

Don't Give In To Holiday Depression

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While the holiday season is usually one of joy, happiness and celebration, for many people the emotion of the season is often depression. Fortunately, it doesn't have to be that way. Many of the things that leave us feeling depressed are things we can control.

For example, the constant stream of media and advertising holiday images contributes to depression for many people. Comparing our own lives to these unrealistic images of holiday perfection, it's easy to feel left out, inadequate, or as if we aren't getting all that's due us.

While there's no avoiding the holiday media/advertising blitz, but it's easy to accept that what we're being shown isn't reality, but rather the make-believe that comes with actors, make-up artists and high dollar productions. We don't have to compete with that.

Eating healthier and getting enough rest is another way to fight holiday blues. Holiday foods usually mean too many rich, high-calorie party temptations, treats loaded with sugar, and opportunities to drink too much. Toss in a busy holiday schedule and it's easy to feel tired, unhealthy, overweight and generally depressed.

So should you just avoid all those holiday foods? Actually, no, since that can leave you feeling deprived and more likely to finally over-indulge. Instead, use common sense and moderation. Limit alcohol consumption and enjoy your favorite holiday foods, but in reasonable-sized portions and without going back for seconds.

And don't forget exercise. It's often ignored in busy holiday schedules, yet studies show that even small or moderate amounts of exercise can lift your spirits. It's also a great way to burn those extra calories of the season.

Lastly, don't let depression rule your life. Holiday socializing is a great way to combat the blues. Make the effort to go and meet people at a party, or just call up a friend to go for coffee and talk about interesting things. Spending time with others and refocusing your thinking on positive things you enjoy is your goal.

Eating right, exercising, taking a realistic view of the holiday madness and having an active social life all take effort, but they're all essential to helping you enjoy the holiday season. Even small efforts in these areas can help you feel better physically and mentally.

But if you find nothing seems to help fight that holiday depression, talk to a counseling professional. They're trained to help you work through and cope with these feelings

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