



Tips for seniors

Staying safe & healthy during the holidays

The holiday season is a time of celebration and togetherness, but it's also important for seniors to prioritize their health and safety during this time. Balancing the stress and challenges of the holidays can be overwhelming for some, and lonely for many others. Here are some essential tips to ensure seniors can enjoy the holidays while staying safe and healthy.

Keep active. Encourage seniors to maintain their regular exercise routines or engage in gentle physical activities. Staying active can boost mood, maintain mobility, and keep joints flexible.

Dress warmly. As temperatures drop, it's crucial to bundle up when heading outdoors. Ensure that you have warm clothing, including hats, gloves, scarves and an appropriate coat to prevent cold-related health issues.

Keep medications in order. Help your loved one organize their medications and ensure they have an adequate supply for the holiday season, and enough to last a few days in case of a winter storm. Don't forget to have a list of medications and emergency contact numbers on hand.

Mindful eating. Enjoying holiday treats is part of the fun, but encourage seniors to maintain a balanced diet. Offer nutritious options at gatherings, and be mindful of any dietary restrictions, or health conditions.

Stay hydrated. Dehydration can be a concern during winter, as you may not feel as thirsty. It's important to remember to drink enough water throughout the day, and opt for warm beverages like herbal teas and broths.

Prevent falls. Snow and ice can increase your risk of slips and falls. Ensure that the walkways are cleared of snow and ice, provide sturdy footwear with traction, and consider installing handrails and grab bars where needed.

Travel safely. If seniors are traveling during the holidays, ensure their mode of transportation is safe and reliable. Plan trips during daylight hours and consider any special accommodations they may need.

Maintain social connections. Loneliness can be particularly challenging during the holiday season and ensuing winter months. Encourage connections with family and friends, either in person or through virtual means, to combat these feelings of isolation. If you need assistance with reaching out, your Assisting Hands caregiver can help you.

Manage stress. Holidays can be stressful for anyone. Encourage your loved one to engage in relaxation techniques such as deep breathing, meditation, or gentle exercise to manage stress and anxiety.

Illness precautions. Keep up with any vaccinations as recommended by your physician, including the flu vaccine and any recommended boosters. Practice good handwashing hygiene and follow local health guidelines to reduce the risk of illness.

The holiday season is a time of celebration and joy. To add to this, it's important to prioritize safety and health, especially for seniors. By taking care of yourself, and be-

November is
National Diabetes
Awareness Month

**Take
Charge of
Tomorrow**

NIH National Institute of
Diabetes and Digestive
and Kidney Diseases

Preventing Diabetes Health Problems

Diabetes is a disease that occurs when your blood glucose, also called blood sugar, is too high. When it's not managed, diabetes can damage the eyes, kidneys, nerves, and heart, and is linked to some types of cancer.

If you have diabetes, taking charge of your health as soon as possible may help you prevent other health problems.

Here are some tips to help you manage your diabetes to stay healthy longer.



Manage your A1C blood glucose, blood pressure, and cholesterol levels.

Ask your doctor what your goals should be, and stay informed about your A1C level.



Take care of your mental health.

A mental health counselor may help you find healthy ways to cope with stress.



Make lifestyle changes to slowly build healthy habits.

Take small steps to eat healthier, be more physically active, and get enough sleep.



Take your medicines on time, even if you feel healthy.

Talk to your doctor or pharmacist for help if you have trouble managing your medicines.



Work closely with your primary care provider.

They can help you manage your diabetes and refer you to other health care professionals for related health problems.

Visit niddk.nih.gov for more information on preventing diabetes health problems.

healthinfo@niddk.nih.gov [in](#) [t](#) [f](#) [y](#) [t](#) [@niddkgov](#)

ing mindful about your health, you can enjoy the holiday season to the fullest. Happy holidays!

November is National Family Caregivers Month

National Family Caregivers Month is a time to recognize and honor family caregivers across the country.

Celebrating Family Caregivers during National Family Caregivers Month enables all of us to:

- Raise awareness of family caregiver issues
- Celebrate the efforts of family caregivers
- Educate family caregivers about self-identification
- Increase support for family caregivers
- Reduce feelings of isolation

Just for FUN

Find the following holiday words in the puzzle.

