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ADULT HEALTH BULLETIN

DECEMBER 2011

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: HOLIDAY STRESS

The holidays are upon us. It is a time of family and friends, hot cocoa and cookies, firelight and brightly lit trees, big bows and wrapping paper. Unfortunately, it can also be a time when we try to do too much and end up stressed and exhausted.

If you have already been hard at work and are feeling stressed, here are some ways that you could relieve your stress this holiday season:

- **Volunteer** — Taking the time to help out at a local church or community center is a great way to relieve stress. Helping out others is a way to really see what the holiday spirit is all about and spread feelings of kindness to others.
- **Eat right** — During the holidays there is a tendency to eat foods that we might not normally eat. We may also pick up a lot of processed foods because it is nice and easy. But we will feel better, and it is better for our bodies, if we eat simple and wholesome foods.

Try a new recipe or if you do not have a lot of time, find some quick and easy meal ideas.

- **Exercise** — Exercise and physical activity are great ways to keep you stress level down. Find a little bit of time, at least 10 minutes 3 times a day for 30 minutes total, and get moving! You will be amazed how much energy you feel like you have after a little physical activity.
- **Stop worrying** — There are many things that we worry about that we have no control over. Try to let go of worries that you cannot control. Instead focus on things in which you can find a solution.

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Volunteering, exercising and eating right are great ways to relieve stress.

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- **Get some rest** — It is easy to stay up later than normal to get everything done on our list of “to-do’s,” but it is important to get your rest. If you have been off your normal schedule you can get run down, try to get back to your normal sleeping patterns. It is recommended that adults get at least 8 hours of sleep a night.
- **Do something special for you** — If you can, take the time to get a massage or get your nails done. Treat yourself to a little something that you would not normally do for yourself.
- **Limit alcohol** — If you drink alcohol, limit how much you are consuming. It is easy to drink too much at a party or when you are distracted. It is recommended that women drink no more than 1 serving in a sitting and men should drink no more than 2 servings in a sitting.

Take a deep breath and follow some of these tips for easing your stress during the holidays:

- **AVOID packing your schedule** — If you look at your calendar and there is something to do every single night you may feel overwhelmed. Do things in moderation. If you have too many activities, you lose some of the simple joy that comes with the season.
- **SPEND wisely** — Many places will be having sales and it is easy to get caught up in the frenzy. Take the time to determine what you can spend without putting yourself into debt. It makes it easier to make a list of the gifts that you want to get the people on your gift list.
- **USE credit wisely** — If you have to use a credit card for purchases, try to only use one card. Also try to charge as little as possible so that you can pay it off quickly.
- **THOUGHTFUL gifts** — The best gifts are not always the ones with the biggest price. Are you talented with a sewing machine or other craft? Gifts that are handmade are often treasured for years to come.
- **SPEND time** — Spending time with your

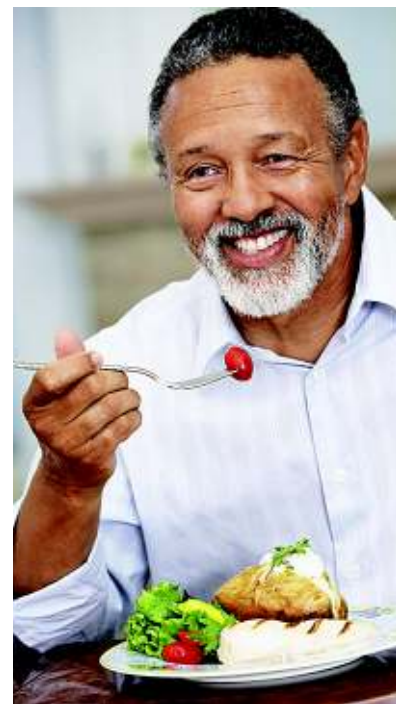
family and loved ones is the best gift of all! Spend time with your family talking, playing and just being together.

If you are feeling the holiday blues

For many people, the holidays are a time of happiness and cheer. But for some people it can be a time of sadness and depression. In fact, depression is not uncommon both during and after the holiday season. If you are feeling depressed, there is nothing wrong in talking to someone about how you feel. It does not mean that there is something wrong with you. In fact, it is smart to talk to someone else.

Behind all of the busy shopping centers, harried shoppers, endless cooking and the long list of parties, there is an opportunity to be kind to others, show love to our family and friends and reflect on all of the blessings in our lives.

Have a wonderful holiday season!



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