

## 9 Tips for Staying Healthy Over the Holidays and Beyond

The holidays are here and with them come an increase in family and in-person gatherings, time constraints, high expectations, schedule disruptions, and associated stress.

With those realities in mind, we offer these tried-and-true tips to help you stay healthy and safe during the holidays and beyond!

### 1) Wash your hands regularly.

This is the simplest and most practical tip. Keep disinfecting wipes, sprays, and hand sanitizers on hand too, especially when you don't have access to soap and water. Check out this article on handwashing from our blog archive: [Clean Hands Count](#).

### 2) Wear a mask.

Flu and RSV, as well as colds, are more prevalent at present. And COVID is still a factor. Masks are encouraged indoors, especially in large groups. Mask can lower rates of viral transmission, reduce the risk of spreading asymptomatic or presymptomatic disease, and prevent others from getting sick. We found this [article on masks](#) from health.com useful.

### 3) Be up to date on vaccines and boosters.

Chances of getting sick increase during the holidays. Cold weather and travel can expose you to new germs and make recovery more difficult. Vaccines, on the other hand, give your immune system a boost. The flu vaccine is effective at prevention, and the COVID vaccines and boosters help to minimize symptoms if you are infected as well as protect against severe illness, hospitalization, and death. [4 Things Older Adults Need to Know About RSV as Cases Surge](#)

### 4) Test before a gathering.

COVID tests are free, readily available, easy to administer, and can greatly help minimize the spread of infection. Learn more about [Testing for COVID-19](#) at the Washington State Department of Health website.

### 5) Plan for rest.

Get your daily minimum requirement of good sleep. Resting, downtime, and sleep are underrated but essential elements of good health. They help us lower stress too. Check out these [6 steps to better sleep](#) from Mayo Clinic.

### **6) Keep physically, social, and intellectually active.**

Keeping our bodies, minds, and hearts active goes a long way to contribute to our well-being and quality of life. Psychosocial well-being can have a positive impact on your overall health, boost your immune response system, and help tackle infection.

### **7) Stay hydrated.**

Are you getting enough fluids? Water helps lubricate our joints, regulate body temperature, nourishes the brain and spinal cord, flushes waste, and delivers oxygen. Here are some insights into the benefits of hydration from our colleague Juliet: [Hydration: How Much Water Should You Drink Every Day?](#)

### **8) Moderate alcohol intake.**

Alcohol can be high in calories. It can contribute to impaired function and poor balance. Alcohol can also cause adverse side effects with prescription medications. It's best to keep your consumption to a minimum.

### **9) Check home accessibility and safety.**

Our homes can be unintentionally filled with tripping hazards and accessibility can be a challenge. Do a review to make sure your home is safe for little ones as well as older adults. Here are things to consider on [Age-friendly exteriors](#). Home hazards or dangers include broken or uneven steps; throw rugs or clutter (think shoes, books and magazines, pet toys, cords) that can be tripped over; poor lighting inside and out; slip hazards in the kitchen and bathroom.

“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” The wisdom of Benjamin Franklin still holds true. With a little planning, you can ensure yourself and your loved ones a safe and healthy holiday season.

**Feeling overwhelmed this holiday season? Struggling with your journey as a family caregiver? We can help! [Schedule a free get-acquainted call](#) with us today.**