



Live Well, Work Well

December 2025

Preventing Burnout During the Holiday Season

Everyday life can be hectic enough without the added pressure of the holidays, which can also be a source of major stress and burnout for many people. Burnout isn't just about being tired; it's emotional, mental and physical depletion caused by prolonged stress. However, with some planning and self-care, you can protect your mental and physical well-being while still enjoying the festivities.

The American Psychological Association reports that the holiday season brings added stress for 2 out of every 5 people.

Consider these tips to help prevent burnout:

- **Set realistic expectations.** Social media and cultural norms often create pressure. Focus on meaningful experiences rather than flawless decorations, trendy outfits or extravagant gifts. Gratitude journaling can help shift your mindset toward what truly matters.
- **Start early.** No matter your holiday plans, spreading out your tasks and starting early will help with stress levels. This way, you won't be waiting until the last minute to complete tasks and rushing through responsibilities.

- **Take time to recharge.** Self-care during the holidays isn't indulgent; it's essential. Regular breaks from daily stressors can prevent burnout by helping your body and mind relax and recharge. Rest restores your energy, boosts your mood and increases productivity.
- **Maintain boundaries.** Boundaries protect your emotions and your physical space. They can be a healthy strategy as you navigate the holiday season and a full calendar. Only commit to the invitations or requests that truly matter to you and let go of the rest.
- **Make a list of all visible and invisible tasks.** Often, the mental load of holiday planning falls on one person and can go unnoticed. For example, "buying a gift" includes making a budget, understanding interests or sizes, deciding on a gift, purchasing it and wrapping it. When invisible labor becomes visible, it's easier to delegate tasks and ask for help.

While these practical strategies can help address some holiday stressors, you should also seek further support from a doctor or mental health professional.

Mindful Holiday Eating

The holiday season often means more parties and gatherings—and an abundance of festive food and drinks. However, practicing mindful holiday eating can help you savor the season without overdoing it. This healthy approach encourages focusing on preparing and consuming food in a distraction-free environment. Mindful eating offers physical and mental health advantages, such as better body cue recognition, overeating prevention, healthier food choices, stress reduction and weight loss.

Consider the following mindful eating tips:

- Honor your hunger and satiety cues.
- Start with small portions.

- Use all five senses when you eat.
- Take small bites and chew slowly.
- Limit distractions while eating.
- Don't skip meals.

Mindful eating doesn't mean avoiding your favorite holiday foods. It's simply about bringing more awareness and enjoyment to your food. You can also try to prioritize the social aspect of gatherings and engage in meaningful conversations to reduce your focus on food.

By practicing mindful holiday eating, you can enjoy the season and create lasting memories. Contact a dietitian if you need guidance on mindful eating.

Learning Your Family Health History

Most people have a family history of at least one chronic disease. Your family health history is one of the most powerful tools for understanding your risk for disease and conditions like heart disease, diabetes and certain cancers. Knowing this information can help you and your health care provider make informed decisions about screenings, lifestyle changes and preventive care.

A 23andMe survey revealed that although 9 out of 10 Americans agree that knowing family health history is important for knowing their own health risks, fewer than half (38%) actually know it.

The holiday season is a great time to gather or update family health history information so you can take charge of your health in the new year. Consider asking your family members these questions:

- What is your family's ancestry or ethnic background?

- Do you have any chronic diseases, such as heart disease, diabetes or obesity?
- Do you have any health conditions, such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol or asthma?
- Have you been diagnosed with any other serious health issues, such as cancer, stroke or Alzheimer's disease?
- How old were you when each of these diseases or health conditions was diagnosed?

Remember to ask about the cause and age of death for relatives who have died. It's important to record your family health history and continually share updates with family members. The U.S. surgeon general's web-based tool, [My Family Health Portrait](#), can help you keep track of information. If you have health concerns, talk with your doctor.

Recipe of the Month

Parmesan Chive Biscuits

Makes: 12 servings

Ingredients

- 2 cups biscuit mix
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup 2% reduced-fat milk
- 4 Tbsp. butter (melted)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup Parmesan cheese (freshly grated)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ Tbsp. fresh chives (finely chopped)

Preparations

1. Preheat oven to 400 F.
2. Combine all ingredients in a large bowl.
3. Stir together to mix well. Do not overmix.
4. Turn out onto a floured board. Roll to a 1-inch-thick square.
5. Cut into 12 squares. Bake on a cookie sheet, spaced slightly apart, for 12 to 15 minutes.