| | |
|-------------|-----------|
| candy | cane |
| caroling | Christmas |
| December | holly |
| lights | merry |
| mistletoe | north |
| pole | peace |
| presents | reindeer |
| Santa Claus | sleigh |
| snowman | star |
| stocking | sugarplum |
| tree | wreath |



| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| O | E | U | S | A | M | T | S | I | R | H | C | R | M | O |
| B | T | L | D | B | L | A | N | Q | K | H | W | N | I | C |
| D | T | R | O | B | B | J | F | P | U | I | O | H | S | A |
| W | C | E | E | P | G | S | E | L | W | X | N | L | T | N |
| S | T | A | R | E | A | A | S | T | H | G | I | L | L | D |
| M | E | R | R | Y | C | N | Q | R | H | V | S | S | E | Y |
| D | G | N | C | E | A | T | O | S | K | C | T | T | T | P |
| E | T | A | F | Z | R | A | R | R | V | D | N | O | O | R |
| C | N | M | N | V | O | C | J | O | T | C | E | C | E | E |
| E | W | W | Y | X | L | L | H | A | V | H | S | K | R | I |
| M | R | O | R | C | I | A | O | G | N | Z | E | I | X | N |
| B | E | N | Q | B | N | U | O | J | I | H | R | N | I | D |
| E | A | S | Y | K | G | S | V | J | M | E | P | G | D | E |
| R | T | X | B | K | W | U | H | H | M | L | L | U | X | E |
| V | H | O | H | M | U | L | P | R | A | G | U | S | T | R |



December Facts:

December 21st or 22nd marks the winter solstice in the Northern Hemisphere, making it the shortest day and longest night of the year. In the Southern Hemisphere, it is the summer solstice, with the longest day and shortest night.

December is associated with various holidays and celebrations, including Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, and New Year's Eve.

Sagittarius and Capricorn are the zodiac signs associated with December. People born in early December fall under Sagittarius, while those born later in the month are Capricorns.

The famous English author Charles Dickens wrote "A Christmas Carol," which was published in December 1843

and has since become one of the most beloved Christmas stories worldwide.

National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day is observed on December 7th in the United States to honor and remember the victims of the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor, which led to the United States' entry into World War II.

In some parts of the world, particularly in the Southern Hemisphere, December marks the beginning of summer, with warm weather and longer daylight hours.

Simply Delicious



English Pub Split Pea Soup

Prep Time: 15 min; **Cook:** 5 hours; **Yield:** 8 servings

Ingredients

- 1 meaty ham bone
- 1-1/3 cups dried green split peas, rinsed
- 2 celery ribs, chopped
- 1 large carrot, chopped
- 1 sweet onion, chopped
- 4 cups water
- 1 bottle (12 ounces) light beer
- 1 tablespoon prepared English mustard
- 1/2 cup 2% milk
- 1/4 cup minced fresh parsley
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- Additional minced fresh parsley, optional

Directions

- Place ham bone in a 4-qt. slow cooker. Add peas, celery, carrot and onion. Combine water, beer and mustard; pour over vegetables. Cook, covered, on high 5-6 hours or until peas are tender.
- Remove ham bone from soup. Cool slightly, trim away fat and remove meat from bone; discard fat and bone. Cut meat into bite-sized pieces; return to slow cooker. Stir in remaining ingredients. If desired, top with additional minced parsley.

Broccoli Salad Supreme

Prep/Total Time: 10 min + chilling; **Yield:** 20 servings

Ingredients

- 10 cups broccoli florets (about 3-1/2 pounds)
- 6 cups seedless red grapes (about 3 pounds)
- 1 cup sliced celery
- 6 green onions, sliced
- 2 cups mayonnaise
- 2/3 cup sugar
- 2 tablespoons cider vinegar
- 1 pound sliced bacon, cooked and crumbled
- 1-1/3 cups slivered almonds, toasted

Directions

- In a large salad bowl, combine the broccoli, grapes, celery



and onions. In a small bowl, combine the mayonnaise, sugar and vinegar. Pour over broccoli mixture and toss to coat.

- Cover and refrigerate for at least 4 hours or overnight. Just before serving, gently stir in bacon and almonds.

Gran's Apple Cake

Prep Time: 20 min.; **Bake:** 35 min + cooling; **Yield:** 24 servings

Ingredients

- 1-2/3 cups sugar
- 2 large eggs, room temperature
- 1/2 cup unsweetened applesauce
- 2 tablespoons canola oil
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 6 cups chopped peeled tart apples
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans

FROSTING:

- 4 ounces reduced-fat cream cheese
- 2 tablespoons butter, softened
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup confectioners' sugar

Directions

- Preheat oven to 350°. Coat a 13x9-in. baking pan with cooking spray.
- In a large bowl, beat sugar, eggs, applesauce, oil and vanilla until well blended. In another bowl, whisk flour, baking soda, cinnamon and salt; gradually beat into sugar mixture. Fold in apples and pecans.
- Transfer to prepared pan. Bake 35-40 minutes or until top is golden brown and a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool completely in pan on a wire rack.
- In a small bowl, beat cream cheese, butter and vanilla until smooth. Gradually beat in confectioners' sugar (mixture will be soft). Spread over cake. Refrigerate leftovers.

– courtesy of tasteofhome.com