

# HOW TO MAKE THE HOLIDAYS SPECIAL FOR SENIORS

CAREGIVERS



Holiday Meals And Memories for Seniors

## Creating Holiday Meals and Memories Seniors Will Love

*Making the holidays special for seniors can involve such simple things as spending time together and cooking a special meal or two.*

Nostalgia has a powerful effect on seniors. By making the holidays special for them, you can improve their quality of life.

The magic of the holiday season doesn't necessarily wear away with age. Seniors get nostalgic during the holidays, and many still want to celebrate.



### Creating a Special Holiday Meal

There are many holiday meals that are heart healthy for seniors. You can find many recipes on web sites such as [aplaceformom.com](http://aplaceformom.com), [tasteofhome.com](http://tasteofhome.com), or [health.com](http://health.com). Use these ideas to get started:



#### Main Dishes:

- Roasted, lightly seasoned turkey breast
- Sweet potato pasta with ground turkey
- Turkey meatloaf



#### Sides:

- Pan seared Brussels sprouts with cranberries and pecans
- Roasted green beans with almonds
- Lemon orzo salad



#### Desserts:

- Oatmeal cookies with cinnamon and raisins
- Peppermint tea
- Lemon bars



#### Dress the Meal Up:

- Use holiday napkins and/or tablecloths
- Help seniors dress up for the meal
- Invite loved ones to share the meal with a senior

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## How to Make Holiday Memories

So much of the holiday season is about reminiscing, reflecting, and togetherness. For seniors, this can be a challenge due to memory issues, health concerns, or family members living far away. You can sweeten the season by intentionally spreading holiday cheer and making memories.



Softly play holiday music, including songs that were popular in past decades



Read holiday cards together and use them to decorate



Create a holiday craft with a senior or help them select/make gifts for loved ones



Look through old photo albums and reminisce with seniors as they share stories



Share your favorite holiday memories and ask seniors about theirs



Plan to attend an event like a holiday concert, pageant, game night, or festival



Take a drive to see holiday lights and décor

([pbehelp.com](http://pbehelp.com))



### Home Care Tip

Decorations for the holidays can be dangerous for seniors. Be sure that décor like lights, candles, hanging ornaments, glass pieces, and linens are not in places where seniors would be endangered if they slip, fall, or forget to turn something on or off.

## One Major Benefit of Holiday Celebrations for Seniors

Depression is common during the holiday season, especially among seniors. Feeling sad and alone isn't good for seniors' health. When you brighten the holidays for seniors, you may be increasing their lifespan and improving their quality of life.

([Agingcare.com](http://Agingcare.com))

## Coping with Holiday Hardships

The holidays can be stressful for seniors, as well as risky for their health. Help seniors avoid and cope with these challenges.

- Don't plan back-to-back activities
- Be mindful of the weather
- Keep tissues and sanitizer available
- Schedule time to connect with long-distance loved ones
- Make free or affordable plans
- Don't upset routines like bedtimes
- Keep fiber and other nutrients in their diet
- Remain positive and sensitive

([Care.com](http://Care.com))