



COVID-19: Celebrate the Holidays Safely This Season

During the continuing pandemic and social restrictions that limit gatherings, your celebrations are likely to be much different than in previous years. However, it's important to find acceptance and focus on all the pleasurable aspects of the holidays you can still enjoy. This will involve making modifications to your usual plans and honoring traditions where you can. Here are a few ways to make your celebrations meaningful as well as safe.

Adhere to the current CDC guidelines. No matter what the occasion, follow the recommendations regarding masking, distancing, size and location of gatherings, travel, the health and risk status of participants and more. **Go to:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/holidays.html>

Let everyone know ASAP how your celebrations will be different this year. Remind them that you are making certain changes out of love and support for everyone's wellbeing. Tell them you will be thinking of them and staying connected virtually or by phone or text.

Focus on activities you can do to feel festive. You can still make your favorite family recipes, build gingerbread houses, put up decorations, make or send gifts and cards, build snowmen with the kids, play charades, make a dance video—all activities that can lift everyone's spirits and create a sense of togetherness.

Schedule a video call to share a holiday dinner. Have everyone place their laptops on the table enabling you to talk while you're eating. Share recipes for the meal ahead of time.

Check out virtual or televised broadcasts and local events. Look for upcoming live or prerecorded concerts and faith services. Find community listings for drive-through holiday displays, guided walks through the park system and other free activities.

Do something for someone else. Volunteering to drive donations to a local charity or making monetary contributions reminds us that we are "all in this together" and helps combat loneliness.

Allow yourself hope for the future. As effective vaccines and treatments become tools to help control the pandemic, it will interfere less with our normal life. Start to plan for future holidays, trips, and the tangible milestones and goalposts you want to reach.



**Have questions about having a safe and healthy holiday?
Talk to your healthcare practitioner about your situation.**