

December: at-a-glance

Holidays, Observances & Awareness Days

- World AIDS Day: December 1
- Giving Tuesday: December 2
- Make a Gift Day: December 3
- National Cookie Day: December 4
- Wildlife Conservation Day: December 4
- National Handwashing Awareness Week: December 5-11
- Human Rights Day: December 10
- First Day of Winter: December 21
- Christmas: December 25
- Hannukah Begins: December 25
- Kwanzaa Begins: December 26
- New Year's Eve: December 31

Activities

- Get ready for winter sports like hockey, football, basketball, ice skating, and skiing.
- **It's a big month for baking**, with many families, churches, schools, and organizations exchanging cookies for the holidays. **Maybe host a cookie swap at your YMCA.**
- Many communities hold tree-lighting ceremonies, parades, caroling, and other holiday-themed events. **Consider sharing** these on your YMCA's social channels.

Notable Events

- The **winter solstice** occurs in the Northern Hemisphere, marking the year's shortest day.
- Visible this month - **The Geminid meteor shower**. It's the most active meteor shower of the year! The best viewing nights are December 13th and 14th.
- Did you know that nearly **1 million species face extinction** due to habitat loss, pollution, and climate change? By protecting wildlife, we're also safeguarding ecosystems that benefit us all. Learn more at [WWF's Wild Classroom](#) or the [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service](#). #WildlifeConservationDay



Food & Beverage

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.

It's cozy season! **Warm your soul** with a satisfyingly healthy and [spicy chicken pumpkin pizza](#). Don't knock it till you try it!

Explore a delightful collection of [Christmas cookie recipes](#) to add to your holiday baking list! From vegan to gluten-free and grain-free options, these festive treats let you indulge without the guilt.

Looking for a festive and flavorful side dish for your Holiday feast? [Look no further!](#)

Game nights just got a whole lot yummier! This [butternut squash chili](#) is a hearty, delicious, and energy-packed dish the entire family will love. #gamedaydinner #cozyseason #chili

Post for 12/17 – Sweeten up your day. It's **National Maple Syrup Day!** 🍁🍷 Drizzled over pancakes, stirred into coffee, or baked into your favorite holiday treats, maple syrup adds the perfect touch of natural sweetness. #NationalMapleSyrupDay #NaturallySweet

Which small, fuzzy fruit is packed with vitamin C, has a vibrant green interior, and adds a tropical twist to your snacks or smoothies? 🥝 Kiwi! [Check out the health benefits here.](#)


🍐 Pears are sweet, healthy, easy to digest, and packed with a bonanza of benefits! And these [Pear Snacks](#) are un"pear"alleled. #PearSnacking #ImmunityBoost #SweetSnack


Add this to your rotation - Roasted Veggie Bowl: Toss chopped root veggies with olive oil, garlic, salt, and your favorite herbs, then roast until tender. Serve over quinoa or rice with a dollop of hummus or tahini sauce.



Lifestyle




Unwrap the gift of microjoys! Don't let these subtle moments slip by. **Embrace the joy of everyday occurrences** and find happiness in the present. #MindfulnessMatters

 **Travel Safely:** Before hitting the road this season, pack an emergency kit with blankets, snacks, and a flashlight. Better to be safe than sorry! #WinterTravel #FamilySafety

 **Warm Up with a Good Book!** December is the perfect month to cozy up with a story. Recommend your favorite holiday-themed book in the comments!


Friendly Reminder: Recycle right! Don't throw out those burnt-out strings of Christmas lights. Recycle them! Google "holiday light recycling" near you.


As the days grow shorter, some of us may feel the impact of #Seasonal Affective Disorder – a type of depression tied to changes in light and weather. Here are three ways to cope:

-  Spend time outdoors during daylight.
-  Stay active and connected with your community.
-  Seek support when needed – it's okay to ask for help.

