

Members' Digest

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December Edition: A Season of Connection, Care & Purpose

The holidays are more than festivities and full calendars; they remind us how closely our well-being is connected to the people and communities around us. Amid the noise, expectations, and emotional weight of the season, it's easy to lose sight of what truly sustains us: meaningful relationships, shared moments, and a sense of purpose that steadies us when life feels hectic. When we prioritize our own health and connection, our families, workplaces, and communities grow stronger too.

In this issue of Members' Digest, we're shining a light on the human side of the season, the need for rest, reflection, and real support. Whether you're navigating stress, craving simpler moments, or looking for ways to give back, our goal is simple: to help you move through the holidays with greater clarity, safety, and calm.



Member Story

When the Holidays Almost Broke Me

Daniel works in a safety-sensitive job, and last December everything seemed to hit at once. He was juggling overtime and year-end deadlines, his children's concerts and family obligations, financial pressures, and a calendar full of holiday events.

"I was running on coffee, sugar, and four hours of sleep," he said. "At work, my body was there, but my mind was somewhere else." One morning, exhausted and distracted, Daniel made a small on-site mistake. No one was hurt, but it was close. His supervisor pulled him aside and gently asked, "Are you okay? You don't seem like yourself."

That moment became a turning point. Daniel reached out through MembersHealth for support and began working with a counsellor and a health coach to create a realistic plan for the rest of the season: fewer late nights, no alcohol on work nights, a cap on overtime where safely possible, and a strategy for saying "no" without guilt.

By January, he felt different. "My life wasn't magically fixed," he said, "but I was clearer. I was present at work, more patient at home, and less angry with myself. I realized I don't have to 'power through' the holidays alone." His story is a reminder that you are allowed to set limits, ask for help, and protect your health, especially when others rely on you.

Holiday Mental Health Check-In

Practical Ways to Reduce the Strain

The holidays may be called "the most wonderful time of the year," but they can also carry real emotional weight. Pressure to be cheerful, financial strain, family tensions, packed schedules, late nights, heavier meals, and more alcohol can leave people feeling anxious, distracted, and exhausted. For those in safety-sensitive roles, this strain can quietly raise the risk of mistakes, leading to poor sleep, irritability, and burnout unless we pause to check in with ourselves.

- **Choose one small daily reset:** a short walk, quiet time, or a few deep breaths, to lower stress.
- **Simplify your workload:** break tasks into smaller steps and protect short windows of focus.
- **Guard a sleep window:** even 20–30 extra minutes can improve clarity and patience.
- **Set gentle limits with food and alcohol:** one plate, one dessert, or a planned number of drinks. Alternate alcohol with water and avoid drinking before safety-sensitive workdays.



How Holiday Stress Affects Work, Safety & Everyday Well-Being

During the holidays, stress doesn't stay at home. It shows up in our bodies, our mood, and our decision-making. When we're juggling late nights, emotional strain, heavier meals, and more alcohol than usual, our ability to focus and react begins to shift, often without us noticing. This matters at any time of year, but during a busy holiday season, it can have a real impact on how safely and effectively we work.



Why This Matters at Work

- **Anxiety and worry:** Heightened stress and racing thoughts can make it difficult to focus, stay present, and process information, affecting safety and accuracy at work.
- **Fatigue and disrupted sleep:** Irregular schedules and late nights slow reaction time and cloud decision-making, making even routine tasks feel harder and less efficient.
- **Alcohol and hangovers:** Extra holiday drinking can impair judgment and coordination, with hangovers reducing clarity and focus long after celebrations end.

What You Can Do:

During the holiday season, changes in food, alcohol, routines, and activity can quietly impact your energy, mood, and focus, both at home and at work. When heavier meals, extra drinks, late nights, and reduced physical activity become part of daily life, your body works harder than usual, which can affect your cognitive clarity and the safety of your tasks.

- **Be Mindful of Eating Patterns:** Holiday meals tend to be richer and heavier, so balance treats with lighter meals, regular eating times, and good hydration.
- **Monitor Alcohol Intake:** More holiday gatherings often mean more drinking, and alcohol, plus next-day effects, can impair judgment and coordination
- **Support Stable Energy:** Irregular schedules and late-night snacks can affect mood and sleep, but steady sleep habits help keep your mind clear.



For non-emergency assistance,
contact us at 1-800-484-0152

How to Take Back Control

The holidays can pull us in many directions at once, emotionally, physically, and socially. Small choices, made early and made consistently, can help you stay balanced without giving up the parts of the season you enjoy. Here are three simple areas where a little awareness goes a long way. That's why MembersHealth is championing a simple but powerful call to action:

See. Believe. Create.

See

With Discovery+, our early detection and preventative health tool, you can see what your body and mind are telling you long before burnout or illness takes hold.



Start Early

Small choices such as hydration, a consistent sleep window, lighter meals, and brief moments of rest help stabilize your energy before stress builds.

Believe

With caring guidance from our health coaches and navigators, you can believe that real change is possible, even during the busiest, most demanding seasons of the year. Their support helps you stay grounded, focused, and confident as you move toward your goals.



Check in With Yourself

Notice changes in your mood, focus, or reactions. These are early signals your body is asking for support.

Create

And with small daily steps, personalized strategies, and ongoing support, you can create a healthier, steadier version of yourself, one that is more present at work, calmer at home, and better equipped to navigate the pressure of the season with confidence.



Reach Out

MembersHealth navigators are here to support you with personalized strategies that fit your life, work demands, and emotional needs.

Prioritize your health today

Learn how we make preventative care simple and accessible.



1-800 - 484 - 0152



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This newsletter provides information only and is not a substitute for professional healthcare advice. We highly recommend individuals facing any health concerns, including symptoms related to mental well-being, to seek advice from their healthcare practitioner.

Spotlight: Family, Community & Purpose

With all the noise of the season, the expectations, the schedules, the spending, the performances, it's easy to forget that the holidays are really about something simple and deeply human: connection, contribution, and a sense of higher purpose.

Family and Friends

This time of year doesn't require a picture-perfect family or flawless gatherings. It's okay to set boundaries, to feel complicated emotions, and to choose simpler moments over grand gestures. Often, the things that matter most are the ones that cost nothing: a real conversation, a shared meal, a quiet walk.

If you're looking for a meaningful way to connect, try gently opening the door with simple prompts, asking someone what they're grateful for this year or what they found difficult. Listening, truly listening, is one of the greatest gifts we can offer each other.



Contributing to Community

Giving back is one of the most reliable ways to lift our mood and reduce stress. It reminds us that we're part of something bigger, and that even small acts of kindness make a difference. Contribution doesn't have to be grand to be meaningful. It might look like:

- Donating time at a food bank, shelter, or community program
- Dropping off a meal or groceries for a neighbour
- Checking in on someone who may be alone
- Supporting a local cause that matters to you

By shifting from "What am I getting?" to "How can I contribute?", the season becomes lighter, calmer, and more meaningful. And as you navigate the mix of joy and stress the holidays bring, remember that MembersHealth is here to support your safety, well-being, and sense of purpose every step of the way.