

# The York University Staff Association Health and Wellness News and Views

This holiday season instead of just toasting to friends and family's good health, why not give it to them? These healthy gifts will keep on giving, long after the holiday parties have ended. Popular gift ideas such as gift certificates for a health club membership, personal training or a massage are always nice, but why not give your favourite health and fitness enthusiasts Christmas gifts they can immediately put their hands on. Here is a fun list of healthy gift ideas.

## Smoothie Maker

Long-gone are the days of the boring blender. There are so many blenders/smoothie makers at various price points on the market. When researching blenders it is important to get one machine that blends, chops, purees, juices, and grinds fresh foods. Ideally the machine should also be able to process both wet and dry ingredients, and can be used to make everything from energy drinks, and batters for healthy baked goods to wholesome homemade soups, dips, and even ice cream. (oops I said ice cream...) Check out the Oster Beehive and The Magic Bullet, both machines are reasonably priced, fast and easy to use and clean.



## Active Wear

When purchasing active wear for a friend or loved one is extremely important to know the individual's size and most importantly taste. If you are confident in those two things... then it is also important to purchase active wear that is versatile and fashionable while delivering on performance. With so many brands and price points to choose from, keep in mind that most fitness enthusiasts prefer workout wear that allows individuals to move seamlessly from errands to the gym and home again all without sacrificing style or performance.

## Portable Fitness Tracking Devices

For the fitness minded or those that need that extra push in motivation there are numerous portable fitness tracking devices on the market. [Nike Plus](#)- Nike + iPod motivates with music while tracking your progress. Hook up your iPhone or iPod to record your running, distance, time and pace. Nike+ syncs with your computer so you can track your goals. The basic sport kit starts at \$35. My personal favourite, [Run Keeper](#)- is an app and it is among the simplest ways to track your fitness activities, not just running

but cycling, hiking and skiing. All you do is press start when you begin your activity and Run Keeper will track your distance, speed and duration. The best part... Run Keeper is only \$10. There are several different types/manufacturers of Fitness Tracking Devices ranging from \$10 - \$300. So do your research and choose wisely.

## Healthy Reading

What better way to communicate that you care than by giving a gift that will make them feel good all year **long**. Why not consider a health magazine subscription. There are so many to choose from. Focus on your loved ones interests and hobbies. There is sure to be a magazine that would tweak their interests, and hopefully motivate them along the way.

## Organic food Hamper

Instead of the usual tins filled with baked goods, cookie trays and chocolates, why not fill a basket with an amazing, colourful array of organic superfoods. This basket will be bursting with raw nutrients, and protective anti-oxidants. Include a personalized yummy recipe using the ingredients you have selected and be sure to also include a personalized card explaining how much you love them!



## Soy Candles

Soy oil is environmentally friendly, biodegradable and long lasting. Soy candles burn at least 50% longer than regular paraffin candles. I personally love the Vanilla Spice scented version. However, the best part has got to be the amazing skin moisturizing and therapeutic benefits of soy oil for the skin. The melted oil is warm to the touch and is wonderful to use as a hand massage treatment.

## Organic Cosmetics

More and more women are learning about the potential problems associated with preservatives and other suspect chemicals in cosmetics. This Christmas ditch the chemical-laden beauty products and treat your loved ones to the luxury of natural and organic cosmetics that are paraben, synthetic fragrance, and mineral oil free. There are now several natural and organic cosmetic companies that have introduced some stunning gift sets just in time for Christmas. Happy Healthy Christmas Shopping!

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