



## SLOW DOWN TO ENJOY THE SEASON.

BY RACHEL SAVIEO

This time of year, it is so easy to get caught up in the endless to-do lists, planning, and parties that you wake up in January exhausted and relieved that the holidays are over. This year why not make it a point to try to slow down and really enjoy the season? Imagine what it would be like to start the new year feeling rested and rejuvenated, rather than frazzled and worn out. It is possible! Here are some tips to keep in mind:

- Decide what is important to you. Establish your priorities and make sure that you are doing things that will make the season fun, relaxing, and memorable for your family.
- Ask for and accept help. Ask others to help you tackle your lists, and make sure that you are doing the things that you enjoy.

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- Let go of perfection. Remember that sometimes the best memories happen when things don't go exactly as planned. Embrace the imperfections this year, knowing they are what you will look back on and laugh about in years to come.
- Focus on the true meaning of the season. It is not about the perfect dinner, or decorated house, or kids in matching outfits. Give your family and yourself the chance to slow down and reflect on what truly makes the season meaningful for you.

## Smart Facts

**12%**

is the amount that online spending increases annually.

**\$525 BILLION**

is spent annually by Americans over the holidays.

**68%**

of participants in an American Psychological Association survey reported that fatigue is the feeling they experience most during the holidays.



# HOW SLEEP AFFECTS YOUR HEALTH AND PERFORMANCE .

BY JENNA MEARS

Sleep, rest, relaxation. It's the one thing we don't get enough of in our busy lives. In fact, sleep is often the first thing we give up when we're busy with work, school, and parenting responsibilities. According to the National Sleep Foundation, the average adult needs seven to nine hours of sleep per night. Below are some ways lack of sleep affects your health and performance.

## Physical health

Sleep is important for healthy immune function, digestion, and appetite. Adults who sleep the recommended seven to nine hours each night have better body temperature regulation, experience fewer unhealthy cravings and food binges, and generally have better digestive health. A healthy amount of sleep also contributes to better immune function, making you less susceptible to illnesses, like the common cold. According to one study, people who averaged less than seven hours of sleep per night were three times more likely to catch a cold!

## Performance

While healthy adults should get at least seven hours of sleep each night, most only get about six and a half hours. The cumulative effect of a sleep deficit is contributing to less productivity in the workforce, including struggling to stay focused in meetings, taking longer to complete tasks, and finding it challenging to be creative. Because we are less productive during the day, we often bring work home with us creating a vicious cycle of later bed times and less focus during the day.

## Sleep tips

Now that you understand how sleep affects your physical health and performance at work, these sleep tips will help you get a better and more restful night's sleep:

1. Stick to a sleep schedule and keep that schedule on weekends. This helps your body regulate your internal clock so sleeping becomes easier.
2. Practice a relaxing bedtime ritual. Try reading a book or drinking a cup of tea. A relaxing routine that doesn't involve bright lights, excitement, or stress relaxes your body to prepare it for sleep.
3. Exercise daily. Exercise helps your body sleep and your immune system stay strong. Try to fit in some type of exercise each day.
4. Evaluate your room. Sometimes we can't sleep because we are too hot, too cold, or something is making a distracting noise. Make sure your bedroom temperature is between 60 and 67 degrees, and free from light and noises.

If you still can't sleep, talk to your doctor. Many health factors and conditions can contribute to not sleeping well and should be investigated.



*A healthy amount of sleep also contributes to better immune function, making you less susceptible to illness, like the common cold.*

Source: National Sleep Foundation. <https://www.sleepfoundation.org/sleep-news/good-nights-sleep-helps-job-performance>. Accessed 29, October 2018.  
Hult International Business School. <http://www.hult.edu/blog/how-sleep-deprivation-affects-work-and-performance/>. Accessed 29 October 2018.



