



HOW TO FEEL YOUR BEST THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

The holiday season is filled with family, friends, food and festivities. It can also be a time of stress, fatigue and overindulgence. Between work, shopping, travel, long to do lists and lots of social gatherings, we often find that our physical and mental health suffers. A survey by the National Alliance of Mental Illness (NAMI) showed 63% percent of people report feeling too much pressure during the holiday season. The good news is that there are lots of simple things you can do to stay your best during the holiday season.

When it comes to celebrating, moderation is key. Remember portion control, choose homemade options over processed food, resist too many sweets, and consider taking a walk after a heavy meal. Don't forget to stay on your sleep schedule, set aside some me-time and to slow things down. Less really can be more!

At Marpai, we are here to help you live better by taking the best health journey now. This newsletter is about helping you get more out of the holiday season with tips on health eating, exercise, and stress management.

Here's to a joyous and healthy holiday for all!

IN THIS ISSUE:

12 Tips for Holiday Eating

The Absolute Best Mocktails To Craft For The Holiday Season

3 Tips for Staying Active During the Holiday Season

8 Ways to Cope If You Can't See Family and Friends This Holiday Season

There's An App For That! Health Holiday Apps

A New Year With Marpai!



12 TIPS FOR HOLIDAY EATING

Published by Harvard Health Publishing

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/12-tips-for-holiday-eating-201212242506>

It's easy to get swept up in the holiday season. This combination of religious and national celebrations can help keep the cold winter away. But the feasts and parties that mark it can tax the arteries and strain the waistline. By eating just 200 extra calories a day — a piece of pecan pie and a tumbler of eggnog here, a couple latkes and some butter cookies there — you could pack on two to three pounds over this five- to six-week period. That doesn't sound like much, except few people shed that extra weight in the following months and years.

You don't need to deprive yourself, eat only boring foods, or take your treats with a side order of guilt. Instead, by practicing a bit of defensive eating and cooking, you can come through the holidays without making "go on a diet" one of your New Year's resolutions.

- 1. Budget wisely.** Don't eat everything at feasts and parties. Be choosy and spend calories judiciously on the foods you love.
- 2. Take 10 before taking seconds.** It takes a few minutes for your stomach's "I'm getting full" signal to get to your brain. After finishing your first helping, take a 10-minute break. Make conversation. Drink some water. Then recheck your appetite. You might realize you are full or want only a small portion of seconds.
- 3. Distance helps the heart stay healthy.** At a party, don't stand next to the food table. That makes it harder to mindlessly reach for food as you talk. If you know you are prone to recreational eating, pop a mint or a stick of gum so you won't keep reaching for the chips.
- 4. Don't go out with an empty tank.** Before setting out for a party, eat something so you don't arrive famished. Excellent pre-party snacks combine complex carbohydrates with protein and unsaturated fat, like apple slices with peanut butter or a slice of turkey and cheese on whole-wheat pita bread.
- 5. Drink to your health.** A glass of eggnog can set you back 500 calories; wine, beer, and mixed drinks range from 150 to 225 calories. If you drink alcohol, have a glass of water or juice-flavored seltzer in between drinks.
- 6. Avoid alcohol on an empty stomach.** Alcohol increases your appetite and diminishes your ability to control what you eat.
- 7. Put on your dancing (or walking) shoes.** Dancing is a great way to work off some holiday calories. If you are at a family gathering, suggest a walk before the feast or even between dinner and dessert.
- 8. Make room for veggies.** At meals and parties, don't ignore fruits and vegetables. They make great snacks and even better side or main dishes — unless they're slathered with creamy sauces or butter.
- 9. Be buffet savvy.** At a buffet, wander 'round the food table before putting anything on your plate. By checking out all of your options, you might be less inclined to pile on items one after another.
- 10. Don't shop hungry.** Eat before you go shopping so the scent of Cinnabons or caramel corn doesn't tempt you to gobble treats you don't need.
- 11. Cook from (and for) the heart.** To show family and friends that you really care about them, be creative with recipes that use less butter, cream, lard, vegetable shortening, and other ingredients rich in saturated fats. Prepare turkey or fish instead of red meat.
- 12. Pay attention to what really matters.** Although food is an integral part of the holidays, put the focus on family and friends, laughter and cheer. If balance and moderation are your usual guides, it's okay to indulge or overeat once in a while.

