



January 2011

Avera EAP
(605) 322-4069 or 1-800-527-9394
www.averaeap.org

Dealing with Holiday Stress

Mark Your Calendar!

- January 4**
- Prime Time Coffee at 10 a.m.
Please register by calling 546-3410
- January 5**
- Sibling Class
6:30 - 8:00 p.m.
- January 8**
- Babysitting Class (\$15)
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
 - Prepared Childbirth
8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
- January 10**
- Diabetic Support Group
"Motivation for the New Year"
7:00 p.m.
- January 11**
- Breastfeeding Class
7:00 - 9:00 p.m.
- January 15**
- Plymouth County EMS Day
8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Please register by calling 546-3388
- January 20**
- Live Healthy Le Mars
100-Day Challenge begins. More
info is available from FVH, Le Mars
Area YMCA or ISU Extension
- January 22**
- Adult First Aid (\$30)
8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
- January 25**
- Stroke Screening
(\$40 each or \$85 for all three tests)
Appointments necessary 546-3401
- January 29**
- Heartsaver CPR (\$33)
8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
- ** For more information or to register
for the above classes, please call
712-546-3401.**

The holiday season is upon us, while the time of joy and celebration for many, others may dread the additional stress, depression and sense of discontent it may bring. Holiday stress often revolves around relationships, finances and increased physical demands of the holiday season. Relationship tensions are often heightened during the holidays, and facing the holidays without a loved one can be tough and leave you feeling lonely and sad. Also, the added expense of gifts, travel, food and entertainment can put a strain on your budget. Finally, extra shopping and socializing can leave you exhausted, increasing your stress and creating a vicious cycle which makes you more susceptible to colds and other illnesses.

Here are 10 tips recommended by the Mayo Clinic for preventing or coping with holiday stress:

1. **Acknowledge feelings of sadness or grief** - You can't force yourself to be happy just because it's the holidays.
2. **Reach out** - If you feel lonely or isolated, seek out community, volunteering, religious or other social events.
3. **Be realistic** - The holidays will not be perfect. Choose a few traditions to hold on to, and create new ones.
4. **Set aside differences** - Try to accept family members and friends as they are.
5. **Stick to a budget** - Before you go shopping, decide how much money you can afford to spend and stick to it.
6. **Plan ahead** - Set aside specific days for shopping, baking, visiting friends and other activities.
7. **Learn to say no** - Saying yes when you should say no can leave you feeling resentful and overwhelmed.
8. **Don't abandon healthy habits** - Continue to get plenty of sleep and physical activity.
9. **Take a breather** - Spending just 15 minutes alone without distractions can refresh you.
10. **Seek professional help if you need it** - You may find yourself feeling persistently sad or anxious, plagued by physical complaints, unable to sleep, irritable and hopeless, and unable to face routine chores. If these feelings last for a while, talk to your doctor or local mental health providers.

Sources:
Avera EAP Services (avera.org)
Mayo Clinic (mayoclinic.org)

Did you know....

- On stressdoc.com/holiday, it speaks of recognizing the holidays 4 Fs of holiday friction: fantasies, family, food and finances. Learning healthy ways to deal with these stressors can mean a happy and healthy holiday for you!
- Stress symptoms may be affecting your health, though you may not realize it. Many people blame their nagging headaches, body aches and decreased productivity on an illness.
- Physical activity, relaxation techniques, meditation, yoga and tai chi can help you manage your stress.
- Mayo Clinic has an on-line stress assessment, <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/stress-assessment>