

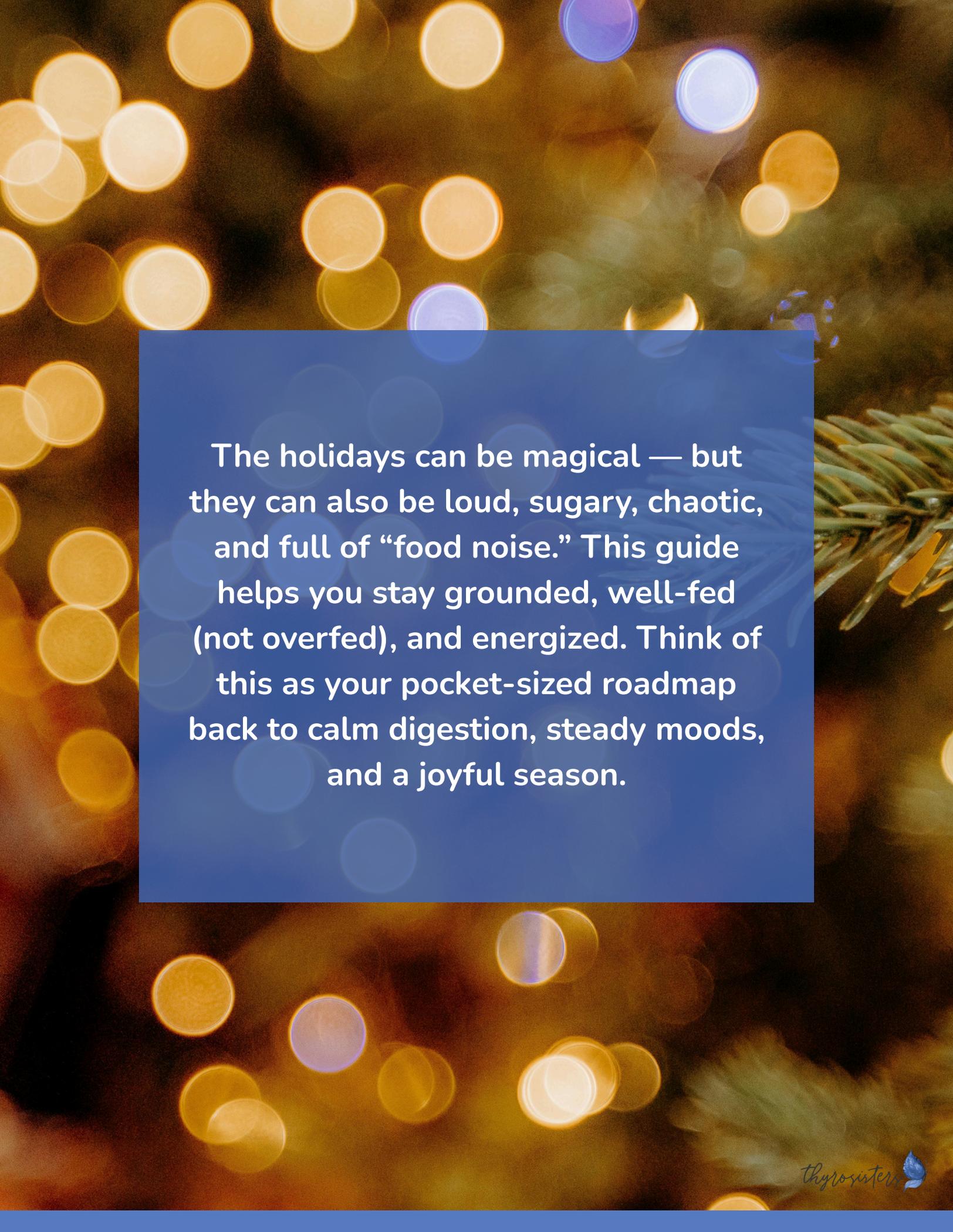


THE HOLIDAY GUT *Survival Guide*

Learn which foods nourish your microbiome —
and which ones fuel food noise.



By Dr. Joni Labbe | ThyroSisters™ Functional
Health Programs



The holidays can be magical — but they can also be loud, sugary, chaotic, and full of “food noise.” This guide helps you stay grounded, well-fed (not overfed), and energized. Think of this as your pocket-sized roadmap back to calm digestion, steady moods, and a joyful season.

THE GUT-NOURISHING FOODS — YOUR ALLIES

Feed your microbiome so it can feed you back.

Your digestive system LOVES real, whole, plant-forward foods. These nourish your gut bacteria, stabilize blood sugar, and support hormonal balance — especially important for those with thyroid or autoimmune concerns.

TOP MICROBIOME-LOVING FOODS

- Artichokes – High in inulin, a prebiotic fiber that increases Bifidobacteria.
- Leeks, Onions & Garlic – Gentle when cooked; excellent for microbial diversity.
- Asparagus – A powerful prebiotic and natural anti-inflammatory.
- Berries – Packed with polyphenols that help calm inflammation.
- Winter squash & Pumpkin – Comfort food with fiber that feeds good bacteria.
- Walnuts – Proven to increase beneficial gut bugs in clinical trials.

