

Wellness Articles

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If you would like to be added to the distribution list for these articles, please email: Rebecca.johnson2@albertahealthservices.ca. You will receive a monthly email containing articles for the upcoming four weeks.

An archive of past wellness articles is available at <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/9966.asp>

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Create meaning this holiday season

Holidays are a joyful time, offering a chance to reconnect with friends and family. But for many it can also cause stress and loneliness. You may worry about family matters, or it may be a painful reminder of past times.

During the holidays try focusing on some simple steps that can help reduce stress, low mood and grief that are commonly felt during this time of year.

Here are some ideas that may help you:

- **Gratitude:** Being thankful magnifies positive emotions and helps us appreciate the value in something or someone. Send a note of thanks to someone special or create a journal filled with things you are thankful for.
- **Do something for yourself.** Often times we are so busy taking care of others we forget to focus on ourselves. Take time for yourself this season by doing something you enjoy, go for a walk, or try a new hobby such as yoga or meditation.
- **Connect.** Join a community group, reconnect with friends, or volunteer.
- **Keep a regular sleep, meal, and exercise schedule and limit alcohol.** Taking care of yourself will help you deal with stressful situations during the holidays. Remember the 80/20 rule, and eat 80 per cent healthy foods.
- **Get organized.** Make lists or use an appointment book to keep track of tasks to do and events to attend.
- **Learn to say no.** It's okay to say "no" to events that aren't important to you. This will give you more time to say "yes" to events that you do want to attend.
- **Know your spending limit.** Lack of money is one of the biggest causes of stress during the holiday season. This year, set a budget and don't spend more than you've planned.
- **Give something personal.** You can show love and caring with any gift that is meaningful and personal. Make a phone call or write a note and share your feelings.



Remember, get help if you need. Holidays can be especially hard if you are already dealing with the death of a loved one or the breakup of a relationship. Talk with health care professional in your area or call Health Link at 811 or the Mental Health Helpline 1-877-303-2642.