



NOVEMBER 2017

Wellness Matters

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Your Healthy Body

Battling Holiday Stress

While many look forward to the holidays, others dread the season. The added obligations at holiday time can take a toll on even the most cheerful of people, at times leading to depression, chronic headaches, excessive alcohol consumption, overeating, and insomnia.

Here are some tips to help you minimize holiday stress.

Causes of Stress

Ask yourself what exactly about the season makes you feel stressed. Your feelings may be triggered by the following:

- Unhappy childhood memories.
- Particularly difficult relatives.
- Negative reflections on changes over the last year.
- Lowered immune defenses due to colder temperatures, higher risk of the flu, eating more, and sleeping less.
- Financial stress.

Minimize Holiday Stress

Consider the following tips to help reduce stress this season:

- Do not feel you must meet all family obligations. Make a list

of the reasons *why* you take part in holiday events and traditions; skip those that make you feel unhappy.

- Stay active and regularly spend time outdoors.
- Continue with a balanced diet and normal sleep schedule.
- Ask a relative to host the family dinner or make it a potluck so that everyone contributes.
- Make a to-do list in chronological order.
- Enjoy the present and avoid worrying about what is lacking.
- Limit your alcohol intake.
- Create a new tradition, such as volunteering, especially if you feel lonely.
- Make time for yourself and your needs, even when hosting guests in your house.
- Keep tabs on your holiday spending. Make a budget and stick to it, no exceptions!



NOVEMBER is Lung Cancer Awareness Month

More people die from lung cancer than any other type of cancer. Many think that only smokers are at risk, but lung cancer affects nonsmokers as well; asbestos, radon, radiation, and secondhand smoke can all contribute to the disease.

Studies show that *smoking* remains the leading cause of lung cancer; *not smoking* is the best preventative measure. A smoker is 30 times more likely to suffer from lung cancer than a nonsmoker. Quit smoking at any age to lower your risk of lung cancer.

Early detection is the best chance of survival; symptoms include a persistent cough that worsens over time; constant chest pain, coughing up blood, shortness of breath, and more. Learn more at lung.org.

Animal-Vehicle Safety

Animal-vehicle collisions are most common between October and December when animals are migrating to new habitats for the winter cold.

Staying safe during your commute can be a challenge, especially when it involves an unexpected deer or other animal running across the road. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that nearly one-quarter of animal and vehicle crashes result in some form of bodily injury or vehicle damage. Whether driving in the country or city, try these tips to keep you safe on the road:

- Remain alert at all times and watch out for animals.
- Slow down if you see an animal ahead, as they are generally unpredictable. Sound your horn with a long blast to scare them away.
- Use your high beams at night to see animals easier.
- Slow down on blind curve areas of the roadway.
- Watch your speed, especially during dusk and at night.
- Have your vehicle's brakes and tires checked regularly to ensure they are in safe working order.
- Slow down at designated animal crossing areas marked by road signs. These signs indicate the area has a lot of animal traffic and an increased potential for accidents.
- Always wear a seat belt; it's your best safety defense against injury.

In the Event You Hit an Animal:

- Pull off to the side of the road and call the police.
- Do not attempt to move the animal if it is lying in the middle of the road.
- Do not leave your vehicle to check on an injured animal, as it may still be alive and potentially dangerous to you.
- Call your automobile insurance agent to report the accident.



Healthy & Delicious

Certain sleep-inducing foods can help you get to sleep and stay asleep: approximately 90 minutes before bedtime, try a snack of roughly 200 calories from the below foods to help your muscles relax, quiet your mind, and produce sleep-inducing hormones (serotonin and melatonin).

- **Bananas.** These power fruits contain serotonin, melatonin, and the muscle relaxant magnesium.
- **Chamomile tea.** This beverage has a mild sedating effect to calm your mind and body.
- **Warm milk.** Contains tryptophan, which is sedating, calcium to help your brain use the tryptophan, and is comforting to drink.
- **Potatoes.** A spud in the evening will clear away the amino acids in your body that can interfere with the powers of tryptophan.
- **Oatmeal.** Oats contain melatonin, which helps induce sleep.
- **Almonds.** These nuts contain a healthy dose of tryptophan and magnesium.
- **Turkey.** The best-known food source of tryptophan; try a slice on whole-wheat bread. Tryptophan works best with a small amount of carbohydrates on a fairly empty stomach.
- **Flaxseeds.** These seeds are rich in omega-3 fatty acids to brighten your mood if sadness or anxiety is keeping you from getting to sleep.