



With 70 calories, it's the classic crunch.

Quaker Rice Snacks. Classic.



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# Nutrition and Exercise Tips for Winter Wellness

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As the temperature drops during the winter months, we tend to ease into a sedentary lifestyle and the pounds gradually begin to increase.

This season inspires heavier and heartier meals that “stick to your ribs”, and potentially to other parts of our bodies as well. It is that time of year when diet and exercise make the top of the resolution list. Health club memberships and diet plans gain followers by the droves who committed this year to make a change and stick with it. For those who may have fallen off the weight watching wagon, or desire to come aboard, it is not too late. Proper nutrition and exercise will strengthen your body, improve your cardiovascular system, and keep your spirits

club, invest in a home gym. Complete with dumbbells, treadmill, and a bicycle, your home gym equipment can be the start of your fitness goals. Consider exercising during your favorite television programs, or start off working out during the commercials. A 30 minute sitcom has roughly 10 minutes of commercials during that time slot. You can use that time to do bicep curls with your dumbbells or a round of sit-ups.

Taking the stairs instead of the elevator is another great way to get exercise incorporated in your day. Start by getting off the elevator one floor earlier and walking the rest of the way. Remind yourself of your goals as part of your motivation to take the stairs. If the winter months inspire you to take on outdoor activities, the National Brotherhood of Skiers [www.nbs.org](http://www.nbs.org) brings people of color together to enjoy the slopes.

high during the winter season blues.

If you are seeking ways to eat well and monitor your weight, here are some tips to keep in mind:

**Be honest with yourself** — Take a look at the foods you are putting in your body and your rate of exercise activity each week. What does your typical meal look like, and what are the serving sizes? What was the last form of exercise you engaged in and for how long? If you find yourself making excuses for not exercising regularly or eating 3-5 servings of fruits and vegetables daily, identify the obstacles that are holding you back. Challenge yourself to face the reasons why. By acknowledging and articulating your barriers to optimal wellness, you will begin the process of developing the courage to modify your lifestyle. Consider reframing your thoughts around nutrition and exercise to be more positive, wholesome, and necessary. Your health is your priority.

**Set achievable goals** — Are you setting yourself up for failure by trying to do too much too soon? Create a realistic schedule for exercise on days when you know you would be most dedicated, and slowly incorporate healthy foods into your diet. Build your success for proper nutrition and exercise by setting small goals that you gradually increase on a weekly basis. A check-up from your primary physician will give you a baseline on where to start to improve your health.

**Be creative** — Understand that simple exercises come in many forms and can be done right in your home. By identifying the kind of exercises you like to do, you are likely to stick to it. If you enjoy using exercise machines but can't commit to consistently attending the health

Creative healthy meals can taste good and be nutritious. The key is portion control. Too often meals contain heaping servings of proteins and starches, and little or no vegetables. Overeating is a sure way to excessive weight gain. Large servings of colorful vegetables should dominate roughly ½ of any plate of food you eat. Only 1/3 of your meal should be comprised of lean protein. If in doubt about proper serving sizes, you can buy portion plates at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) that partition servings by vegetables, starches, and proteins.

And even though the temperature is cold outside, it is still essential to drink plenty of water to replenish your body and quench your thirst.

**Develop a support system** — Whether you join a support group, seek out a wellness coach, or gain inspiration from successful role models, it is important to surround yourself with motivational resources. You can even grab a friend, put on your pedometer, and take a brisk indoor walk at your favorite mall. It is a wonderful way to chitchat with a friend, avoid the cold outdoors, and work your way up to the recommended 10,000 steps a day.

**Celebrate your successes** — For each milestone you achieve in your fitness quest, be sure to reward yourself. Whether you pamper yourself at a spa or buy a new outfit, you will boost your self image and feel good about yourself.

**If at first you don't succeed** ... Remember, no one is perfect. It will take some time for healthy lifestyle changes to become a habit. The key is to refocus and continue moving forward toward your goal.

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