GUT-SOOTHING, ANCESTRAL WISDOM: SAUERKRAUT

Before we had supplements or probiotics, humans relied on fermented foods — especially sauerkraut — to keep digestion steady.

Why It Works:

- Naturally rich in probiotics (Lactobacillus species)
- Helps buffer acidity from heavy meals
- Supports stomach acid balance
- Aids digestion of fats and proteins
- Calms post-meal bloating
- Increases microbial diversity (2021 fermented foods study)

Historically, sauerkraut was used to “alkalize” the system after rich, acidic winter foods. Today we’d say it supports post-meal balance — the effect is similar: more comfort, less bloat.

A spoonful with meals can be a holiday miracle worker.

THE FOOD-NOISE TRIGGERS

Proceed with awareness (not guilt).

Some foods trigger blood sugar spikes, inflammation, and cravings. They don't need to be avoided perfectly — just approached consciously.

Common Gut Disruptors

- Ultra-processed carbs (bread baskets, boxed stuffings, crackers)
- Refined sugars
- Seed-oil-based fried foods
- Dairy-heavy appetizers
- Alcohol + sugar combos (cocktails, holiday punches)

These can inflame the gut lining, sabotage thyroid function, and amplify cravings.

ANTI-INFLAMMATORY HOLIDAY EATING

Why gluten-, dairy-, and soy-free eating can calm your gut — especially with Hashimoto's.

For many women—especially those with Hashimoto's—gluten, dairy, and soy are not just irritating... they can actually confuse the immune system.

Molecular Mimicry: The Thyroid Look-Alikes

Gluten, dairy (casein), and soy proteins have structural similarities to thyroid tissue. This means:

1. The immune system reacts to gluten, dairy, or soy
2. The immune system “sees” something similar on thyroid tissue
3. Antibodies may mistakenly target the thyroid
4. Autoimmune inflammation increases

This is called molecular mimicry, and it's one of the key reasons many people with Hashimoto's feel dramatically better when they reduce or remove these foods.

Anti-Inflammatory Benefits

Going gluten-, dairy-, and soy-free can:

- Reduce bloating and gut inflammation
- Improve energy and mental clarity
- Calm intestinal permeability (“leaky gut”)
- Support better T3 conversion
- Reduce antibody levels over time
- Decrease cravings and blood sugar spikes

This is not about perfection. It's about helping your body work with you, not against you

LATERAL MOVES: BABY STEPS WITH GRACE & EASE

Change doesn't have to be dramatic. One of my favorite strategies is the Lateral Move — swap something inflammatory for something less inflammatory, without losing the familiar comfort.

Instead of wheat-based bread → try:

- Canyon Bakehouse
- Simple Kneads
- Udi's
- Schär Gluten-Free Artisan bread

Instead of wheat pasta → try:

- Jovial Gluten-Free Brown Rice Pasta
- Tinkyada
- Banza Chickpea Pasta
- Trader Joe's Red Lentil Pasta

Instead of wheat cereal → try:

- Purely Elizabeth Grain-Free Cereal
- Three Wishes Grain-Free Cereal
- Nature's Path Organic Gluten-Free selections

Instead of cow's milk → try:

- Coconut milk
- Almond milk
- Cashew milk

These are easier on digestion, lower in inflammatory proteins, and less likely to trigger autoimmune reactivity.

And when you *really* want cheese?

Choose **goat cheese**.

It contains different casein proteins (A2-dominant), making it less inflammatory and often better tolerated.

This isn't about deprivation — it's about *supporting your microbiome without losing joy*. Baby steps are enough. Small changes done consistently move mountains.

A NOTE ABOUT REST, RECHARGE & RHYTHM

Your gut doesn't thrive on constant motion.

Neither do you.

Digestion is profoundly influenced by your nervous system. A calm body digests better. A rested mind absorbs nourishment. A peaceful schedule creates a peaceful microbiome.

During the holidays, carve out moments — even 5 minutes — to breathe, stretch, walk, or simply be.

You'll be astonished how much better your gut behaves when YOU feel supported.

Remember:

"It will all get done. And it will get done better when you are restored."

Give yourself permission to pause, to restore, to rejuvenate.

This may be the most healing thing you do all season.

A PERSONAL NOTE FROM DR. JONI

The holidays are not a test of willpower — they're an invitation to navigate joy, nourishment, connection, and self-care with intention.

Your gut is your second brain.

Your immune system is listening.

And your hormones respond to every act of grace you give yourself.

Discipline is simply choosing what supports your future self — with gentleness, humor, and compassion.

"Joy hides inside discipline the way warmth hides inside fire — step close, and you'll feel it."

Here's to a season of steadiness, nourishment, and peace.



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