

Mindfulness During the Holidays: Tips for the Melanoma Community

In the bustling holiday season, finding peace can be a gift.

December 27, 2023 By [Melanoma Research Alliance](#)

While the holidays are a time to celebrate with family and friends, the season can quickly go from joyful to stressful for those living with a melanoma diagnosis. Many find this time of year challenging and end up feeling overwhelmed, isolated, or even depressed. Here are some suggestions on navigating the holidays:

For Melanoma Patients:

- Accept and allow yourself to be where you are emotionally and physically. Acknowledging the stress and pressure of the holiday season and being honest with where you are is important in setting expectations of yourself and loved ones. However, if you feel you are having trouble coping with a specific issue, let your health care provider know and consider seeing a mental health professional.
- Reach Out to the Community. [The Melanoma > Exchange Online Community](#) is a great resource to be in community with fellow patients facing melanoma who are also navigating the holidays. Knowing you aren't alone, and that other people are going through something similar is a powerful sentiment.
- Keep your calendar open. A holiday event in the future may sound fun, but when the day comes, you may not be in the same space. When accepting an invitation, do so on a tentative basis letting the host know your desire to join in, while also communicating there may be other

needs that may have to take priority. This will give you the flexibility you need to honor how you are feeling in the moment.

- Be flexible with traditions. Talk openly with your loved ones about what the holiday season will hold. It is important to discuss what you are comfortable doing and what holiday traditions you may want – or need – to be flexible with or let go at this time.

For Family and Friends:

- Accept what your loved one tells you. It is important that you listen, respect, and accept where they are and what they need this holiday season. Your loved ones needs may be different now than they were in the past or will be in the future.
- Be flexible with traditions and measure expectations. Have open discussions about the holidays and come together on decisions based on everyone's needs. If there is a decision to decline an invitation, please be sure to state that the family has other commitments rather than make it about the person who is not feeling well.
- Active listening can be a gift. Sometimes a caring listener is what a loved one needs the most. Be with your loved one and if they feel like talking, then listen. And remember, there is no need to try to “fix” everything right away Just listening and being supportive can go a long way, especially during a time of year that can be difficult during the best of circumstances.

Mediation and Mindfulness During the Holidays:

In the bustling holiday season, finding peace can be a gift. For many facing a cancer diagnosis, mindfulness and meditation practices can significantly contribute to managing stress, anxiety, and overall well-being. The integration of these practices into your comprehensive care plan aligns with a growing understanding of the mind-body connection in health and recovery.

The Melanoma Research Alliance is proud to partner with Unplug Mediation which offers 24/7 access to digital classes on mindfulness, guided imagery, sound baths, hypnosis, breathwork and more from their roster of 100+ world-renowned guides.

On December 19th, MRA's Stephanie Kauffman was joined in conversation with Unplug Meditation's Suze Yalof Schwartz for a special MRA webinar, in guiding the melanoma community with practical techniques on navigating the holiday season.

During the webinar, Stephanie shared a message from an MRA supporter: "Mindfulness got me through Stage 4 melanoma and has helped keep me grounded after recovery. It has helped the chatter in my mind calm down and has helped me be present and appreciate life and live it to the fullest... Incorporating mediation moments into your every day life is so important and I can't think of a better way to help people especially when you're dealing with a cancer diagnosis."

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<http://beta.docker.cancerhealth.com/blog/mindfulness-holidays-tips-melanoma-community>