THE ABSOLUTE BEST MOCKTAILS TO CRAFT FOR THE HOLIDAY SEASON

Published by Daily Meal

<https://www.thedailymeal.com/1110874/the-absolute-best-mocktails-to-craft-for-the-holiday-season/>

Enjoying festive foods and drinks during the holidays is a marvelous way to bring loved ones together. There's nothing more comforting than gathering and relishing the seasonal flavors. Whether you host elegant parties where folks dress to the nines or prefer to cozy up in the living room while wearing pajamas, you certainly need a flavorsome beverage to savor.

Alcohol-based drinks are undoubtedly fun to prepare, but not everyone partakes in them for one reason or another. Maybe you just don't prefer the taste of alcohol (or maybe you do, but the thought of having a hangover is enough for you to veer toward a booze-free experience). In contrast, you might simply enjoy serving family-friendly beverages to your guests.

Whichever the case, the ideas on this list are all fantastic options for you to try out this season. Choose from virgin renditions of famous cocktails like Moscow mules and cosmopolitans or sip on effervescent spritzers. Prepare to take notes because you won't want to miss out on these delightful mocktails.

CRANBERRY-ROSEMARY SPRITZER

This drink is a perfect choice for those who want a non-alcoholic spritzer because the result is a flavorful and bubbly concoction that contains zero wine. This mocktail is made with ginger beer, which provides spicy undertones that perfectly complement the cranberry juice. Along with a splash of rosemary-infused simple syrup, this iced beverage encompasses the flavors of the holidays.

Appearance-wise, this drink also does an impressive job of looking festive. After all, its color is not so far-off from a classic Christmas red. A first glance at the charming rosemary, cranberry, and crab apple drink will have you dying for a sip. Tasting Table staff created this cranberry-rosemary spritzer recipe for Crate and Barrel, which is where you'll find the exact rocks glass to bring this refreshment to life. The recipe yields one mocktail but adjusting the amounts to make a small batch is more than achievable.

HOLIDAY CHEER MOCKTAIL

This holiday cheer mocktail is an excellent addition to your upcoming party menu. You serve this beverage warm, which is perfect for the winter months when all you



want to do is cozy up by the fire. The mixture consists of three juices: apple, pineapple, and cranberry. Fresh lemon peel, cinnamon sticks, and ground nutmeg offer soothing flavors to complement the fruit. This drink is alluring as is, but heating it on the stove will also leave your kitchen with a tantalizing aroma with hints of citrus and spice.

If you're making this thirst quencher for a crowd, prepare it in advance and keep it warm in an insulated beverage dispenser. This mixture is impeccable for Thanksgiving, Christmas, or Even New Year's parties. However, that doesn't mean it's off-limits for ordinary weekdays. Gather your ingredients for this holiday cheer mocktail, and you'll be able to enjoy this warm treat in no time.

THE ROY ROGERS

The Roy Rogers is a popular mocktail named after the Hollywood western film star and singer of the same name. And, as you can guess, Rogers preferred alcohol-free pick-me-ups like this one. A typical version of this iced beverage includes Coca-Cola, grenadine syrup, and maraschino cherries. Nevertheless, altering it to fit your taste by using different kinds of soda is exquisite as well.

This beverage is ideal for holiday gatherings because the ingredient list is simple and it's incredibly effortless to throw together when you're in a time crunch. In fact, it doesn't even take five minutes to create. Not to mention, who doesn't love a dressed-up Coca-Cola?

Aside from its simple yet tasty nature, the cherry on top (quite literally) provides a gorgeous pop of color. Adding a mint or herb sprig instantly transforms the garnish into a fun symbol for Christmas holly. No matter how you serve it, this non-alcoholic delight will make a lasting impression.

