



# Pennington & Red Lake Counties Wellness Newsletter

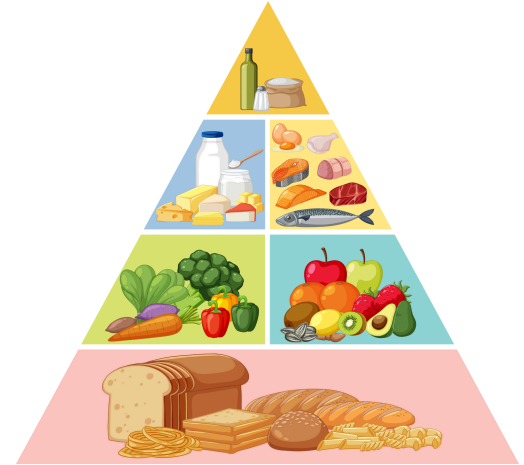
## December 2024

## STAY HEALTHY THROUGHOUT THE HOLIDAYS

As we enter the busy holiday season there are so many reasons to celebrate and connect with people we care about! With all this celebrating comes lots of good food. It's important to maintain a balance between food that's good for the tastebuds and good for your health throughout the holiday season.

### *Why is a balanced diet important?*

The holiday season also coincides with flu season. Building up your immune system with the necessary nutrients from a balanced diet helps to fend off all sorts of illnesses throughout the fall and winter. This is also a season of busyness and a balanced diet will help you maintain your energy without relying on stimulants such as caffeine to get you through the day. A balanced diet will also help you maintain a healthy weight which means your New Years resolution doesn't have to involve a gym membership! It's important to prioritize your health so you can enjoy the celebrations and time with family and friends.



### *Tips for A Healthy Holiday Season*

- **Add color to your plate**- Fruits and veggies are packed with nutrients your body needs to thrive.
- **Swap holiday classics for healthier alternatives**- Some easy swaps include turkey instead of ham, baked or grilled food instead of frying the same foods, pumpkin pie instead of pecan pie, and replace sour cream with Greek yogurt
- **Stay hydrated**- Be sure to drink water or an electrolyte drink in between your favorite holiday drink!
- **Resist holiday treats outside of celebrations**- The cookies, candy, and other goodies your coworkers bring in for the holidays are tempting, but skipping this little treat will leave you feeling better throughout the season.
- **Prioritize your health**- Stick to a balanced diet, get enough sleep, stay hydrated, set boundaries, make time for yourself, maintain physical activity and exercise to ensure you aren't worn down by the end of the year.



## National Hand Washing Week December 5-11

The first week of December is National Hand Washing Week. Make sure you are fighting disease and infection by taking time to properly wash your hands-- one simple action can have a huge impact on your health!

### Proper Handwashing

1. **Wet** your hands with clean water
2. **Apply soap** and rub hands together to create a lather as lots of bubbles form
3. **Scrub** your palms, fingers, back of hand, under fingernails, and wrists for at least 20 seconds
4. **Rinse** your hands with clean water thoroughly
5. **Wipe** your hands dry with a clean towel or air dryer

### When to Wash

1. Before, during, and after handling food
2. Before and after treating a wound
3. After using public facilities (handles, tables, chair arms, transportation, etc.)
4. After taking out the garbage

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# Parenting Tips

## Connecting With Your Children

Research shows that families who spend quality time together and connect activities at home to what children are learning in school have a stronger emotional bond and better communication. These kids do better in school.

### Ways to combine quality time and education

#### 1. Create a budget.

Encourage your kids to write a list of the people they want to buy gifts for. Then have them allocate a certain amount for each person on their list. While shopping for gifts, help your kids keep track of spending and their remaining budget.

#### 2. Cook together.

Include your children in meal prep and baking for holiday gatherings. It's a great way to have fun and teach kids about cooking and nutrition. While you're cooking, you can practice math and reading skills. You can demonstrate cool science concepts through various cooking techniques.

#### 3. Make holiday greeting cards and gifts.

Have your kids write holiday cards or letters to family and friends. It's a great chance for children to practice their handwriting, as well as their grammar, spelling, and creative writing skills. Also, making gifts at home is a way to encourage creativity.

#### 4. Explore your city.

When you feel a bit of cabin fever, plan a family outing. Many local parks and zoos feature light displays and other ways to celebrate the season. You can also visit a local museum and historic sites. Or, you can see a play at a local theater.

#### 5. Play games.

Playing board and trivia games during holiday gatherings is a good way to enjoy being together. Look for ideas online. There are a variety of games—for all ages—that are fun and encourage learning.

#### 6. Enjoy the great outdoors.

Play with your kids in the backyard or at a local park. If it snows, build a snowman or hit the slopes! You can find fun outdoor games that promote physical activity.