

Navigating the Christmas Period with FND: A Guide of Dos and Don'ts

The holiday season can be a joyful time, but for those living with Functional Neurological Disorder (FND), it can also be overwhelming. Managing the hustle and bustle of Christmas while caring for your mental and physical well-being is crucial. Below are some helpful tips on what to do and what to avoid during this festive time.

DO

Plan Ahead	Create a schedule for the holiday activities you want to participate in. Planning can help reduce feelings of being overwhelmed and allow you to manage your energy levels effectively.
Set Realistic Expectations	Understand your limits and communicate them to family and friends. It's okay to say no to certain events or activities.
Take Breaks	Allow yourself time to rest and recharge. Designate quiet moments during the day where you can step away from festivities and relax.
Engage in Mindful Activities	Participate in calming activities such as meditation, yoga, or gentle walks. These can help ground you and reduce anxiety.
Connect with Supportive People	Surround yourself with those who understand your condition and can offer support. Sharing your experiences can be comforting and validating.
Limit Sensory Overload	Be mindful of environments that may be too loud or bright. Choose quieter locations for gatherings when possible, and don't hesitate to wear earplugs or sunglasses if needed.
Focus on Simple Joys	Embrace the small moments that bring you happiness, whether it's enjoying a favourite holiday treat or watching a classic movie.
Stay Hydrated and Nourished	Ensure you maintain a balanced diet and drink plenty of water. Proper nutrition can help manage your energy levels and overall well-being.

DON'T

Overcommit	Avoid saying yes to every invitation. It's important to prioritize your health and well-being over social obligations.
Neglect Self-Care	Don't forget to take care of yourself amidst the holiday chaos. Make time for self-care practices that help you unwind and recharge
Ignore Your Body's Signals	If you start to feel overwhelmed, anxious, or fatigued, don't push through. Listen to your body and take a break when necessary.
Engage in Stressful Situations	Try to steer clear of high-stress environments, such as crowded stores or loud parties, if they trigger your symptoms.
Avoid Discussions About FND	While it's important to communicate your needs, don't feel pressured to explain your condition to everyone if you're not comfortable doing so
Skip Important Medications or Routines	Maintain your regular medication schedule and routines, even during the holidays. Consistency is key to managing your condition.
Isolate Yourself	While it's essential to take breaks, don't isolate yourself completely. Reach out to friends or family, even for a brief chat, to maintain connections.
Forget About What Brings You Joy	Don't lose sight of the holiday spirit. Engage in activities that you enjoy, whether it's baking, crafting, or simply reflecting on what the season means to you.

Conclusion

The Christmas season can be a time of joy, but it's important to navigate it mindfully when living with FND. By following these dos and don'ts, you can create a more manageable and enjoyable holiday experience. Remember, it's okay to prioritize your well-being and seek support when needed. Wishing you a peaceful and fulfilling holiday season!