

## 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](mailto: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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## Honouring loss during the holidays

Holidays are generally a happy time of year, but for some who have suffered loss, they can also be very difficult. Grieving a significant loss takes time.

While grieving may make you want to isolate yourself from others and hold it all in, it's important that you find ways to express your grief. Use whatever mode of expression works for you. Talking, writing, creating art or music, or being physically active are all ways of expressing grief.

During the holidays, take note of how you're feeling about the upcoming day as it gets closer and plan to take extra time to care for yourself.

It can help to make a plan. Know the holiday may be a difficult time and plan to recognize the day with a special memory or activity.

And try focusing on simple steps that can help reduce the stress, low mood and grief that are common 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. Create a journal filled with things you are thankful to have in your life.
- **Do something for yourself.** 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 grief and stressful situations during the holidays.
- **Learn to say no.** It's okay to say "no" to events that may cause stress. This will give you more time to say "yes" to look after yourself.



Remember, help is available if you need it. Talk with a healthcare professional in your area. You can also call the Mental Health Helpline 1-877-303-2642, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, for free, confidential help, or visit [www.ahs.ca/helpintoughtimes](http://www.ahs.ca/helpintoughtimes).