



WASHINGTON HEALTH SYSTEM
Center for Mental Health and Wellbeing

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



Holiday depression, anxiety, and stress facts

The winter holiday season, with celebrations such as Christmas, Hanukkah, and Thanksgiving, for most people is a fun time of the year filled with parties and social gatherings with family and friends. But for many people, it is a time filled with sadness, self-reflection, loneliness, and anxiety.

- Many factors, including unrealistic expectations, financial pressures, and excessive commitments can cause [stress](#) and [anxiety](#) at holiday time.
- Certain people may feel anxious or [depressed](#) around the winter holidays due to [seasonal affective disorder](#) (SAD), sometimes referred to as seasonal [depression](#).
- [Headaches](#), excessive drinking, overeating, and [insomnia](#) are some of the possible consequences of poorly managed holiday [stress](#).
- Those suffering from any type of holiday [anxiety](#), [depression](#), or stress can benefit from increased social support during this time of year. Counseling or support groups can also be beneficial.
- In addition to being an important step in preventing the symptoms of seasonal affective disorder, regular exposure to light that is bright, particularly fluorescent lights, significantly improves [depression](#) in people with SAD during the fall and winter.
- Setting realistic goals and expectations, reaching out to friends, sharing tasks with family members, finding inexpensive ways to enjoy yourself, and helping others are all ways to help beat holiday stress.

**November
2019**

What causes the holiday blues?

Sadness is a truly personal feeling. What makes one person feel sad may not affect another person. Typical sources of holiday sadness include

- stress,
- [fatigue](#),
- unrealistic expectations,
- overcommercialization,
- financial stress,
- the inability to be with one's family and friends, and
- in addition to sadness, many people feel holiday anxiety or stress, particularly when they feel unable to cope with the demands upon them.

To read the full article on
Holiday Depression, Anxiety
and Stress visit:
[https://www.medicinenet.com/
holiday_depression_and_stre
ss/article](https://www.medicinenet.com/holiday_depression_and_stress/article)



Is the environment and reduced daylight a factor in wintertime sadness?

Nonhuman animals react to the changing season with changes in mood and behavior. People change behaviors, as well, when there is less sunlight. Most people find they eat and sleep slightly more in wintertime and dislike the dark mornings and short days. For some, however, other symptoms are severe enough to disrupt their lives and cause considerable distress.

Sadness or depression at holiday time can be a reaction to the stresses and demands of the season. In other cases, people may feel depressed around the winter holidays due to a condition known as seasonal affective disorder (SAD), sometimes referred to as seasonal depression. This is a type of depression that tends to occur (and recur) as the days grow shorter in the fall and winter. It is believed that affected people react to the decreasing amounts of sunlight and the colder temperatures as the fall and winter progress, resulting in feelings of depression. Although this disorder usually occurs in the fall and winter, there are those who suffer from this condition during the summer instead of, or in addition to, during the fall or winter. The incidence of seasonal affective disorder increases in people who are living farther away from the equator.

To read the full article on Holiday Depression, Anxiety and Stress visit:

https://www.medicinenet.com/holiday_depression_and_stress/article

DID YOU
KNOW?

Symptoms and signs of holiday depression, anxiety, and stress include:

- headaches,
- excessive drinking,
- overeating,
- insomnia.

Balancing the demands of shopping, parties, family obligations, and house guests may contribute to feelings of being overwhelmed and increased tension. People who do not view themselves as depressed may develop stress responses and may experience a number of physical and emotional symptoms.

Thank you!!!

Dear Valued Referral Sources,

As we approach the season of Thanksgiving, we wanted to say thank you for your continued support of our WHS Center for Mental Health and Wellbeing Inpatient and Outpatient programs. We are very thankful for your referrals and support!

Sincerely,

Jennifer Campbell, MSW, LSW

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National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255
Greenbriar Treatment Facility: 1-800-637-4673