

December is **AIDS Awareness Month, National Human Rights Month, and Safe Toys and Gifts Month.**

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### **December 1 - Giving Tuesday**

A day to celebrate and promote generosity. In what ways are you giving back?

### **December 4 - National Cookie Day**

🍪 Go ahead and splurge, but just for today!

### **December 10 - Hanukkah Begins**

Bring on the latkes! Here's a simple recipe. Just go easy on the sour cream. 😊

<https://www.thekitchn.com/how-to-make-latkes-at-home-251997>

### **December 13 - National Cocoa Day**

Did you know that Cocoa has many health benefits? It's true!

<https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/cocoa-powder-nutrition-benefits>

### **December 21 - First Day of Winter**

It's the shortest day and longest night of the year. Light some candles and enjoy your evening.

### **December 25 - Christmas**

🎄 🕯️ 🔔 **Facebook Poll:** Have you been naughty or nice?

### **December 26 - Kwanzaa Begins**

Kwanzaa is rooted in African culture, but people from all racial and ethnic backgrounds are welcomed to join in the celebration.

### **December 31 - New Year's Eve**

We've all been through a lot this year to varying degrees. Pause. Give thanks. Reflect. Breath. Be kind. Remember, we're all in this together. #2020 #newyarseve #nye

# FOOD & DRINK

**What's in season?** Parsnip, Turnips, Celery Root, Horseradish, Kumquats, Ugli Fruit, Beets, and Rutabaga.

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Why hasn't anyone thought of this sooner! Chop 1 cup of fresh cranberries, pat dry, and toss with powdered sugar. Then add to a batch of Rice Krispies for a new Christmas treat. #mindblown

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Who doesn't love a classic green bean casserole for The Holidays? Lighten things up with this made from scratch recipe: <https://www.gimmesomeoven.com/healthier-green-bean-casserole/>

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Give beets a chance. This elegant and colorful dish makes a great holiday appetizer!  
<https://bit.ly/3eWrkv0>

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Are parsnips healthy? Yes! A half-cup provides a good source of folate, vitamin C, and about 3 grams of fiber. They also add some heart-healthy potassium to your diet and make a great-tasting soup. <https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/154833/creamy-roasted-parsnip-soup/>

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It's been a year to indulge, and Christmas cookies are oh, so comforting! Here are a few healthier versions to try. <https://bit.ly/2Uqtaum>

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🍁 National Maple Syrup Day is December 17th. Roast some vegetables for dinner tonight with a mixture of maple syrup and Dijon mustard.

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Did you know comfort foods provide psychological comfort? They can remind us of fond memories and occasions involving our friends and family. Soothe your soul with one of these recipes. <https://bit.ly/3nz3LMf>

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🍷🍸🥂 So long, 2020! Ring in the New Year with a festive champagne cocktail or mocktail.  
<https://www.countryliving.com/food-drinks/g2872/new-years-party-champagne-cocktails/>  
<https://www.marthastewart.com/274247/nonalcoholic-drinks>



# LIFESTYLE

**Friendly Reminder:** Be sure to change your furnace filters. When appropriately used, HVAC filters can help reduce airborne contaminants, including viruses in a building or small space.

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Oat Yeah! Start your day with oatmeal. Breakfast eaters have a decreased risk of Type 2 Diabetes, and oats contain a particular fiber that helps improve your blood glucose.

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☀️ Seasonal affective disorder can affect anyone. Battle those blues with exercise! Moving your body releases endorphins and can also increase serotonin levels.

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🌲🌟🔥 Safety first! Christmas time means lots of extra lights. Overloaded circuits can lead to blown fuses or even fires. Be aware of how many devices you have plugged in at one time and never plug extension cords into other extension cords.

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Stay safe and sane. Here are 100 things you can do inside. <https://bit.ly/3eYYZ7w>

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Work-Life Advice: You don't need a reason to take a day off from work, and you shouldn't have to explain why. <https://bit.ly/32ZcH5J>

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🚗 **Safety Reminder:** Get your car ready for winter and check your tires. Look for adequate tread depth, defects or damage, and be sure to inflate your tires to the proper pressure.