# HOME PRESCRIPTION DRUG SAFETY .

BY JOHN THOMAS

The new year is a good time to take a fresh look at your medicine cabinet. As odd as that might sound, it's a serious task: Each year, 80,000 children are hospitalized for overdoses, and one in four teens admits to abusing prescription drugs. For these and other reasons, it's a good idea to review your home's prescription drug safety. Here are some actions to consider:

- **Lock 'em up.** It might seem like a drastic step, but keeping your medications in a locked box or cabinet will greatly reduce the chances that a child will accidentally swallow something, or that anyone will steal your medication.
- **Talk frankly to kids.** Tell children very directly that medicine not specifically for them is dangerous and off-limits. Don't assume they won't be interested. Colorful pills and liquids can look inviting to young eyes.
- **Know what you've got.** Keep a list of all your medications and have a pretty good sense of how much you have of each. That way you'll be more likely to recognize if something is missing.
- **Have show-and-tell with your doctor.** At least once a year, take all your medications to an appointment with your primary care physician so they're aware of what you're taking and what you have on hand.
- **Get answers.** If you have any questions about a medication, ask your health care provider or pharmacist.
- **Get rid of the old stuff.** Check your drug label to see if it gives disposal recommendations. You can also go to the Federal Drug Enforcement Administration's website at [www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug\\_disposal/](http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/) or call 800-882-9539 to find a DEA-approved disposal center near you. PLEASE NOTE: While it was once common to flush no-longer-needed medications, many drugs should not be flushed. To see a list of drugs OK for flushing, search "FDA flush medication" in your Internet browser.



## December is Safe Toys and Gifts Month

December is safe toys and gifts month, reminding us all that some toys can be harmful to children if not properly assembled or monitored carefully during play time. In 2010, emergency rooms treated 251,700 toy-related injuries. Let's remember to buy safe toys for our children this holiday season! To learn more, visit <https://child-familyservices.org/december-is-national-safe-toys-and-gifts-month/>.

Source: <https://child-familyservices.org/december-is-national-safe-toys-and-gifts-month/>, <https://www.healthtradition.com/december-is-safe-toys-and-gifts-month/>. Accessed 24 October 2018.

# HARVEST OF THE MONTH: PINEAPPLE

BY RACHEL SAVIEO

Pineapples may not be the first produce that comes to mind in the winter months, but they are actually available year-round. They can be included in many traditional holiday recipes such as baked ham, pineapple upside down cake, and holiday punch. Pineapples are a good source of vitamin C, and they are the only source of a plant compound called bromelain, which is associated with several health benefits including enhanced immune function, cancer prevention, improved wound healing and better digestive health.

## How to Select

Fresh pineapple will not ripen any further once it is cut from the plant, so don't plan to let it ripen on the counter. Look for pineapples with green, fresh-looking leaves. The leaves should be easy to remove if it is fully ripe. The pineapple should be plump, feel heavy, and have a strong sweet aroma.

## How to Store

Fresh pineapple is very perishable, so if you store it at room temperature, use it within two days. Refrigerating the whole pineapple in a perforated plastic bag can extend the lifespan 3 to 5 days. Once it is trimmed and cut, cover it in juice in an airtight container, refrigerate, and use within 5 to 7 days.



## How to Prepare

Use a sharp, sturdy serrated knife to cut off the base and the crown. Slice off the skin in a downward vertical motion, following the natural curvature of the fruit. Be sure to slice far enough to cut off the woody eyes, or dig them out with the knife tip or the tip of a peeler. Trim away the center core.

Source: The Spruce Eats. <https://www.thespruceeats.com/pineapple-selection-and-storage-1807793>. Accessed 24 October 2018.



## Recipe: Slow Cooker Ham and Pineapple

### Ingredients:

- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 2 pounds fully cooked low-sodium ham
- 1/3 cup 100% apple juice
- 1/2 pineapple, cored, sliced
- 1/2 cup Sage Fruit® cherries, pitted

### Directions:

1. Mix brown sugar, honey and mustard in small bowl.
2. Place ham in slow cooker. Pour apple juice on top, then coat ham in mustard glaze. Top with pineapple slices and cherries.
3. Cook in slow cooker 6 hours on low.

### Nutrition Information:

Per Serving: Calories 285, Fat 8.97, Protein 26.01G, Carbohydrates 22.93G, Fiber 2.84G, Sodium 924MG, Calcium 30MG, IRON 1.90MG

Source: Produce for Kids. <https://www.produceforkids.com/recipes/slow-cooker-ham-pineapple/>. Accessed 24 October 2018.