

# Wellness Newsletter- December 2024

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## Health Topic of the Month: Self-Care for the Holidays

The holidays are a time when we gather, laugh, eat — and sometimes eat some more. For many, holiday finances can also quickly snowball, which can cause stress. Between food, décor and presents for family and friends, our wallets may feel some frostbite. But, with a little planning and mindfulness, we can plan celebrations responsibly (and affordably) — and have plenty of fun too.

**According to the CDC, the best ways to prevent most chronic diseases are to eat healthy, be physically active, and avoid tobacco and excessive alcohol use. The holidays can make it hard to stick to these healthy practices.**

Source: CDC. <https://www.cdc.gov/chronic-disease/prevention/index.html> 2024. Accessed November 2024.



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## Holiday Eating Strategies

**It's hard to stay on track with healthy eating during the holidays. Let's talk about some tips to help keep you on track with your goals.**

- Don't skip meals. Skipping a meal with the goal of saving calories prior to a holiday event may often backfire. Having a filling snack, such as fruit, string cheese, yogurt or a small handful of nuts, may help to curb your appetite and prevent overeating.
- Contribute a healthy dish. Ensure at least one nutritious choice is available at potlucks by contributing a healthy dish.
- Choose your splurges. Scan the buffet or dinner table and choose a couple holiday favorites to splurge.
- Choose drinks wisely. Stick to calorie-free drinks, such as water, tea or seltzer, instead of high-calorie festive drinks. If you do choose to drink alcohol, do so in moderation, and alternate each alcoholic drink with a glass of water.
- Visit the people, not the food. Move socializing away from the buffet or appetizer table to prevent mindless eating.
- Eat until you are satisfied, not stuffed. Remember — there are always leftovers!
- Don't feel guilty. If you did overindulge, don't beat yourself up!



Source: CDC. <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/healthy-eating/5-healthy-eating-tips-holidays.html> 2024. Accessed November 2024.

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## Holidays and Family Stress

Sometimes being around extended family may make us feel like we're teenagers again! Let's talk about some strategies for avoiding family conflict.

- **Plan ahead.** Knowing you're in for a psychological arm wrestle may protect you from unrealistic expectations. Use experience as a guide instead of just thinking "it'll be different this time".
- **Learn to say no.** Saying yes when you should say no may leave you feeling resentful and overwhelmed
- **Don't abandon healthy habits.** Don't let the holidays become a free-for-all. Overindulgence only adds to your stress and guilt
- **Take a breather.** Make some time for yourself. Find an activity you enjoy. Take a break by yourself. Spending just 15 minutes alone, without distractions, may refresh you enough to handle everything you need to do
- **List your coping strategies for dealing with anger.** (I can excuse myself, take a walk, do deep breathing,, remind myself to stay in the here-and-now,, close my eyes, call a friend, leave at a set time, etc.)



Source: Mayo Clinic. <https://www.mayoclinichealthsystem.org/hometown-health/speaking-of-health/fend-off-holiday-stress-with-these-tips> 2021. Accessed November 2024.

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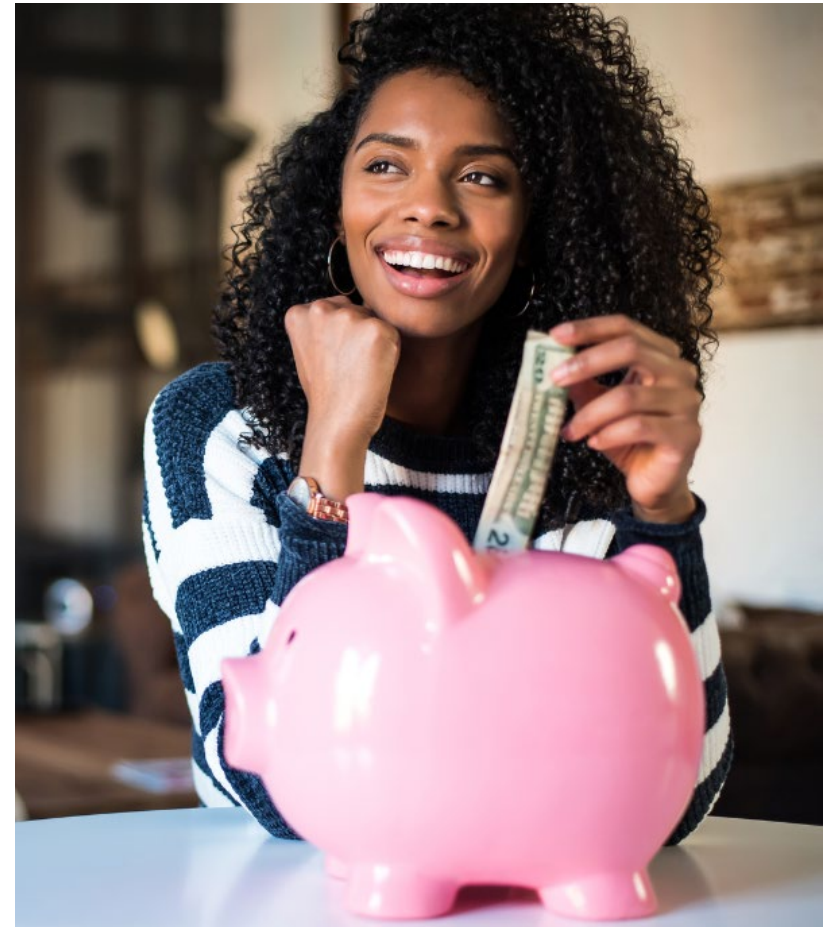
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## Budgeting and the Holidays

Consider a budget friendly holiday. Have a plan when it comes to holiday spending so you don't overextend yourself. The plan may include creating a budget or could be to find a way to make more money – pick up extra hours at work, get an extra seasonal job, or clean out your basement or garage and sell unwanted items. Whatever you choose, having a plan helps us feel that we have some control over our lives and that we're empowered.

Here are a few things to consider for your holiday finances:

- Create a budget to determine if you have money to spend during the holidays. You may also talk with your family about your financial constraints
- Suggest a gift exchange. As an alternative to buying for all, throw everyone's names into a hat and pick just one for whom to find the perfect gift.
- If you're intent on traveling, book your airline reservations well in advance and take advantage of traveling in off-peak hours when flights are cheaper.
- Start a list of all the people you need to shop for and what the gift will be for each person. This will relieve the pressure of getting shopping done and will allow you to focus on other aspects of the holidays, like cooking, traveling, and family time.



**Financial worry is a common holiday stressor. Sometimes the high expectations and need to spend may cast a dark shadow on what is supposed to be a happy season. Take steps to prevent that from happening to you and your family.**



Source: Bankrate. <https://www.bankrate.com/personal-finance/how-to-deal-with-holiday-financial-stress-and-anxiety/#make-a-shopping-list> 2024. Accessed November 2024.

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## United at Work Presentation of the Month- Self-care: Invest in Yourself

[Click here for the Self-care: Invest in Yourself presentation.](#) During this presentation, members may learn why it is important to invest in your own self-care to help maximize your well-being. Specifically, members may learn the key investments in self-care to address physical, mental, and emotional well-being. They will also define “self-care” and create an action plan to incorporate 1-2 key investments that may help improve their overall well-being

**Health Tip Flier of the Month: Financial Well-being ([English](#)) ([Spanish](#))**

**Click on the websites below for additional health and wellness information!**

**[www.myuhc.com](http://www.myuhc.com)**

**[www.uhc.com/health-and-wellness](http://www.uhc.com/health-and-wellness)**

**[www.nutrition.gov](http://www.nutrition.gov)**

**[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)**

