The Dizzy Moms Club
Help with the Holidays
Quick Tips for Managing the Festive Season

The holidays can be a stressful time for most people, but add in a vestibular disorder, and the season becomes even more challenging. When tasked with making the season special, the pressure to be on top of everything can become overwhelming. Here are a few ideas to help manage the holidays and enjoy the time with your family:

BE HONEST…

- …with yourself and your family about what you can manage.
- **Prioritise what is important to you:** There is no shame in skipping out on some events or asking for help.
- **Focus on quality over quantity:** It's far better to attend a few small events that you and your family can all enjoy instead of stretching yourself too thin and burning out before the big day.
- **Communicate your limits:** Setting expectations ahead of time prevents disappointment and upset, for everyone.
- **Practice self-compassion:** Give yourself the gift of removing the pressure and expectation to be everywhere and do everything.

PLAN AND PREPARE

- Make a list of **all the tasks** that need to be completed
  - Identify **who** needs to do them, and
  - **schedule** them out over the weeks leading up to the event.
- This can include things like:
  - **meal preparation** (much of which can be prepared and frozen),
  - **gift-buying**, and
  - **attending events** (like planning the outfits, schedule, gifts/food to bring, how long you will stay, etc).
- **Prepare** as much as possible **ahead of time** to reduce the stress and strain on the day
- **Spread tasks out** so that you are not doing too much all at once.

GIFT SHOPPING

- Can be especially difficult with a vestibular disorder.
- **Reduce your mental load by:**
  - **asking** people for gift suggestions, or
  - agreeing to **simplify** things like doing a family/friend group anonymous gift exchange.
- If you need to **shop in store**, try to do so at **quieter, less busy times**.
- When **shopping online**, take **regular breaks** and practice the **20-20-20 rule** (every 20 minutes, look 20 feet into the distance for at least 20 seconds).

DELEGATE!

- **Identify tasks** that your spouse or kids can do.
- **Involving children** lets them see the preparation involved and helps to **teach** them **life skills**.
- Ensure tasks are **age-appropriate** but examples may include:
  - decorating the tree/home,
  - writing and posting holiday cards,
  - chopping up vegetables,
  - wrapping gifts for family members,
  - helping with housework, etc.

REMEMBER

- **You are doing your best:** This is a stressful and overwhelming time of year, especially so when you have a vestibular disorder! Be kind to yourself during this challenging season.
- **You can do things your own way:** Focus on making memories in a way that works for **you and your family**, whether that be attending seasonal events together or having a weekly holiday movie night in the run up to the big day.
- **Spending quality time together is what makes this time of year special:** That's what creates lasting memories for your child, and oftentimes, it's the simple things that make the biggest impression.

DISCLAIMER & MEDICAL SAFETY NOTE

This guide shares peer experiences for educational purposes only and is not medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. As every vestibular condition is unique, consult your medical team before making physical adjustments or trying new tools or medications.

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Bonus: Holiday Planning Tool

Here is a handy tool to help you plan out your holiday tasks and work out who needs to do them and when. Begin by listing out your tasks and then determine whether they need to be done ASAP, can be scheduled, if someone else can do it, or if it even needs to be done at all.

TASK	DEADLINE	CAN SOMEONE ELSE DO THIS?

	URGENT	NOT URGENT
IMPORTANT	**DO IT ASAP**	**SCHEDULE IT**
NOT IMPORTANT	**DELEGATE IT**	**ONLY IF THERE'S TIME**

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