

Holiday Tip Sheet

The holiday season is upon us, and for many people, it will be a much anticipated return to in-person gatherings with our loved ones. This is certainly a source of joy, but it is also a challenge for those who may feel left out of the good times due to their hearing loss. Parties may be conducive for great conversation, but they are not conducive for great communication! Background noise and the competition of many people speaking at once can be overwhelming. But worry not - there are many ways you can self-advocate for a more inclusive and accessible gathering!

Remember to speak up for yourself! If you are having difficulty hearing or are unable to communicate clearly, especially in loud situations, don't be shy. Remind your friends and family that there are ways in which they can help you enjoy your time together. You can say to them:

- Get my attention before talking to me
- Face me
- Speak slowly and clearly
- Do not shout
- Use facial expressions and body language
- Rephrase rather than repeat
- Turn off music and television
- Use good lighting so that I can speechread
- Use a pen and paper when necessary
- Do not cover your mouth while speaking
- Wear an accessible face mask



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Plan ahead! If you can plan to arrive early you may be able to get the best seat in the house. This also gives you a few moments to get your bearings if you are in an unfamiliar location. Here are some ways that you can set yourself up for an enjoyable evening:

- Select a seat that is against a wall to reduce ambient noise
- Position yourself away from noisy areas such as the kitchen or near speakers
- Find an intimate setting to allow for one-on one conversations
- Find an area with cushions, drapes, and carpeting to help improve sound quality
- Ask your host to turn off the music or turn it down
- Find a spot with good lighting



Be prepared! Making sure that you are equipped with everything you need will help you have a great time.

- Wear your hearing aid or assistive listening device if you have one
- Bring spare batteries
- Have a pen and notepad handy
- Use technology like Live Transcribe or Group Transcribe (automatic captioning apps for Android and Apple smartphones respectively)



You deserve to enjoy yourself this holiday season; hopefully these tips and tricks can help make that happen!

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