How to Skip the Stress and Savor the Holiday Season

The holiday season will soon be upon us. While this is usually a special time for families and children, it can also bring unexpected stresses due to celebrations centered around food, schedule changes, and extra activities. And as you may know, too much stress can negatively impact diabetes.

However, with some forward planning and creative ideas, you and your family can thoroughly enjoy the season. Follow these tried-and-true tips from the Diabetes Research Institute to minimize stress, maximize enjoyment, and maintain healthy habits:

• **Set realistic expectations.** Expect that with the excitement of the holidays, blood glucose fluctuations may occur at some point during the holiday season. Keep with the holiday spirit and put your energy into the solution, rather than the problem, if undesired blood glucose levels occur.

• **Maintaining your routine** of blood sugar checks and insulin administration will help monitor and reduce the impact of the holiday season.

• Children with diabetes can have treats; the key is moderation with candy and foods high in carbohydrates and including them within the established meal plan. Think of some creative ways to deal with extra treats, such as trading them or spacing them out over the following months. Aim to limit food extravaganzas to the holiday itself rather than to the entire holiday season.

• **Look for opportunities to revise traditional recipes,** such as reducing the sugar or fat content. Experiment with sugar substitutes, cinnamon, nutmeg, vanilla, and other sweet-tasting spices and flavorings. Not only is this better for your child with diabetes, but for the entire family!

• **Look for nonfood treats and activities** to celebrate the holiday season – fun art projects, holiday stickers, and family events, such as a karaoke competition of holiday songs.

• Balance an increase in food intake with fun activities that get children moving. Try to limit time in front of the television or on the computer, but make it a family affair, not just something your child with diabetes needs to do.

• If you are traveling, be mindful of time zone changes, and remember to bring extra supplies, medical alert identification, and a hypoglycemia kit.

• **Enjoy the holidays!** Focus on spending quality time with family and friends and collecting fabulous memories you can talk about for years to come.

For more tips, go to www.diabetesresearch.org.
Driving Safely with Diabetes

Getting your driver license is a very exciting time. Follow these tips from the American Diabetes Association to maximize the fun while keeping yourself and others safe:

Start Driver’s Education early. Establish a diabetes management routine before the big day arrives to get a permit or license. Be sure you understand the rules and responsibilities that come with a driver’s license.

Rules of the Road

- **Pass the (glucose) test.** Check your blood glucose (blood sugar) level before getting into the car. Every time, no exceptions.

- **Stop for a diabetes red light.** Treat low blood glucose and then recheck in 15 minutes. Do not get behind the wheel until blood glucose is in the target range.

- **Slow down.** Treat your blood glucose even if it means being late. It’s never okay to drive with a low blood glucose level. Call whoever is waiting for you and explain why you’ll be a little late. They’ll understand.

- **Always have enough fuel.** Stock the car with healthy, nonperishable snacks and fast-acting sugars. And keep your diabetes supplies within easy reach, but don’t leave them in your car (hot and cold temperatures will damage them).

- **Pull over.** Pull over immediately if you are feeling sick or low while driving. Check your blood glucose, treat yourself, wait 15 minutes, and then recheck.

- **ID, please.** Don’t leave home without a driver’s license and medical ID bracelet or necklace. Always wear a medical ID.

For more great information on everyday life, go to diabetes.org/living-with-diabetes/parents-and-kids/everyday-life/

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**Balsamic Glazed Salmon**

4 servings, ready in about 24 minutes

**Ingredients:**
- 1 cup balsamic vinegar
- 4 tsp. Dijon mustard
- 4 tsp. honey
- 4 salmon filets (4 oz. each)
- 1 green onion, chopped

**Directions:**
1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F. Place parchment paper on a baking sheet.
2. In a small saucepan, bring the vinegar, Dijon mustard, and honey to a boil over medium heat. Reduce the heat to a simmer and cook until thick, about ten minutes.
3. Brush the salmon filets with half of the balsamic glaze and reserve the other half. Bake the salmon for 10-14 minutes, or until the salmon is cooked through and flakes easily with a fork.
4. Remove the salmon from the oven and pour the remaining glaze over the salmon. Top with green onion and serve hot.

Source: ADA Diabetes Food Hub
For nutrition info, see DiabetesFoodHub.org/recipes/balsamic-glazed-salmon
Safe & Healthy Halloween!

- Have a healthy dinner before you go out to trick or treat.
- On Halloween, make sure your parents check all candy before you eat it.
- Throw out the candy that isn’t your favorite. See how many “basket shots” you can make into the trash can!
- Remember to keep eating healthy foods, like fruits and veggies, during Halloween season.
- Host a Halloween party and serve healthy spooky snacks.
- Instead of candy, ask your parent to give out pencils, erasers, or stickers.

Carving Pumpkins? Keep the Seeds!

- Pumpkin seeds, also known as pepitas, are a tasty jack-o-lantern bonus.
- Did you know pumpkin seeds are rich in nutrients that are great for your heart and brain? It’s true! They also have “fight-O” chemicals (phytochemicals) that fight off diseases!
- Roasted pumpkin seeds make a great on-the-go snack or addition to salads, trail mix, and cookies.

Word Game

Can you think of some healthy Halloween party snacks? See if you can guess:

R __ A __ E __
P __ __ __ __ __ __
S __ E __ D __

and

F __ U __ T __ S __ L __ __

Answer: Roasted pumpkin seeds and fruit salad.

Adapted from SuperKidsNutrition.com.