

הקשר היהודי שלך

Your Jewish Connection

Brought to you by the Lifelong Learning Committee – *Written by Linda S Trapasso*

It's Time to Meet Rosh Chodesh

Rosh Chodesh (“head of the month”) is a minor holiday and marks the beginning of every Hebrew month. The Jewish calendar combines both lunar and solar aspects. It has 12 months and 13 months in a leap year. Half of the months are 30 days long and half are 29 days long.

At the end of 30-day months, we observe *Rosh Chodesh* for two days – first on the 30th day of the month and second on the first day of the new month. For a 29-day month, we observe *Rosh Chodesh* on the first day of the new month. ([myjewishlearning](#))

Rosh Chodesh is the day after a new moon (this is when no moon shows in the sky). It is announced on the preceding *Shabbat* (named *Shabbat Mevarchim*, the *Shabbat* of Blessing [the new month]). Special prayers are added to the evening service of *Rosh Chodesh* and again during the morning service, including full or half *Hallel* (Psalms 113-118). There may be special *Torah* and *Haftarah* readings. ([Wikipedia](#))

According to *Midrash*, *Rosh Chodesh* is a day set aside for women to study, gather, share, and witness each other in the joys, struggles, uncertainties, and all shades of human

experience. This designation was the result of the Israelite women refusing to provide gold for, or to participate in worshiping, the golden calf. This special day was a reward for their faith. ([myjewishlearning2](#))

In addition, women’s monthly cycles are linked to the moon, so the holiday lends itself to being a holiday for women. The

new moon signifies a new beginning and brings with it a sense of optimism. There are many groups of women across the country and around the world working to reclaim this women’s tradition in modern times. This began in the 1970s with the feminist movement and continues to today. Each group has its own observances and each group is as different as the women who are its members. ([Jweekly](#))

Read these articles for descriptions of women’s *Rosh Chodesh* groups: [Rosh Chodesh Ritual Fosters Spirituality and Creativity](#), [The Very Feminist Way Jewish Women Can Celebrate the New Moon](#), and [Monthly gatherings connect women with sacred cycles, and each other](#).

What would be a Jewish holiday without food? [Welcome Rosh Chodesh with appetizing round foods](#) has some

ideas to help get you started.

For in-depth articles and commentary, go to [Sefaria](#), which is a free, living library of Jewish texts and their interconnections, in Hebrew and in translation. You can also go to [YouTube](#) and search on *Rosh Chodesh*.

To test your *Rosh Chodesh* knowledge, go to the [Rosh Chodesh Quiz](#). Can you pass it once in a blue moon?



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