SPARKLING CRANBERRY SPRITZER

This sparkling cranberry spritzer recipe offers hints of mango and lime, giving it a refreshing and mildly tropical feel. This recipe is adapted from a version by Ocean Spray, so sparkling water and Ocean Spray cranberry raspberry energy juice drink make up the base. However, if you have a different cranberry drink (energy or not) on hand, swapping it in is no problem.

This recipe produces one mocktail, but since you just need to mix all the ingredients together, it is a convenient option to make in larger volumes if needed. Since its components are not necessarily centered on a specific season, it is highly versatile and can work for any holiday. The fizziness of the sparkling water and the zing from the energy drink make for a lively combination. Moreover, when you serve it in tall clear glass, the presentation is just as vibrant as the taste.

RED & ORANGE SPICY NESPRESSO MOCKTAIL

This multicolored beverage does a fantastic job of spicing up the holidays. Nespresso initially wrote the recipe for this red and orange spicy mocktail, which Tasting Table staff later adapted. The zesty drink takes advantage of a Nespresso Perú Secreto Grand Cru coffee capsule. Aside from that, only three other ingredients are needed: crushed ice, spicy pepper syrup, and mango juice.

The sweet and tropical essence of the mango juice is the perfect stepping stone for the spicy flavor to shine through without overwhelming the palate. Not to mention, the coffee scent is simply irresistible. The heavenly concoction has noticeable layers in its appearance, ultimately making it a total standout.

Since you construct the drink with such detail, it is ideally prepared individually rather than trying to make a single large batch. Luckily, you only need five minutes of your time to create it. Try pairing this refreshment alongside holiday starters or even desserts for a sweet and spicy experience.

APPLE CIDER CRANBERRY SPRITZ

You will absolutely adore Lidia Bastianich's apple cider cranberry spritz because it's the perfect holiday mocktail. What screams autumn and winter more than the marriage of apple cider and sugared cranberries? However, it doesn't stop there; the festive thirst quencher also contains sparkling water, so it is pleasantly bubbly. As an extra unique detail, macerated cranberries are frozen into the ice cubes you add to the drink — you don't see that every day.

Bastianich shared the recipe on her website and Instagram account, leading many fans to try it out and commend her for the creation. The recipe yields just about one and a half liters worth of iced refreshment, so there is plenty to go around if you feel like sharing. Bastianich has served it at Thanksgiving and also simply paired it with ordinary meals throughout the holiday season. There's no doubt about it, this is a mocktail that apple cider fans mustn't pass up.

BLACKBERRY AND LAVENDER SPRITZER

If you've been keeping an eye open for a flavorful mocktail with a stunning presentation, look no further; this blackberry and lavender spritzer is meant for you. Yes, some might consider it more of a summer drink, but the truth is this recipe is so versatile that people can enjoy it any time of year. You can thank Catherine Pappas of Living The Gourmet for developing the formula.

The mixture's base consists of club soda, blackberry syrup, and lemon juice. The lavender water is where it gets marvelous, though. In fact, the lavender water is what makes it such a fitting beverage for this time of year. Lavender is known to have calming properties, so enjoying this refreshment alongside a large plate of holiday food is perfectly appropriate.

This recipe takes some planning ahead because you'll be making the lavender water from scratch. As long as you allow enough time to prepare it and let it cool, you're in for a treat.

MOSCOW MULE MOCKTAIL

This alcohol-free take on the classic Moscow mule offers refreshing yet comforting flavors, which is great news for folks who love the traditional components of the drink, minus the vodka. With ginger beer, club soda, simple syrup, and fresh lime juice, there is so much worth indulging in already. Of course, just as with the standard cocktail, the fresh mint leaves sit atop the iced mocktail for a lovely presentation.

