

Coping With Depression Over the Holidays

The holidays are an exciting time. However, for some they can be difficult, and depression is common during the holiday season. There can be many causes for depression during the holidays, including:

-**Sadness** over the loss of a loved one, whether the loss was recent or long ago. The holidays are a time when families get together and participate in traditions. This can cause us to miss a loved one that has passed away even more than at other times of the year.

-**Loneliness**- Many people feel lonely during the holidays and may be separated from their family or loved ones due to family conflict, distance or other reasons.

-**Financial worries**- We all tend to spend more money during the holidays with buying presents, decorations, and hosting meals at our home. This can put a burden on the wallet, which can cause extra stress about our finances.

-**Increased stress and responsibilities**- We have to get to the store to buy presents, cook that meal, decorate the house, and everything needs to be perfect. Our commitments increase and this can put extra stress on us, which can then turn into depressed feelings, especially if our expectations do not meet with reality.

-**Decreased sunlight**- During the winter months we are exposed to less sunshine than other times of the year. Decreased sun exposure has been shown to contribute to increased sadness and depression.

So what can we do to help avoid feeling depressed during the holidays?

Here are some tips:

-If you are feeling sadness, grief, or loneliness find someone to talk to about these feelings. Whether it is a family member, friend, or someone from church, it will help to talk about how you are feeling.

-Set a budget for your holiday expenses ahead of time and stick to it. This will avoid worry later on by avoiding overspending.





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Written by Carly Boone, MPAS, PA-C

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-Don't be afraid to say no. If you are feeling overwhelmed with responsibilities do not be afraid to take a step back. Ask someone else to host that dinner, limit the amount of decorations you are putting up, and limit your trips to the store, etc. Take some of the burden off of your shoulders and allow yourself to enjoy the season.

-Get outside in the sunshine. Of course the holidays fall during the winter months, and in some parts of the country this can make getting outside a problem. If you are able, getting outside and taking a walk or sitting in the sunshine can improve your emotional well-being.



-Eat healthy and exercise- Allow yourself to enjoy the delicious treats of the season in moderation. Have a plan for how you are going to stick to your healthy diet and exercise as much as possible during the holidays.

May this holiday season be an enjoyable one for you. Again, if you are feeling depressed please let someone know how you are feeling and seek medical help if needed.

Happy Holidays!



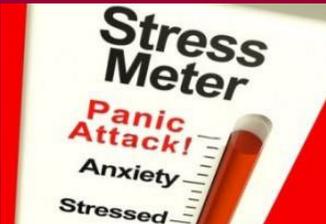
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QPIC Corner

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Healthy Corner Recipe The Healthy Mummy.com

Pesto Salmon

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 20 minutes

Servings: 4

Ingredients:

4 120g fillets of salmon with bones removed skin on

1 bunch basil

1/4 cup pine nuts

2 tbsp. oil

1 lemon squeezed

Salt and pepper to season

Aluminum foil

Oil Spray



Directions:

1. In a pan, dry fry the pine nuts until slightly brown (will only take a few moments)
2. Once browned, place them in a blender with the basil, oil, and squeezed lemon juice. Season with salt and pepper and blitz it until it comes together.
3. In baking dish lightly spray the base.
4. Place your fillets on the tray, skin down.
5. Hold the top of the fillet and make a slight incision in the middle of the fillet, about 5 cm down the length of the fillet (this step is optional)
6. With the pesto from the blender either “stuff” the salmon with it or place it on top.
7. Evenly spread the pesto amongst the fish fillets
8. Cover the baking dish with aluminum foil and put it in a preheated 200 degree oven for 15 to 20 minutes, depending on the thickness of the fish
9. Serve with some wilted broccoli and spinach with some chat potatoes



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