

Tips for your Holidays

For many, the holidays mean travel. The more fearless will take to the skies or the highways and visit distant locations. For many living with the unreliable vision caused by AMD, holiday travel centers on visits to the homes of family and friends. These visits can be just as stressful as a long-distance vacation because it means changes in routine and unexpected situations.

If you will be spending time with children or grandchildren this holiday, here are some simple tips for you (and your hosts) to remember:

- Secure loose floor coverings. Remove throw rugs that may skid and cause a fall. Make sure the spilled eggnog is wiped off the floor.
- Make sure the chairs you sit in are easy to get in and out of, and unnecessary furniture is removed to keep down the clutter.
- Holiday decorations add to the beauty of the season, but make sure electric cords, lights and ornaments do not get in the way. Everyone may love the soft glow of the lights on a Christmas tree, but you can't easily navigate by these lights alone.



- If grandchildren are present, set aside their own play space - toys are a notorious tripping hazard.
- If you are staying in an unfamiliar room, make sure you know where the light switches are. And you might pack a flashlight or an extra night light that you can plug in to ease your way down a hallway or to find the bathroom at night.
- Loud conversations and background music are part of the season, but can add to stress since you must rely more on your hearing since your vision has declined. You may need to take a 'time out' during certain noisy family festivities. Don't be a Grinch, do it with grace.
- The family dog needs to be a part of the holiday celebration, but make sure Rover does not jump on you unexpectedly, or take a nap in a place where you are likely to trip over him.
- If family is visiting you, remind them not to move furniture, TV remotes, or items in the kitchen or bathroom. You won't face the frustration of looking for misplaced objects after they have gone home.
- You may find yourself shopping or attending church services during the holidays. Think about bringing a handheld magnifier so that you can follow the order of service or read labels on merchandise with less difficulty. Even if you don't normally use a cane for mobility purposes, a cane can alert others that you are visually impaired (and you might get a better seat at that performance of the Nutcracker!)
- Count your blessings! Enjoy the smells, the sights, the taste, and the sounds of Christmas! Warm wishes for 2019 from your friends at Macular Degeneration Partnership.