Although this drink is not exclusively served on holidays, it's a phenomenal option to make for any holiday party you host. Dressing it up with extra garnishes is an easy way to make it more festive. Adding edible flowers, rosemary, or even pomegranate seeds as an embellishment in conjunction with the mint is more than enough. Also, since the components make this so easy to assemble, whipping up multiple servings is a breeze. You'll quickly realize that taking only one sip of this scrumptious concoction is virtually impossible.

3 TIPS FOR STAYING ACTIVE DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON

Published by Very Well Fit

<https://www.verywellfit.com/exercise-during-the-holidays-1231555>

The holiday season brings a unique level of busyness and stress to everyone's lives, often with the expectation that everything needs to be checked off a seemingly never-ending to-do list. Amidst the chaos, it can be helpful to maintain habits that focus on your overall health and well-being—even if those habits look different than the rest of the year.

Staying active and maintaining a semblance of an exercise routine may seem like an impossible task with a calendar full of holiday parties and family obligations. But there are some small, low-maintenance ways to stay active throughout the holiday craze that will not only contribute to your physical health but might also be the mental reprieve you crave.

3 WAYS TO PRIORITIZE FITNESS DURING THE HOLIDAYS

Use these strategies to stay active and fit while you enjoy the holidays. Even if you don't exercise as much as you do during the rest of the year, getting some activity will provide benefits.

PLAN YOUR WORKOUTS AHEAD OF TIME

If you're traveling, planning ahead can make all the difference. Take some time to figure out what your options are so you're ready for anything.

- If you're staying with family, find any nearby gyms and ask if they let guests use their facility, or sell day passes.
- Ask family or friends if they have any fitness equipment you can use.
- If you're staying in a hotel, find out if it has an exercise room.
- Plan simple workouts that don't require much space or equipment.
- Search for walking, running, or park trails nearby.
- Talk to your family in advance and suggest taking a walk or doing something active together.

Try to plan your workout schedule beforehand. Even if you have to change it (which is likely when you're traveling), you've already made a commitment to

exercise. It's easier to stick with it when you have it planned than to squeeze it in later.



MAKE WORKING OUT CONVENIENT

If you're not sure about your schedule or whether you'll even have time to get in a workout, plan for the worst-case scenario. That may mean exercising in grandma's basement with no equipment and only 10 or 15 minutes to yourself. Try these quick tips for squeezing in a workout even when you only have minutes to spare.

- **Bring a workout plan with you:** Plan a 10-minute routine you could do right in your bedroom. Choose 10 exercises (squats, lunges, push-ups, jumping jacks, and so on) and do each for 1 minute. Or check out the holiday workouts below for other ideas.
- **Bring resistance bands:** Resistance bands travel well, and you can use them for quick strength exercises whenever you catch a few minutes.

- **Move your equipment** (weights or bands) into your bedroom if guests are staying with you so you can sneak in some exercise at night or in the morning.
- **Bring along a workout** on DVD or try streaming workouts online.
- **Wear your running or walking shoes** as much as you can. You may find a 20-minute window when people are napping or before dinner for a quick walk or run.

You may even want to invite some family members for a walk. Sometimes there are others who'd love to work out, but they're just waiting for someone else to step up first.

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF DOWNTIME

Planning and preparing are nice, but even the best-laid plans get derailed, especially during the holidays. Taking advantage of downtime—or parts of the day where others are relaxing, watching the football game, etc—might be the best way to focus on yourself and get some movement in. That being said, don't be afraid to partake in downtime if you're feeling drained. Rest is equally important, especially during the holiday season.

- If you're hanging out with kids, set up a game of football, tag, or hide and seek.
- Offer to help with housework, shoveling snow, or raking leaves.
- Walk! Take extra laps at the park, use the stairs, and volunteer to walk the dog.

HOLIDAY WORKOUTS TO TRY

The following routines cover everything from cardio to circuit training to strength workouts with no equipment. Bookmark them to try over the holidays, or use them for inspiration in creating your own workouts.