Nutritional Information

(per serving)

Total calories	153
Total fat	9 g
Protein	4 g
Sodium	348 mg
Carbohydrate	15 g
Dietary fiber	0 g
Saturated fat	4 g
Total sugars	3 g

Source: MyPlate



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Coping With Holiday Stress and Anxiety

While often joyful, the holiday season can also bring a wave of stress and anxiety. With social obligations, financial pressures and the desire to create perfect memories, it's easy to feel overwhelmed.

The following are practical ways to manage these emotions and enjoy the season more fully:

- **Set realistic expectations.** Let go of the idea that everything must be perfect. Traditions evolve, and it's okay if things don't go exactly as planned. Instead, focus on connection, gratitude and rest.
- **Prioritize self-care.** Make time for activities that recharge you. Whether it's a quiet walk, reading or declining an invitation, protecting your energy is essential.
- **Budget mindfully.** Financial stress is common during the holidays. Set a realistic budget and stick to it. Thoughtful, low-cost gifts or experiences often carry more meaning than expensive purchases.
- **Stay connected.** Reach out to supportive friends or family, especially if you're

feeling isolated and in need of emotional support. Sharing your thoughts and feelings can lighten the emotional load. If you need additional support, consider consulting a mental health professional.

- **Practice mindfulness.** Take a few minutes each day to breathe deeply, meditate or reflect on your thoughts. These brief pauses can help you remain in the present, even in the midst of chaos.
- **Create boundaries.** It's okay to decline invitations or limit time with people who drain your energy. Protecting your mental health sometimes means saying "no" without guilt.
- **Focus on gratitude.** Focusing on what you're thankful for can help ease anxiety and foster a sense of peace. Try keeping a short daily gratitude list to stay grounded in the positives.

It's completely normal to feel stressed during the holiday season. By acknowledging your emotions and taking small, intentional steps to care for yourself, you can create a season that feels calmer and more peaceful.

Tips for a Mindful Year-End

As the year draws to a close, December naturally invites a moment of pause. Between the flurry of holiday plans and the anticipation of a fresh start in January, it's easy to overlook your emotional well-being. Yet, this month may be one of the most important times to gently check in with your mental well-being.

The end of the year offers a unique opportunity to reflect on what has passed and reset intentions for what's ahead. However, before rushing into resolutions, think about creating space for self-compassion and clarity. Consider the following tips to do just that:

- **Reflect.** Take a quiet moment to look back on the year—not just the milestones, but the everyday moments as well. What challenged you? What surprised you? What helped you grow? Reflection isn't about perfection; it's about awareness.
- **Recognize.** Celebrate your wins—big and small. Maybe you led a successful project, supported a teammate or showed up on tough days. Acknowledging your efforts builds confidence and

resilience. At the same time, recognize areas for growth without judgment.

- **Reset.** Take time to reset and set intentions for 2026. Consider what kind of energy you want to carry into the new year. What values will guide your choices? What boundaries or habits will support your well-being? A short mindfulness practice or writing a letter to your future self can help you connect with your vision.

As you take time to reflect, recognize and reset, remember that you don't have to navigate your well-being alone. If you're feeling overwhelmed or want to explore ways to support your mental health, consider reaching out to your HR representative to learn more about the mental health benefits available to you.

Take Charge of Your Health



Replace Doomscrolling with Hopescrolling

It's easy to instinctively scroll through endless feeds of distressing headlines and negative news. "Doomscrolling" is the act of continuously scrolling through bad news, often leading to heightened anxiety, stress and a sense of helplessness. In contrast, a growing movement is encouraging a shift toward "hopescrolling," which involves intentionally seeking out uplifting, inspiring, and solution-oriented stories that foster optimism and resilience.

By replacing doomscrolling with hopescrolling, you can reshape your digital habits to support mental well-being and cultivate a more hopeful outlook about the world. Consider the following tips to be more intentional while scrolling:



Follow positive accounts. Curate your social media feeds to include more positive content by following users who share happy news and funny, lighthearted videos. Additionally, unfollow or mute sources that consistently leave you feeling drained or hopeless.



Set a time limit. To reduce the time you spend scrolling, set a timer or utilize your device's app limits feature. It's important to take regular breaks to reset your focus.



Set intentions before you scroll. Ask yourself: Am I opening this app to connect, learn, relax or distract? Setting a purpose helps you stay mindful and avoid falling into a doomscrolling spiral. It's still valid to want to consume the news, and a goal can help keep your scrolling on track.



Remove apps. If you find yourself upset or in a bad mood every time you use a specific app, try deleting it from your device and replacing it with an app that improves your mood instead.



Manage notifications. Change your phone settings to reduce the number of notifications you receive daily. They can often deliver upsetting and distracting news, and it can be tempting to start scrolling every time you get a new one.