



# Comfort and joy

Create a peaceful holiday season

The time from Thanksgiving to New Year's Day can be overwhelming. But it doesn't have to be. There are little and big things you can do to enjoy the holidays with fewer distractions, less stress and no extra pounds.

To start, gratitude. When you show gratitude, you make someone feel appreciated. But did you know that the act of feeling grateful can help you, too? Gratitude may be able to improve your well-being, decrease your anger and increase your resilience.

It's also important to be in the moment. The holidays can pass by so quickly — try to be present for the joy. Be patient with yourself and take a few deep breaths when challenges creep in.

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# Tips and tricks

## Plan ahead to enjoy the season

### Plan and prep

Planning helps a lot. Here are some tips and reminders to pull it off:

- Set a realistic budget and stick to it. You'll thank yourself come January. Get creative and do something special, like baking your famous apple pie or putting together the world's greatest playlist.
- No one wants to be sick, especially around the holidays. The simplest self-care tip is to wash your hands often. You're in contact with more people during the holidays and exposed to more germs.
- You don't have to go to every party — really. It's okay to say "no, thanks." Go and enjoy the ones that are meaningful or important to you.
- Keep up with your exercise. It'll lower your stress. And it'll give you some freedom to indulge in some of your favorite bites, in moderation of course!
- Beat the blues with a little help from your friends. And plan something you can look forward to in January.

### Make better choices

Sticking with your normal meal routine will be a challenge. Just remember that one day — or a few days — of unhealthy choices is okay. Just get yourself back on track and keep trying. Planning ahead helps here, too:

- Try not to skip meals. It's better to eat normally during the day rather than "saving up" calories to splurge on one meal.
- Eat a healthy snack before the party. Taking the edge off your hunger will make it easier to control your eating choices.
- Be purposeful, chew slowly and be mindful of what you're eating. Take the time to enjoy every bite.
- Scan the buffet table before filling your plate. Then choose only your favorites and balance healthy vs. less healthy options.
- Drink alcohol in moderation or not at all. It's high in calories and stimulates the appetite while decreasing willpower. Alternate with water or other non-alcoholic drinks and never drink and drive.

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