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🧘🏻‍♀️ Zoom fatigue. It's a thing. Check out these tips that can help make video calls less exhausting. <https://bit.ly/2Haxhs2>

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It's not just your hands that need washing! Your phones, clothes, and doorknobs need it too. Click <https://rb.gy/ibcx8l> to see how to get your stuff cleaned up and disinfected.



# COMMUNITY

We all have things to give - time, talent, and objects we no longer use. [The Good Use app](#) connects the people in your community who can honestly use these things and put them to good use. Give it a try and make a difference.

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**Help families in need.** The coronavirus has disrupted our food system in many ways but has affected low-income families the most. Wholesome Wave believes in getting more fruits and vegetables to those in need. Donate today. <https://www.wholesomewave.org>

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🧐 Let's keep taking care of each other. There is no shortage of options for environmentally-friendly reusable masks, and most are even very stylish! #maskson

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**Giving Back:** Have each family member pick an organization that is meaningful to them and donate to a local charity this Christmas instead of all those gifts.


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🥧🍰🍪 Delegate desert. Save time and oven space by supporting local bakeries. Order your pies, cakes, and sweets for your holiday festivities.

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🌍 Be a good steward of the Earth and upcycle your live Christmas tree. Use it for firewood, mulch, or compost, turn it into a wildlife habitat for birds, protect your tender plants with its branches, or find a Christmas tree recycling program in your area.

# HEALTH

 **One-minute health boost.** Take two to three deep breaths, focus on your breathing, and think of three things that are going well for you. Deep breathing can lower your heart rate and blood pressure and help improve your mood.

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Feeling a little stiff from the cold? Here are four stretches to help relieve those stiff joints:

- Arm Opener
  - Hula Hoop
  - Yoyo
  - Calf Stretch
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Holiday over-indulgence? These exercises help aid in digestion - walking, cycling, crunches, yoga, Tai chi, and deep breathing.

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#PurplePower - Research shows eating more foods with this nutritious hue can help prevent cancer and heart disease. Think purple potatoes, carrots or cauliflower, blackberries, eggplant, acai, and purple cabbage.

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**Pro Tip:** Can't find any rubbing alcohol or hydrogen peroxide? Use an alcohol-based mouthwash or lemon juice to clean and disinfect your shallow cuts.

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Cooking at home is healthier than takeout, and these recipes are quicker than delivery!  
<https://bit.ly/35BmznP>

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Looking to burn some calories fast? Try one of these workouts you can do in 30 minutes.  
<https://www.shape.com/fitness/cardio/5-ways-burn-500-calories-30-minutes>

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Vegetarians and vegans take note. You may have a higher risk of stroke due to lower B12 levels. Consider boosting your intake with supplements or fortified foods.



# PARENTING

**Lead by example.** Wearing a mask when you're in public is a great way to visibly demonstrate to those around you (and your kids) that you care about their health and safety.

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Get your kids in the habit of helping! Chores help them learn responsibility and self-reliance.  
<https://www.parents.com/toddlers-preschoolers/development/behavioral/chores-for-kids/>

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We knew the warm weather wouldn't last forever. Keep your kids entertained inside.  
<https://whatmomslove.com/kids/active-indoor-games-activities-for-kids-to-burn-energy/>

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🎄 ❄️ 🐮 It's time for Christmas crafting! Lots of super cute ideas here:  
<https://www.countryliving.com/diy-crafts/g5030/christmas-crafts-for-kids/>

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**Freebie:** Let's get those crayons and markers out.  
<http://www.freefunchristmas.com/christmas-coloring-pages/>

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Keep your community healthy and avoid the spread of preventable diseases. Make sure your children are up-to-date on their immunizations.  
<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/imz/child-adolescent.html>

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👶 You can still take the kids to see Santa this year. Google "Drive-thru Santa events near me" and see what's being offered.

