

# STRESS MANAGEMENT TIPS

DECEMBER 2015 RESOURCE SHARING

Along with the joy of the holidays, the season can also bring unwelcome guests—stress and depression. But with some practical tips, you can minimize the stress that accompanies the holidays.

- 1. Acknowledge your feelings.** If someone close to you has recently died or you can't be with loved ones, realize that it's normal to feel sadness and grief.
- 2. Reach out.** If you feel lonely or isolated, seek out community, religious or other social events. They can offer support and companionship.
- 3. Be realistic.** The holidays don't have to be perfect or just like last year. As families change and grow, traditions and rituals often change as well.
- 4. Set aside differences.** Try to accept family members and friends as they are, even if they don't live up to all of your expectations.
- 5. Stick to a budget.** Before you go gift and food shopping, decide how much money you can afford to spend. Then stick to your budget.
- 6. Plan ahead.** Set aside specific days for shopping, baking, visiting friends and other activities.
- 7. Learn to say no.** Saying yes when you should say no can leave you feeling resentful and overwhelmed.
- 8. Don't abandon healthy habits.** Don't let the holidays become a free-for-all. Overindulgence only adds to your stress and guilt.
- 9. Take a breather.** Make some time for yourself. Spending just 15 minutes alone, without distractions, may refresh you enough to handle everything you need to do.
- 10. Seek professional help if you need it.** Despite your best efforts, you may find yourself feeling persistently sad or anxious, plagued by physical complaints, unable to sleep, irritable and hopeless, and unable to face routine chores. If these feelings last for a while, talk to your doctor or a mental health professional.

Original article: <http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/stress/art-20047544>