- 10-Minute Cardio Blast
- Best Body Weight Exercises
- Fat Burning Circuit
- Low Impact Cardio Blast
- Quick and Challenging Bodyweight Exercises
- Total Body Resistance Band Workout

The most important thing is to be realistic about your holiday workout expectations. You aren't always in charge of your schedule during this time of year, so having a flexible mindset is crucial. Ultimately, don't forget to put yourself and your physical needs (whether that be rest or a quick run) first.

A WORD FROM VERYWELL

While exercising during the holidays may seem like a lost cause, small moments of movement throughout the day can actually help you maintain physical and mental stamina. That said, fitness during the holiday season should not be a stressful or forced activity—taking rest days and time off to enjoy your family and friends is equally important.

8 WAYS TO COPE IF YOU CAN'T SEE FAMILY AND FRIENDS THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

Published by Real Simple

<https://www.realsimple.com/holidays-entertaining/holidays/how-to-cope-without-family-friends-during-holidays>

CELEBRATING ALONE OR WITH A SMALL GROUP DOESN'T MEAN YOU CAN'T EMBRACE HOLIDAY CHEER.

Many of us feel more emotional as we enter the holiday season. But if circumstances prevent us from gathering with family, meeting with friends, or vacationing as usual, those extra emotions can spiral down to a place we don't want to visit.

It's normal to feel disenchanting and flat-out sad about Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas, and New Year's Eve when we can't spend time with people near and dear to us. While those feelings are normal and expected, it's essential to find coping strategies to make the most of the season, no matter what. We solicited experts for their best advice for feeling connected and remaining positive during the holidays.



1. Host a cook-along with family members.

Traditions are a big part of what makes the holiday season memorable. Maybe it's hanging handmade ornaments on your tree, hearing that story again from your grandmother, or having seconds of your aunt's signature dessert. But if traditional celebrations are out-of-the-question this year, consider a modern approach.

To feel closer to loved ones, certified holistic wellness coach Kama Hagar suggests putting innovative spins on traditional routines: maybe a cook-off where every household recreates a classic dish and everyone votes on the presentation, or a cook-along where the family secret techniques and ingredients are revealed. "How incredible is it that we have this technology? Hagar asks. "Don't give up on it. Get creative together."

To go one step further, ship the final goods to the elder members of the family. "You could schedule a virtual cookie-making class with your mom or bake your grandparents goodies," Hagar suggests

2. Volunteer.

If states or oceans separate you and loved ones, look locally to feel connected to others and spread cheer.

"You might deliver food to an elderly person who may not be able to get to the store," says Amy Cooper Hakim, PhD, an industrial-organizational psychology practitioner. "Or you might call someone who is alone and in need of some company. You could even make holiday cards or 'thinking of you' cards to deliver to nursing homes or hospitals." Giving back in this way improves your spirits, even if you can't be with your loved ones.

3. Send kind, meaningful gifts or cards, and open virtually.

Small, meaningful gifts and handwritten cards go a long way to help you and your favorite folks feel loved and valued. If money is tight, schedule phone calls or events where you can virtually sing songs, tell funny stories from the past, and stay in touch.

"When people may be experiencing increased levels of anxiety, stress, helplessness, depression, loneliness, and/or grief, having one's support system to lean on and give emotional support back to can be very comforting and grounding for each other," says psychologist Yvonne Thomas, PhD. "You can create new positive holiday memories that can be very empowering and uplifting."



4. Honor your grief.

For some, holidays are a reminder of the loss of someone special to them. Double board-certified psychiatrist Zlatin Ivanov, MD, recommends joining efforts with others to process your feelings and honor the deceased instead of grieving alone. This might manifest as a charitable donation or a physical representation of their life.

“Consider creating a memory box that contains reminders of the person who has died. You can include photos, quotes you associate with them, any mementos you may have,” Dr. Ivanov suggests. And if you can’t do this project in person, pick up the phone to share stories, talk about how much you miss them, and acknowledge your grief.

5. Practice thoughtfulness weekly.

You don’t need oversized, expensive gestures to create a chain-reaction of kindness in your community, family, or friend group. In fact, the simple act of being present can help those around you feel supported and heard during a challenging season. And, by giving to others, you give to yourself.