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🎬 🍿 Don't be a Grinch! Break out the popcorn and have a classic Holiday movie night.  
<https://bit.ly/32PM9U5>

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**Family Activity:** Read about the seven principles of Kwanzaa with your family. They teach about working together, learning from the past, and strengthening bonds. All valuable life lessons!

# MEMBERSHIP

👶 Sitting on Santa's lap may be out this year, so share your Santa Throwback photos with us!  
#throwbackthursday #santa #santaclaus #photography

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**Friendly Reminder:** It's time to start collecting those coats, hats, gloves, and scarves for local shelters. Put up signs, advertise on your social channels, and spread the word!

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Donating to your local Y provides emergency services to communities in need, including outreach to isolated seniors. Here's how you can help: (insert a link to the page with information)

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Have an online cookie (recipe) swap for National Cookie Day where members share their favorite recipes for all to enjoy.

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Thinking about your new year's resolutions? Join the YMCA! You'll have access to equipment, fitness classes, youth development programs, childcare services, personal trainers, and so much more! Learn more by visiting (insert URL to page with more information).

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**Dear Members:** What fitness class would you like to see added in 2021?

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❄️ It's getting cold out there! Bring your workouts inside and use The YMCAs state-of-the-art equipment to keep your routine exciting and challenging!



# TRIVIA

Where does ugli fruit originate?

**Answer:** Jamaica! The ugli fruit is a hybridization of tangerine, orange, and grapefruit and is thus a tangelo.

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What do the colors of Kwanza represent?

**Answer:** Black for the people, red for the noble blood that unites all people of African ancestry, and green for the rich land of Africa.

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What does LISS stand for?

**Answer:** LISS stands for “low-intensity steady-state” and refers to moderate cardio exercise performed without varying intensity.

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True or false? Should you store bread in the fridge to keep it fresh?

**Answer:** False. The refrigerator can slow down mold, but it causes loaves to go stale faster.

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What is the most popular Christmas tree in North America?

**Answer:** The Fraser Fir

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The first ball to be dropped in New York’s Times Square happened in what year?

**Answer:** 1908

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Which state makes the most maple syrup? A: Ohio B: Vermont C: Maine

**Answer:** A: Vermont. In 2019, they produced over 2 million gallons of this sweet substance.



# INSPIRATION

“Great things are done by a series of small things brought together” ~ Vincent Van Gogh  
#motivation #dailyquote

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**Be Bold!** "The best way to spread Christmas cheer is singing loud for all to hear."  
~ Buddy the Elf

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Sometimes we need a personal cheerleader or a really good pep talk. Some of us turn on the music. What songs motivate or inspire you?

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#motivationmonday “Don’t limit your challenges. Challenge your limits.” ~ Unknown

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A quote 65 years old but even more meaningful today - “Maybe Christmas (he thought) doesn’t come from a store. Maybe Christmas perhaps means a little bit more.” ~ The Grinch

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Strive for progress, not perfection. #inspire #believe #mindset #positivity #love

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**Christmas hashtags:** #christmas #christmastree #xmas #love #merrychristmas #christmasdecor  
#winter #christmastime #handmade #santa #santaclaus #art #christmaslights #bhfyp  
#instagood #snow #family #navidad #christmasiscoming #holidays #christmasdecorations  
#holiday #photography #christmasgifts #noel #gift #december #like



# VIDEO

**Words of encouragement.** Have your instructors post videos with tips on how to help members who are struggling with their health and fitness #motivation #health #fitness

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**Attract new members!** Post videos or live streams of fitness classes or members working out at your Y to show off your facilities and encourage new membership. Also, show how clean and safe it is! #maskson #selfdistancing #newnormal #washyourhands #wereinthistogether #stopthespread #wegotthis

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Share “Get Ready with Me” videos of warm-up exercises, stretches, training, or any other pre-workout routines. #exercise #fitness #workout #motivation #health #training #fitnessmotivation #personaltrainer #strong

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Ho, Ho, Ho! Here’s a safe way to see Santa. Create an event and live stream from the North Pole with Santa and his Elves as he prepares for Christmas Day!

Please consider taking the [ySocial Survey](#) to help us better our monthly documents!