

Surviving the Holiday Season

Surviving the holiday season with a chronic illness requires proactive planning, prioritising self-care, and setting realistic expectations. Focus on simplifying celebrations, pacing yourself, and communicating your needs to loved ones. Remember, it's okay to say no to some activities and to adjust traditions to suit your energy levels.

Here are some specific tips to help you navigate the holiday season:

1. Simplify and pace yourself

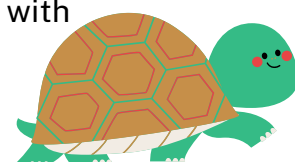
- **Simplify celebrations:** Focus on what truly matters and let go of unnecessary traditions or activities that drain your energy.
- **Pace yourself:** Avoid overcommitting and schedule rest days before and after events.
- **Shop online:** Utilise online shopping to avoid crowded stores and save energy.
- **Delegate tasks:** If hosting, ask guests to bring a dish or help with setup.
- **Prep as much as possible:** Prepare food and decorations in advance to reduce stress during the holidays.

2. Prioritise self-care

- **Schedule rest and relaxation:** Make time for activities that help you recharge, like taking naps, enjoying a warm bath, or meditating.
- **Be mindful of your diet:** Eat nourishing foods and be mindful of alcohol consumption.
- **Create a quiet space:** Have a designated area where you can retreat and recharge when needed.
- **Practice mindfulness and relaxation techniques:** Deep breathing, and meditation can help manage stress and symptoms.
- **Seek support when needed:** Don't hesitate to ask for help from friends, family, or support groups.

3. Communicate and set boundaries

- **Communicate your needs:** Talk to your family and friends about your limitations and what you can realistically manage.
- **Set boundaries:** It's okay to say no to events or activities that will overextend you.
- **Be prepared for unhelpful comments:** Practice responses to potential insensitive remarks about your limitations.
- **Focus on positive connections:** Cherish the moments of connection with loved ones and let go of resentment or negative emotions.



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4. Adapt traditions

- **Choose low-energy traditions:** Enjoy movies, baking pre-made dough, or doing simple crafts.
- **Modify traditions:** Adjust traditions to suit your energy levels and preferences.
- **Consider alternative celebrations:** Explore options like virtual gatherings or smaller, more intimate gatherings.

5. Seek professional support

- **Consult with your healthcare provider:** Discuss your plans and any concerns you may have about managing your chronic illness during the holidays.
- **Explore local disability services:** Some communities offer extra support for people with disabilities during the holidays.

The holiday season can be a demanding and stressful time of year, but with the right strategies in place it can also be a fun, enjoyable time to spend with family and loved ones without a detrimental impact on those with chronic health conditions.

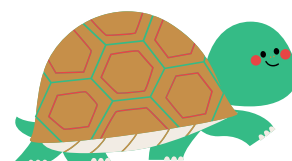
This information sheet was created from Google's AI overview, which used a range of open-use sources including Adulting Well blog, Not Your Grandmas, and My Several Worlds:

<https://www.adultingwell.au/blog/Surviving-Christmas-Chaos#:~:text=%F0%9F%92%A1%20Pro%20Tip%20Practise%20your,you%20can%20recharge%20when%20needed>.

<https://notyourgrandmas.co.uk/how-to-survive-christmas-while-being-chronically-ill/#:~:text=Then%20make%20room%20for%20the,You%20may%20also%20like>

<https://www.myseveralworlds.com/2018/12/02/surviving-the-holidays-with-chronic-illness/#:~:text=Here%20are%20a%20few%20tips,%20Dcare%20and%20self%20love>.

This factsheet is part of our Club Tortoise program for pacing with energy-limiting conditions.



For more information or help managing your condition:

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