#SADAwareness #HealthySpiritMindBody #SeasonalAffectiveDisorderAwarenessMonth

Feeling the holiday hustle? **Take 5 minutes to breathe deeply and center yourself.** Your mental health matters!  #HolidayWellness

 **Fireplace Safety Alert:** Keep stockings and decorations far from the flames, and always use a screen to block sparks. Cozy AND safe! #FireSafety #HolidayTips

 Get creative this holiday season with handmade crafts and DIY projects. Have some fun with knitting, painting, or upcycling items. It's a wonderful way to unwind and unleash your imagination. Plus, they'll make great gifts! #CraftingInspiration #DIYFun



Community

Post for 12/3 - 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. 🧡💙 #InclusionMatters

Post for 12/4 - 🌱 Start local this Wildlife Conservation Day by planting native species, cleaning up parks, or volunteering with wildlife rehab centers to **protect our community's ecosystem!** #WildlifeConservationDay #ThinkGlobalActLocal

🎁 **Keep the Holidays Safe** 🎁 When choosing toys this holiday season, keep the child's age, abilities, and even allergies or sensory needs in mind. Thoughtful choices make for safe, happy holiday moments! ❤️ #HolidayGifts #SafePlay

Keep your furry friends in mind while planning for your holiday celebrations, as many decorations and treats can be hazards to their health. [Check out this list.](#)

☀️ **Holiday Helpers Needed!** This season, give the gift of time! Volunteer with us and help brighten the holidays for others. Contact us to sign up! 💙 #YMCAGivesBack #Volunteer

Ways to give back this holiday season:

- **Spread Holiday Cheer Through Caroling:** Gather friends or neighbors and go caroling in your community to bring smiles and holiday joy to others.
- **Create Care Packages for Those in Need:** Put together essential items like toiletries, warm socks, or snacks and distribute them to people experiencing homelessness or facing challenges in your area.
- **Encourage Acts of Kindness:** Inspire others in your community with simple gestures, like leaving anonymous gifts or uplifting notes to brighten someone's day.
- **Support Deployed Military Personnel:** Send care packages filled with snacks, personal care items, and heartfelt letters to show appreciation for their service.
- **Lend a Hand at Your Local Animal Shelter:** Volunteer to walk dogs, play with cats, or donate much-needed pet supplies to help animals this holiday season.



Health

This slushy is an anti-inflammatory triple threat thanks to the tart pineapple, earthy turmeric, and zippy ginger! Blend 4 cups pineapple + 2 1/2 cups coconut water + 1 1/2" piece of peeled and grated ginger + 1/2 tsp salt + 3/4 tsp. Turmeric + 2 cups ice. Enjoy!

Party season is here! 🎉 Enjoy the festivities while making smarter eating choices to feel your best. Opt for a small plate to help with portion control, and start by filling it with colorful veggies to get a dose of nutrients before indulging in heavier options. #HolidayHealth #SnackWisely

☀️ Don't forget your daily dose of Vitamin D! Even in winter, some sunshine is essential for your health and well-being. #Sunshine #VitaminD #DailyDose

Post for 12/13 - It's National Cocoa Day! Did you know **cocoa can help reduce muscle inflammation** after a workout? Treat yourself to a post-workout [cocoa smoothie!](#) 🍫💪

Staying active as the temperature drops can be enjoyable! Here are some ideas:

Hiking in Nature: Enjoy the crisp air and beautiful fall or winter landscapes.

Snow Sports: Try skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing, or cross-country skiing.

Ice Skating: Skating is great cardio, whether outdoors or at a rink.

Winter Biking: Use a fat tire bike or bundle up for city riding.

🥬 Did you know dark leafy greens like spinach and kale are rich in iron, calcium, and other essential nutrients that support overall health and vitality? 🥗🌿 #LeafyGreens #NutrientPowerhouses #EatYourGreens

Feeling a little under the weather? This [chicken and pasta soup](#) will lift your spirits in no time!

Keep Holiday Foods Safe! Avoid food poisoning at your celebrations with these tips:

- Wash hands often while cooking.
- Use a food thermometer to ensure proper cooking temperatures.
- Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold.
- Store leftovers promptly and reheat thoroughly.

Parenting

Did you know December is Safe Toys and Gifts Month? 🧸 **Choose age-appropriate toys** and inspect for small parts or sharp edges. Safe toys mean more holiday joy! 🎁 #ParentingTips #HolidaySafety #SafeToys #ChooseWisely

What's for breakfast? How about this quick and easy [PB&J Oatmeal](#) that adults will love, too?

Post for 12/6 – 📅 🧑🏻 **Happy St. Nicholas Day!** It's the perfect time to teach children about the joy of generosity and the importance of kindness. Gather your family to share meaningful moments and inspire the next generation to give back to those in need. And don't forget to set out those shoes! St. Nicholas might drop by with a special treat! #StNicholasDay

Get your kids in the holiday spirit with these [easy Christmas crafts](#).

