

COPING WITH THE HOLIDAYS WHILE LIVING WITH A CHRONIC ILLNESS



This is the season of joy, laughter and good will. But what if you don't have the strength and energy to truly embrace the season? For some people, the holidays bring unwelcome guests, unwelcome memories and stress. The holidays can involve an array of demands, work, parties, shopping, baking, cleaning, caring for family and friends or feeling the effects of MG. So much for peace and joy, right? Here are a few tips for surviving and actually enjoying the holiday season this year.



SHOPPING: Nothing beats the feeling of giving the perfect gift, but finding the energy to get the shopping done is not an easy feat. Shop early and shop smart.

1. Make a list of everyone you plan to buy a gift for. Then, create a page for each person and write down gift ideas. Later, when you actually purchased the gift, write it down on the person's page and cross out the person's name on your "master list".

2. Shop online or by catalog. If your energy is limited, internet shopping can compensate and you can shop anytime of the day or night. If you're not comfortable with actually ordering online, you can use the internet to browse and find out which stores carry the items you want to purchase. You can save a lot of energy if you know exactly what you want and where you need to go to find it.

3. Scan the fliers that arrive in your mailbox. If you find an item you want, call the store to make sure it's in stock and ask for the item to be held for you at customer service. You can stop in and pick up your item, or have a family member do so, with out actually "shopping".

4. Plan your shopping trips to be as efficient as possible. Avoid peak times like evenings and weekends and you won't use up your energy fighting the crowds and standing in lines.

5. Make use of free or low cost gift wrapping services or use holiday gift bags.

6. If all else fails, use GIFT CARDS. There are unlimited options these days, so you can find just the right one and several stores sell a large selection all in one place.

SOCIAL EVENTS: Get out and have some fun, just don't forget to look after your health as well. If you have a big event or family celebration, don't plan any other events or outings a few days before, so that you can save up your energy. The temptation to stay too long is difficult to avoid, but listen to your body and know when it is time to go. If you're the host, purchase pre-made food platters or have family and friends do the prep work for you. If you can afford it, use a cleaning service and assign a co-host if you need to sneak away for a rest. Most of all, the holidays are not about perfection, but sharing special moments with those we love! ENJOY.

