finals approach, students become stressed out and are more susceptible to becoming ill while some of the most important tests lay ahead. So what can you do to protect yourself?

In order to not get sick, there are three things you need to take care of: Our wellness depends upon our mental, physical, and nutritional health. Here is where the breakdown of things you can do to protect your health begins. Read on to find out how you can protect yourself and be spreading the holiday cheer instead of the holiday germs.

Advice from the Student Health Center

If you start to feel sick...

• Drink lots of liquids
• Get extra rest
• Avoid late nights
• Stay out of public places
Healthy food and drink options this winter

**Grapefruit** – This is one of the best things to eat when you are sick. It has tons of vitamin C that may help reduce cold symptoms and the severity of it.

**Tea** – In a study from Brigham and Women’s hospital in Boston it was found that people who drink one or more cups of black tea each day were 44 percent less likely to develop cancer.

**Sweet Potatoes** – One of the best vegetables you can eat. It has cancer-fighting antioxidant properties and is rich in vitamin C and potassium.

**Almonds** – These are high in calcium, fiber, and mono-unsaturated fats which have been shown to reduce the risk of heart disease. They are also low in saturated fats.

**Oats** – In a study from Brigham and Women’s Hospital it was found that women who ate two to three servings of whole grains per day reduced their risk of heart disease by 27 percent.

**Broccoli** – This is full of B vitamin folacin which may protect against some birth defects and heart disease. It also contains calcium.

**Soy** – Soy can help lower blood cholesterol and may prevent hormone-related cancers. Soy has tons of calcium, fiber and protein, too.

**Blueberries** – In a study from Tufts University, elderly rats who were about 70 in human years were fed a diet rich in blueberries. This improved their declining balance and coordination skills. The antioxidants that give blueberries their color are natural anti-inflammatories.

**Watermelon** – One slice is packed with vitamin C and vitamin A. It also has lycopene, a powerful antioxidant that may prevent cholesterol and help with arthritis and asthma.

**Orange** – Grains

**Oats**

Eat at least three ounces of these a day. This includes whole-grain bread, cereal, crackers, rice and pasta.

**Blueberries**

Eat at least two and a half cups of these a day. Some examples of these are broccoli, spinach, black beans, artichokes, potatoes and green beans.

**Tea**

Eat at least two cups of these a day. Go easy on juices because they are high in sugar. Some commonly eaten fruits include apples, avocado, strawberries, cantaloupe and pineapple.

**Yellow** – Oils

Get about six teaspoons of oil a day. The most common ways to get the amount you need each day is through nuts, fish, cooking oil, or salad dressings.

**Blue** – Milk

Get at least three cups from the milk group each day. When choosing a milk or yogurt, look for ones that are fat-free or low-fat. You can also get your daily intake from assorted cheeses, puddings, and ice creams.

**Purple** – Meat and Beans

Women should be getting five and a half ounces of meat and beans each day while men should be getting six and a half ounces. Choose low-fat or lean meats and poultry and make sure to bake it, boil it, or grill it. This category also includes nuts, seeds and fish.

**Green** – Vegetables

Eat at least two and a half cups of these a day. Some examples of these are broccoli, spinach, black beans, artichokes, potatoes and green beans.

Breakdown of the new USDA food pyramid

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### Yoga is good for keeping body and mind fit

**Natalie Zanzucchi**

**Editor-in-Chief**

It is impossible to ignore the growing interest in yoga practice living in Southern California. Yoga studios are as common as Starbucks, and yoga mat-toting soccer moms, college students and muscle-bound surfers can be found competing for space on the bamboo floor of each studio.

Yoga is a Sanskrit word that means “union.” It is an ancient philosophy and practice that combines physical, mental and spiritual exercises and follows an eight-fold framework leading to health and personal enlightenment. The BBC explains the eight-fold framework as “yamas (moral codes); niyamas (daily observances); asanas (exercise postures); pranayama (breathing exercises); pratyahara (withdrawal of the senses); dharana (concentration); dhyana (meditation) and samadhi (superconsciousness and spiritual union).”

Taking the time to be quiet, look inward and meditate is a direct contrast to the fast-paced and busy world we all share.

“Connecting the mind, body and breath helps us to direct our attention inward. Through this process of inward attention, we learn to recognize our habitual thought patterns without labeling them, judging them or trying to change them. We become more aware of our experiences from moment to moment. The awareness that we cultivate is what makes yoga a practice, rather than a task or a goal to be completed.

Your body will most likely become much more flexible by doing yoga and so will your mind,” Cyndi Lee, yoga teacher and studio owner explains on yogajournal.com.

This type of release can be especially effective in combating the extra stress felt during finals and the holiday season.

“The practice of yoga offers solutions to all types of stress,” says yogajournal.com. Three particular poses are suggested to ease stress:

**Seated Twists**

Seated twists of all kinds are powerful anxiety relievers. They teach you to relax even when you find yourself in a tight spot.

Once a deep twist has been achieved in the pose of your choice, focus on the breath. You’ll soon discover that breathing relieves the anxiety and discomfort of the pose. Next, you can apply this insight to other life situations—going to a party, sitting in a meeting or talking with people.

