

December is **Safe Toys and Gifts Month, National Drunk and Drugged Driving (3D) Prevention Month, and World AIDS Awareness Month**

Find the best resources by clicking the names above.

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## December 6 - St. Nicholas Day

Tradition says, **leave your shoes by the door tonight**, and St. Nick might leave a little surprise.

## December 7 - Hanukkah Starts

**Happy Hanukkah!** Wishing you a festival filled with love, light, and joy. May the glow of the menorah illuminate your home and heart. #HanukkahCelebration #FestivalOfLights

## December 21 - First Day of Winter

Let the frosty adventures begin! Here's to hot chocolate, warm blankets, and making memories in a winter wonderland. ❄️🧤 #WinterMagic #CozyVibes

## December 25 - Christmas Day

**Merry Christmas!** 🎄✨ May it bring warmth to your heart and happiness to your home. #MerryChristmas #JoyfulCelebrations

## December 26 - Kwanza Starts

Embrace the seven principles of unity this week - self-determination, collective work, responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, and creativity. **Happy Kwanzaa!** #KwanzaaJoy #UnityInDiversity

## December 31 - New Year's Eve

**Great advice for the new year!** "Be always at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors, and let each New Year find you a better man." ~ Benjamin Franklin

# FOOD & DRINK

**What's in season?** Parsnip, turnips, celery root, winter squash, cauliflower, romanesco, Brussels sprouts, chestnuts, horseradish, kumquats, ugli fruit, kiwi, mandarins, Meyer lemons, beets, collard greens, kale, and rutabaga.

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*Post for 12/4 - **Today is National Cookie Day!** Share your favorite cookie recipes with us, then bake them up on December 18th for Bake Cookies Day.*

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It's time to celebrate! There's no need to ruin your diet this month. Have a [delicious and healthy](#) holiday season with these recipes from Eating Well.

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This [Ruby-Red Raspberry smoothie](#) has some good **holiday vibes**. Have one for breakfast or an afternoon snack.

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**Turn Taco Tuesday into soup night.** [This recipe](#) has all your favorite taco flavors packed into one delicious and comforting bowl.

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Give it a try: [Roasted Parsnips](#). Parsnips have a rich fiber content and offer essential nutrients such as potassium, vitamin C, and B6/Folate. They also possess anti-inflammatory and anti-fungal properties.

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Have you ever heard of the tradition of eating **12 grapes at the stroke of midnight** on New Year's Eve? It's said to bring good luck, success, and prosperity in the coming year.

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Pomegranates are packed with polyphenols, giving them superfood status! [Here's how to cut them up](#) to add to your favorite recipes.

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**Are you bored with broccoli or Brussels? Try romanesco instead!**



# LIFESTYLE

**Make the season bright!** Host a movie night with friends and family and watch classic Christmas movies together.

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Ditch the paper and [wrap your gifts with fabric!](#)

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**Make stretching a part of your daily routine.** Flexibility is essential for preventing injuries, improving posture, and maintaining mobility as you age.

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With the new year comes new resolutions. [Learn how to start](#) and keep a healthy habit in 2024.

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It's easy to become more sedentary this month. **Set a step goal and challenge yourself** to walk more throughout the day. Aim for 10,000 steps or more, and use a pedometer or smartphone app to track your progress.

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**Decorate safely this holiday with a few simple steps:**

- Don't cover cords. Overheated or frayed cords could spark and cause a fire.
  - Keep light strings short. Only connect up to three strings of mini lights to one outlet unless your lights are LEDs.
  - Keep decor cool. Don't put ribbons or other decorations around lampshades to avoid fire hazards.
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**Holiday Eating Tip:** Keep healthy snacks like apple slices with peanut butter or carrot sticks with hummus readily available so you're not munching on cookies all day.

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What New Year's Eve traditions set your goals for the new year?

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**Take a break from holiday meal prep and enjoy a calming cup of tea.** Whether it's herbal, green, or your favorite blend, savor the flavors and let them soothe your body and mind.



# COMMUNITY

*Post for December 2 - It's Coats & Toys for Kids Day!* **Donate a coat or a toy, and make a difference in a child's life.** Together, we can create smiles and ensure every child feels the warmth of love this season. ❤️🧑🏻🧑🏻 #GiveBack #SpreadJoy

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Be mindful: Not all people enjoy this time of year. **Be there for friends or family members** who may be lonely or struggling during the holiday season. Sometimes, all it takes is a friendly conversation to brighten someone's day.

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*Post for December 3, International Day of Persons with Disabilities Day -* Celebrate the strength and resilience of individuals with disabilities on **International Day of Persons with Disabilities.** Let's champion inclusivity, break barriers, and create a world where everyone's abilities shine. 🧡💙 #IDPD #InclusionMatters

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'Tis the season to give! Make monetary donations to charities or organizations that support causes you care about. Many charities run holiday campaigns to help those in need.

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**Thoughtful Gift Idea** - Donate to a charity or nonprofit organization in someone's memory. It can even be in remembrance of a furry friend.

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Feeling festive? Gather your friends and family and go **Christmas Caroling** in your neighborhood or at a local nursing home.

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*Post for Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day on December 7 -*

"We have not forgotten, nor will we. We live in a world made more free, more just, and more peaceful by those who will answer roll call no more, those who will report for muster never again. We do remember Pearl Harbor." ~ Ronald Reagan



# HEALTH

Have you ever wondered what is the best time to eat dinner? [Earlier might be better.](#)

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**DYK? Steaming vegetables helps preserve their nutrients** and natural flavors. For a simple and nutritious side dish, try steaming broccoli, carrots, and cauliflower.