According to Hagar, feeling loved is vitally important to a human’s well-being, so take on the task of practicing a thoughtful gesture weekly from November until January (and beyond, because, why not?).

“Call someone you know that has no family, write a letter to your recently widowed family friend, or reach out to someone who was recently divorced or lost their job,” Hagar says. “The holidays are super hard on everyone, especially those in lonely or insecure situations. Make it a weekly practice to reach out to call or FaceTime to make others feel the holiday spirit.”

6. Schedule a family holiday toast.

If you have double-digit cousins, aunts and uncles, siblings with youngsters, and parents who aren’t so keen on technology, a Zoom dinner might be a complicated longshot. Someone’s internet is bound to go haywire, and grandma won’t figure out how to put herself on mute.

Instead, Hakim suggests taking the pressure off by having an off-screen toast with wine, coffee, tea, or hot chocolate. If you can figure out videoconferencing, great. If not, encourage everyone to send a selfie of their holiday setup and beverage of choice in a group chat. The photos will make you grin—and hopefully get you through the day.

For bonus points, send a bottle of bubbly (or another drink of choice) to everyone on your toast list so you’re all drinking the same thing.

7. Seek out and savor the positives.

Finding the silver lining during a trying time can be a tall order. Still, seeking, savoring, and honoring any and all wins—even if its just getting out of bed or sending a holiday card—is vital to mental and emotional health. Thomas calls this “reframing,” where one sees something from a different (or not solely negative) perspective, so the whole picture is accurately viewed and represented.

For example, instead of saying, “I’m not celebrating Christmas this year because I can’t be with my family,” rephrase it to, “I’m celebrating the end of a tough year, and the beginning of a bright future.” Or focus on other things (besides your far-off loved ones) that bring you joy: being home, activities you love, hobbies you enjoy, or (dare we say) meaningful work.

8. Take care of your health from the inside out.

Every part of our body is connected, and if we spend the next three months loading up on junk food, sweets, and treats; our mental state will be cloudy at best. Though many people turn to cravings to process their emotions, Thomas recommends prioritizing your personal health this (and every) holiday season.

“Make a conscious effort to get enough sleep, eat right, exercise, laugh, and get emotional support from loved ones to maintain your physical and emotional health,” she says. “The bottom line is...you still can find ways to broaden and add to your life and, as a consequence, grow emotionally stronger, even...when you might not be in person with your family and friends during the holidays.”

THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT! HEALTH HOLIDAY APPS



There are lots of apps available to help you get the most out of this holiday season. Here are some to explore: Apps to help you stay active with your busy schedule, apps to help you travel during the holidays, mindfulness apps to help you de-stress, apps to help you stay on budget, and discover the 12 Christmas Apps that can add more fun to your celebration!

[10 APPS TO HELP YOU STAY HEALTHY DURING THE HOLIDAYS](#)

[40 BEST TRAVEL APPS TO DOWNLOAD - 2022 EDITION](#)

[5 COMPLETELY FREE MEDITATION APPS TO HELP CENTER YOUR MIND](#)

[HOLIDAY CRUNCH: THE BEST APPS TO HELP YOU STAY ON BUDGET](#)

[12 BEST CHRISTMAS APPS TO MAKE YOUR HOLIDAY FUN IN 2022](#)



A NEW YEAR WITH MARPAI!

As 2022 comes to a close, we celebrate your health and remain committed to keeping you and your loved ones at their best.

Be sure to visit the myMarpai.com member portal for important updates as we enter 2023. During the coming year, you can rely on Marpai to create a better, easier health journey for you and your family. We can guide you to high-quality in-network providers and send you a reminder when it's time to schedule an appointment for your annual exam, screening or vaccination. Enjoy 24/7 access to health plan information with the myMarpai App (available at Apple and Google Play stores). With just a click, see what's covered, track spending and deductibles, view claims, find a provider, manage family care and more. You can trust Marpai to give you the tools and information you need to stay on the best health journey. Wishing you a happy and healthy holiday season and new year.