

Tips for a Safe and Enjoyable Holiday Season for People with Disabilities and Older Adults



December
2024

Accessible Decorations and Lighting

- **Simplify Decorations:** Choose decorations that are visually appealing without being too overwhelming.
- **Lighting Considerations:** Use lights that are not overly bright, or consider dimmable lights for flexibility.

Stay Warm and Comfortable

- **Dress in Layers:** Older adults can be more susceptible to cold. Encourage wearing multiple layers that can be added or removed.
- **Temperature Control:** Keep rooms at a warm, comfortable temperature, especially if hosting a loved one who is more sensitive to the cold.

Inclusive Menus

- **Label Dishes:** Clearly label dishes with allergen information.
- **Dietary Accommodations:** Ask guests about dietary needs beforehand to ensure everyone has something suitable to eat.

Plan for Accessibility at Gatherings

- **Check Accessibility:** Ensure that venues are wheelchair accessible, including ramps and wide entrances for mobility aids.
- **Room for Maneuverability:** Arrange seating with enough space for easy movement.

Stay Connected

- **Reach Out:** The holiday season can be isolating for older individuals, especially if they live alone. Schedule regular calls or set up virtual check-ins.
- **Invite Participation:** Involve those who might be alone in holiday preparations, such as decorating, cooking, or even crafting. It helps maintain a sense of belonging and joy.

Avoid Slips and Falls

- **Non-Slip Rugs:** If you're hosting at home, make sure rugs are non-slip, and secure any loose items that could be tripping hazards.
- **Clear Pathways:** Ensure that walkways are free of clutter both indoors and outdoors.