



Stay true to you to avoid holiday stress

Holiday cheer can easily be overshadowed by the stress of the season. And when you're trying to stay on track health-wise, stress can throw you off your game. The key is to **manage** that stress in smart, calming, helpful ways.¹

Here are some tips to stay on track with your health goals and keep stress at bay while enjoying all that the season has to offer. Take back your holidays!

Nourish yourself

- **Eat healthy.** Food is one of the best parts of the holidays. Let others know you're trying to make healthier food choices so they can support your goals.
- **Be consistent.** Don't skip meals, even on your busiest days. Fuel yourself with a colorful variety of veggies, fruits and protein-filled snacks throughout the day.
- **Be picky.** Treats will be everywhere. Stay on track by taking only the foods you **love**. Enjoy your treats slowly and mindfully.

Strengthen your body

- **Challenge yourself.** Exercise is a great stress-buster. Sign up for something new. Try a holiday-themed fun run or walk, or even a fitness class at your local community center.²
- **Get in extra steps.** While shopping, squeeze in more activity by parking in the far lot, walking every aisle in the store or taking the stairs instead of elevators.
- **Make weather work.** If you have snow, shovel it instead of using a snowblower. Try snowshoeing or cross-country skiing. Have fun with a snowball fight.
- **Weight it out.** Add muscle-building resistance exercises like pushups, squats or calf raises. Do bicep curls with unopened cans or jars from your pantry or fridge.

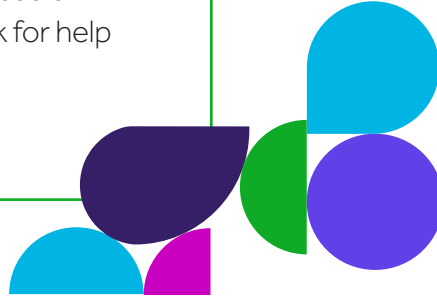


Soothe your mind

- **Practice deep breathing.** Inhale slowly for four counts, deep into your belly. Then slowly exhale for four counts. This helps calm your body and refocus your mind in a natural way.
- **Laugh.** Keep a go-to list of funny videos, jokes and laugh-out-loud pictures on your favorite device or social media page. Laughter is contagious, so share the LOLs with others and turn stress into joy.
- **Manage your stress.** Stress is often unavoidable. Reduce it by trying meditation, prayer, tai chi or journaling.³
- **Slip-ups happen.** Don't beat yourself up. Acknowledge why it happened and renew your commitment to your health.

Ground in the now

- **Trust yourself.** You are in the driver's seat.
- **Be present.** Don't compare this year to "last year" or "the good old days." Practice being in the moment with your friends, family, coworkers or even your pets.
- **Be positive.** Reframe negative thoughts. For example, "This is more than I can handle" could become, "I'll give it my best shot and will ask for help if I need it."



Happy **healthy** holidays from our family to yours!

Not a Livongo member? See if you're eligible for personalized health support at Go.Livongo.com/ACSHIC/New.

Sources:

¹<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/stress>

²<https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/fitness/fitness-basics/aha-recs-for-physical-activity-in-adults>

³<https://www.nlm.nih.gov/health/publications/so-stressed-out-fact-sheet>

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