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Are you looking for ways to avoid Winter weight gain? Here are [20 tips to help you](#) through the holidays and into the new year.

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**Boost your immunity** with these [11 foods](#) this holiday season to keep you well and heal faster.

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**Sip on this: Peppermint Tea!** Here are some surprising benefits that might surprise you.

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Healthy Tip: Incorporate bodyweight exercises like push-ups, squats, and planks into your routine for a convenient and effective way to build strength anytime and anywhere.

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The YMCA is the perfect choice for anyone looking to **prioritize their health and wellness** in the new year. Join us today!

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**New Year's Goal:** Nourish your body with delicious and nutritious meals. Discover new recipes, experiment with fresh ingredients, and make healthy eating a joyful experience!

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When was the last time you took a moment for self-care? It can be as simple as relaxing with your morning coffee, enjoying a warm bath, or reducing stress levels with calming activities.

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**Here's what's on our list of healthy snacks for December** - Fresh popped Popcorn, Cranberry Pecan Granola, Goji Berries, Brie drizzled with honey on crispbread with a slice of pear, and Pomegranate arils.



# PARENTING

Winter break is an excellent time to have your children go through the books they don't read anymore and donate them to the local library, school, daycare, or literacy organization. Bonus! It'll keep them busy for a little while.

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Think Hot Chocolate can't be healthy? Think again! [Here's a kid-friendly, feel-good recipe](#) for **National Cocoa Day on December 13th**.

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How can you keep your kids entertained when the weather turns cold? [Here are 125 ways!](#)

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**December 5th is Communicate with Your Kids Day.** Talking with your teen about sensitive subjects can be uncomfortable, but it's essential. Start the conversation and listen to what they have to say.

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You'll find all kinds of [free Christmas printables](#), such as holiday cards, gift tags, coloring sheets, decorations, and more. It's a great mixture of **printables for both you and your children**.

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Mix in some [healthy snacks](#) between all the holiday cookies and Christmas treats.

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Reading to your children is a great way to **help them develop a love of books and improve their language skills**. Break out your Holiday favorites and get reading!

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*Post for 12/27* - Today is Make Cutout Snowflakes Day. Check out these [free printable snowflake templates](#) to fold and cut into beautiful paper snowflakes with instructions and step-by-step photos.

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**Fun things to do during Winter Break** - Make snow angels, build a snowman, make snow castles, play board games, visit a park, decorate Christmas cookies, go bowling, have a holiday movie marathon, build a fort, or have a [winter scavenger hunt](#).

# MEMBERSHIP

**Bright idea!** Record virtual classes and share them online to give potential members a sense of what they can expect from the YMCA's offerings.

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**Get your groove on at the YMCA!** Our dance classes aim to inspire and energize. From hip-hop to salsa, there's a style for every dancer. Let's dance our way to fitness!

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Is joining the Y part of your New Year's Resolutions? It should be! We believe in supporting your overall health and wellness. Stop in and see what we have to offer.

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**We want to know:** What would you like to see added to the mix in 2024?

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Video Suggestion: Start pushing for the new year and share clips of fitness classes and programs offered at your YMCA to give viewers a taste of what they can expect.

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With state-of-the-art equipment and experienced trainers, **the YMCA is the perfect place to take your fitness routine to the next level.** Join us today! *(link the post to your join now webpage)*

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Gain new membership for 2024 by showcasing the unique community events and initiatives hosted by your YMCA.

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**Are you looking for a place to play sports and stay active?** The YMCA has basketball courts, swimming pools, and much more! *(link the post to your program's webpage)*

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Join the conversation: Have you started to let go of your unhealthy habits for the New Year?

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**"Giving up is for rookies."** ~ Philoctetes



# TRIVIA

In the movie Elf, what was the first rule of The Code of Elves?

**Answer:** Treat every day like Christmas

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Which country was the first Winter Olympics held in?

**Answer:** France

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Elvis isn't going to have a White Christmas. He's going to have a \_\_\_\_\_?

**Answer:** Blue Christmas.

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About how many arils are inside a pomegranate?

**Answer:** 600

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In the movie Home Alone, where are the McCallisters going when they leave Kevin behind?

**Answer:** Paris

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Which fairy tale was the first gingerbread house inspired by?

**Answer:** Hansel and Gretel

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What did Frosty The Snowman do when a magic hat was placed on his head?

**Answer:** He began to dance around

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How many valves does a trumpet have?

**Answer:** Three

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What is the tallest penguin? A. Rockhopper B. Emperor C. King D. Chinstrap

**Answer:** B. Emperor. They can range from 3.6 to 4.3 feet in height.



# INSPIRATION

**"There are three stages of man:** he believes in Santa Claus; he does not believe in Santa Claus; he is Santa Claus." ~ Bob Phillips

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"Instead of letting your hardships and failures discourage or exhaust you, let them inspire you." ~ Michelle Obama

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**"May your walls know joy,** may every room hold laughter, and every window open to great possibility." ~ Mary Anne Radmacher

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"Winter is the time for comfort, for good food and warmth, for the touch of a friendly hand and for a talk beside the fire: it is the time for home." ~ Edith Sitwell

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"You are never too old to set another goal or to **dream a new dream.**" ~ Audrey Hepburn

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"You can tell a lot about a person by the way they handle three things: a rainy day, lost luggage, and tangled Christmas tree lights." ~ Maya Angelou

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**"You're braver than you believe,** stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think."  
~ A. A. Milne

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"Get comfortable with being uncomfortable!" ~ Jillian Michaels

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"Last year's words belong to last year's language. And next year's words await another voice."  
~ T.S. Eliot

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**"Dear George: Remember — No man is a failure who has friends."**  
~ It's a Wonderful Life