

The Case of the Holiday Blues

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The holiday season is a time filled with celebration. Some people have a collection of symptoms known as the “holiday blues.” Someone who may have the holiday blues may be stressed or have negative feelings regarding the December holidays. Causes for the holiday blues may include a change in schedule and diet, shorter periods of sunlight during the day, and the loss of a loved one who may not be around for the holidays.

Here are a few tips on how to relieve the “holiday blues”:

- **Be realistic.** The holidays are busy with events such as parties and community service. People can be overwhelmed with everything that is going on, and holiday shoppers may end up overspending on gifts. The best way to relieve this stress is to realistically budget what you spend. Manage the best gifts to give to your loved ones and/or co-workers. It may be more difficult around the holidays but manage your time in a way so you will be able to relax. You could perhaps make a to-do list so you can keep track of your holiday goals.
- **Be healthy and take time to yourself.** Attending holiday parties or get-togethers may cause one to overeat or drink more than a recommended amount of alcohol. A combination of work and holiday activities may reduce time for rest. The best thing to do is to eat healthy foods and if you are 21 years of age or over, limit your intake of alcoholic beverages. Get the right amount of rest and exercise to take your focus out of holiday activities.
- **Try something new.** Repetitive holiday happenings may become tiresome and one may feel obligated to do it again and again each year. To relieve that frustration, you can find a new tradition to take part in. Trying something new for the holidays can add excitement to the season. Finding a new recipe to cook or a new game to play can break the humdrum of repetitive holiday traditions.
- **Spend time with others.** The holiday season is more fun when you cherish it with loved ones. Surrounding yourself with supportive people (and pets) can make you feel better. You’ll be in a belonging environment. If you have the “holiday blues” and feel comfortable sharing your experiences, you can talk to a loved one about how you feel.