**Headstand**

More advanced yoga students can practice Sirsasana (Headstand), which is great for increasing balance and strength and can also stimulate mental clarity. Holding Headstand can be tough, but it’s an effective way to calm anxious thoughts and build confidence. These three yoga poses are suggestions from yogajournal.com.

In addition to relieving stress, exerciseabout.com suggests that yoga can also aid in the quest to avoid weight gain and stay in shape through the holiday season. “A vigorous vinyasa practice (and healthy eating habits, of course) may be all you need to stay in shape.”

There are many different strands of yoga, some more rigorous than others, which attract different people. Yoga studios have made their presence in nearly every city and are not unique to Southern California, making yoga practice possible no matter where holiday travels may take you.

In San Diego make sure to check out YogaFuzion located at 5632 La Jolla Blvd, in Bird Rock. The ecclectic studio offers ashtanga, vinyasa, hatha, svaroopa, acro yoga, Dhan and yoga wall as well as pilates, African dance, esoponti, belly dancing and meditation. Practice is personal, spiritual and fun. YogaFuzion also boasts an incredible selection of international gifts, jewelry, clothing and art. The first class is free.

To combat stress, avoid lethargy during the holidays and to add an element of inward awareness to your every day life, practice yoga.
Tips for remaining healthy

Staying in shape

Cory Miller  
Staff Writer

As students settle back into school after what was hopefully an enjoyable and probably large Thanksgiving dinner, some might be doing so with a little extra baggage. Others might be wondering how to find the time to stay in shape between classes, work and the extra packages filled with baked goods from family and friends.

“I am concerned about how I am going to balance exercise and keep my fitness goals during the holidays,” Lauren Shipman, sophomore, said. Two campus health experts, Dr. Regina Fleming, USD’s physician, and David Freeman, the Fitness Coordinator at Campus Recreation provided good advice on how to stay fit and enjoy the holidays:

1) Keep a routine: Fleming said that it is helpful to keep a routine in order to stay healthy. “I know it can be hard during the holidays, but getting a good eight hours of sleep and trying to do some kind of exercise daily really helps.” Fleming stressed that exercise need not be viewed as a chore, but rather something that can be done socially with friends and family. For example, if you go to the gym, bring a friend along with you. Or go for a fun run by the beach. Running is also a great way to unwind. Freeman emphasized the power of staying calm at a time where people tend to get more stressed than usual. He personally uses the power of breath to calm himself when he is feeling stressed. He said that “most people allow the stress in and then have to deal with it, but if you are proactive you can avoid the entire process of being stressed.”

2) Everything in moderation: Another helpful hint during the holidays, and in general, is to eat a little bit of a wide array of foods instead of chowing down on just one food group. Fleming suggested not to “deprive yourself of the foods you enjoy, but make sure that you get all the important things you need such as fruits and veggies, vitamins, fiber and calcium.” With regards to sweets she said “each person is different. Some can have a few sweets a day while others need to limit their intake more. The important thing is to know how you can eat balanced meals.” Both Freeman and Fleming also emphasized the use of good judgment with regards to alcohol consumption. Fleming said, “alcohol can throw your entire routine if consumed in excess during the holidays. If you’re drinking, try to limit yourself to one alcoholic beverage per hour.”

3) Enjoy yourself: The last piece of advice that both Fleming and Freeman had was to enjoy the holidays. “Don’t miss out on the holiday fun because you are worried about being a certain size. In other words, don’t worry about the trimmings,” Fleming said. Freeman enjoys breaking tradition each holiday season by doing something different. He said “Find something interesting to do. Make a new tradition within your family.”

Wash your hands often

10,000 to 10 million – that’s the number of germs a typical person carries on their hand alone. With everything you come in contact with throughout your day, whether it be your sick friend’s hand or the door knob to your next class, you never know what germs can be passed along. To prevent getting sick, you should always wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and warm water. Also, 1,000 times as many germs spread from damp hands than dry hands so make sure that you towel them off well.

Don’t share your drinks

This is the best way for those lovely cold bugs to travel. If your friend asks for a drink from your water bottle, kindly point to the fountain down the hall. This may seem like a “grinch” thing to do, but you’ll be glad when you’re not carrying a box of Kleenex around with you.

Get eight hours of sleep each night

The National Sleep Foundation says that eight hours of sleep is the perfect amount for adults. This amount of sleep each night can lead to improved performance on tests, reduced risk of accidents and a better immune system. You may think that getting more than eight hours of sleep is fine. But an American study found that those who sleep four to seven hours live longer lives than those who sleep more than nine hours. Those who slept more than nine hours had about a 30 percent increased chance of early death, similar to moderate obesity. Eight hours is the perfect amount of sleep for students. This does not apply to children and adolescents who sometimes require as much as 13 hours of sleep a night.

Manage your stress effectively

People deal with stress in different ways. A common way is exercising, which will improve your physical and mental health. Exercise helps turn down the production of stress hormones and neurochemicals. Another effective way that people cope with stress is through meditation or other relaxation techniques. For a quick relaxation activity try this: sit quietly and comfortably while closing your eyes. Start from your feet and move up your body, working on relaxing each muscle one at a time. Breathe in and out deeply while counting each breath. This helps your mind avoid distractions. Do this for ten to twenty minutes for a relaxing break.

Information from:
- Safefoodonline.com
- WHfoods.com
- Mindtools.com
- Wikipedia
- National Sleep Foundation