



Lifting spirits during the holidays

Many people become depressed, or feel more depressed during the holiday season. It is understandable that you may feel "out of sync" when the rest of the world is seemingly happy and energized.

Tips for dealing with the holiday blues

- Participate when you feel comfortable and don't force yourself if it seems too hard. Be careful not to isolate yourself, however, as this may make you feel worse. If COVID is putting a damper on your holiday plans, think about how you can stay connected virtually.
- Take a break from the hustle and bustle. Allow yourself some quiet time for reading a book or listening to relaxing music. Keep the holiday TV programming and news turned off when it seems too much to handle.
- Volunteer your time or resources. Volunteering is often a good way to forget problems that beset us for a few hours. There are many people that need assistance during the holidays and helping others usually makes us feel better about ourselves.
- Start new traditions if the old ones bring you down.
- Live in the present moment and the "here and now." Try to focus on the relationships that are currently in your life and on whatever good fortune you currently have.
- Watch your sugar and alcohol intake. Holidays bring lots of fun treats and desserts, but overindulging can affect your mood and energy levels. Try taking a walk after a big meal in order to boost your metabolism!
- Stay active. Exercise has many emotional health benefits, including helping to lift the mood and manage stress.

Awareness of symptoms

Reach out if the holidays seem too hard to manage or if you are experiencing any of the below symptoms and it starts to impact your daily functioning.

Remember, no two people experience symptoms of depression in the same manner or will be able to cope with the holidays in the same way.

- Persistent sad, anxious, or "empty" mood
- Sleeping too little or sleeping too much
- Change in appetite
- Loss of interest in activities once enjoyed
- Restlessness, irritability
- Difficulty concentrating, making decisions, recall
- Fatigue or loss of energy
- Feeling guilty, hopeless or worthless
- Thoughts of suicide or death

If you find yourself struggling, it is okay to seek and ask for help professional help. Research indicates a high level of success with appropriate help.

For Further Support

Help is available to you and your household members. Call the Employee Assistance Program provided by mySupport at 443-997-7000 and press Option 2.