Hide those vegetables from the picky eaters in your family! Cozy up with this [comforting Mac & Cheese that's sure to please!](#)

What's on your December bucket list? Curling up with *A Christmas Carol* or *The Polar Express*? Visiting Santa Claus? Hosting a holiday movie marathon? Going caroling?

Hot cocoa with natural cocoa powder isn't just tasty – it may help your kids stay focused while tackling homework! **Brain food never tasted so good!** 🍫 🧠

🌲 **Holiday Safety Tip:** Secure your Christmas tree to prevent tipping, especially with little ones or pets in the house. Avoid sharp or breakable ornaments within reach! #HolidaySafety #FamilyFirst

Cold, wintery days are here, and so are these [free printable winter coloring pages](#).

We like! [Simple Handmade Christmas Cards](#). Making greeting cards is a fun and meaningful way to teach kids to express their feelings and celebrate the season!



Membership

Don't wait for the New Year's resolutions! Start your fitness journey at the YMCA today. You can achieve your goals with us. 🏋️🎯 #YMCAFitnessGoals

🎁🏊 Give the gift of fitness this December with a YMCA membership. The perfect present for a healthier, happier holiday season! #GiftOfHealth #JoinYMCA

Post for 12/11 - Did you know stretching improves flexibility and reduces injury risk? 🧘 **This National Stretching Day**, focus on mobility and join us for yoga!

🎵 YMCA Holiday Playlist 🎵

Let's spread some cheer! Drop your favorite holiday tunes in the comments to help us create the ultimate playlist! 🎧 #YTunes #HappyHolidays

Post and promo idea for a Family Night at the Y. Alter content to fit your specific activities – Family time = fitness time! 🏋️👨👩👧👦 Join us every Friday for family-friendly activities like obstacle courses, swim nights, and parent-kid yoga. **Fitness is more fun together!** #FamilyFitnessFridays

The 12 Days of Fitmas or here! Join us in our countdown to Christmas with a daily fitness tip. Stay tuned to stay fit and merry this season! #12DaysofFitmas #YHealth

🌲 How do you plan to stay active this holiday? ♦ Hitting the gym for winter workouts! ♦ Trying a new Y fitness class. ♦ Walking or jogging in the winter wonderland. ♦ Family fitness fun at home! Share it in the comments! #HolidayWellness #YMCA

🎁 **New Year, New Goals!** Tell us: What's your fitness goal for the new year? Let's make it happen together at the Y! #NewYearAtTheY #Goals2025

Winter Wellness Challenge! ❄️ Let's stay active together all season long! Tag a friend who should join you for some holiday workouts at the Y. 🏋️ #WinterWellness #YMCA



Trivia Questions

What is the most visited tourist attraction in the world?

Answer: Times Square

According to a survey of adults, 7% said they wish this happened twice a year.

Answer: Christmas!

20% of adults say they'll do this before Christmas ...

Answer: Sneak a peek at their gifts!

What's the recommended amount of physical activity for adults each week?

Answer: At least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity.

Which holiday song was the first song ever broadcast from space?

Answer: Jingle Bells

What traditional Christmas decoration is actually a parasitic plant?

Answer: Mistletoe.

What German composer and pianist was born on December 16, 1770?

Answer: Ludwig van Beethoven

What is the term for the move in snowboarding where the rider flips both backward and forward in a single jump?

Answer: A double cork.

What year was the first artificial snow produced for skiing?

Answer: 1952.

Inspiration

"To appreciate the beauty of a snowflake it is necessary to stand out in the cold." ~ Aristotle

"When you wish someone joy, you wish them peace, love, prosperity, happiness ... all the good things." ~ Maya Angelou

"Reflect upon your present blessings – of which every man has many – not on your past misfortunes, of which all men have some." ~ Charles Dickens

"December: **A month of lights, snow, coziness, and feasts**; time to make amends and tie up loose ends; finish what you started and make your wishes come true." ~ Unknown

"What good is the warmth of summer, without the cold of winter to give it sweetness."
~ John Steinbeck

Post for 12/7, Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day –

"**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

"**May you never be too grown up to search the skies on Christmas Eve.**" ~ Unknown

"December has the clarity, the simplicity, and the silence you need for the best fresh start of your life." ~ Vivian Swift

"Many people will walk in and out of your life, but **only true friends will leave footprints in your heart**" ~ Eleanor Roosevelt

"Let all the failures of your past year be your best guide in the New Year." ~ Mehmet Murat ildan