



8 Tips for a Stress Free Holiday

It's the beginning of the holiday season and with the holidays comes stress. Each year we feel a mix of joy and anxiety when we approach the days before holidays. The holidays can bring stress starting in November and go straight through until the new year. We experience a combination of stressors related to financial costs of the holidays, family coming to stay and the conflicts it may bring, and the stress of trying to have the perfect meal and holiday all together. Here are 8 tips to help feel balanced, happy and stress-free:

1. Remember what the holidays are really about - spending quality time with family, friends and loved ones. It's about giving love and joy to others. Watch your expectation; make sure they are realistic. Remind yourself that the holidays are about being close to your loved ones while everything else comes second.

2. Take care of you; during the busy holiday season, we forget about ourselves. We worry so much about setting a nice table; buying and cooking the food; decorating the house; buying the presents; etc., we forget to take a time out and spend some quiet time alone.

3. Seasonal disorder - If you know that the cold weather and shorter days affect you and cause you to have negative moods, then do some preventive work. Talk to your doctor about options, seek to counsel before the change of weather and holidays start, set up a support system, invest in light boxes and plan a vacation to a warm destination.

4. Start early - before the holiday season is in full swing, start making your things-to-do lists, start your holiday shopping early this way when the holidays approach you're not scrambling for

presents. Buy wrapping paper, holiday's cards, etc. Wrap your gifts as you buy them. Be proactive.

5. Ask for help - there is no reason why you have to do everything on your own. Delegate this holiday season. Ask each person who is coming to prepare a dish or a dessert. Make your holidays, not about the cooking but more about the socializing. Don't feel guilty about it.

6. Be upfront financially - tell family and friends what you can and can't do early on. If you know this will be a tough financial holiday season, then recommend other options such as: buying for the kids only, a grab bag, the charity option (everyone gives to a charity - whatever they can afford) instead of a gift, homemade gifts, etc.

7. Gratitude - this is the time of year that we should spend more time counting our blessings, remembering what we have instead of worrying about what we don't. Instead of "Keeping up with the Jones's," take a minute to appreciate the abundance of love, health, family, and friends.

8. Watch the signs - listen to your body. If you are noticing any of the following signs then it's time to make changes: Change in sleeping habits, Change in eating habits, Feeling irritable, moody and unhappy, Exhaustion and fatigue, Panic attack symptoms like dizziness, heavy chest, heart racing, headache, feeling nauseous, hot and cold flashes, Physical signs such as headaches, stomachaches, joint pain and low immune system.

These symptoms are all warning signs of too much stress and anxiety in our life. This is a sign to slow down and take a time out.

- Brawo press Inc. - Diane Lang

News & Events

• **VIVA Pediatrics Holiday Party**
The VIVA Holiday party for DFW patients and staff is coming up on Saturday, December 8!

We are so thankful for everyone that was able to attend our Austin Holiday party on December 1! We had an amazing time!

• **Sensitive Santa at We Rock the Spectrum Kid's Gym - Austin**
December 16 3 p.m. - 5 p.m.
MUST Pre-Register
www.facebook.com/events/261390951390281/

• **Sensory Friendly Santa around DFW**
Visit the following website for information on locations and times:
www.dfwchild.com/2018/11/20/sensory-friendly-santa-experienc-es-in-dallas-fort-worth/

• **The Trains at North Park Benefiting the Ronald McDonald House**
Features trains rolling across 1,800 feet of track on a journey across America. All proceeds from ticket sales go to helping families at Ronald McDonald House of Dallas.
www.thetrainsatnorthpark.com/

• **Rays of Light Night Lights**
Giving parents of special needs children 4 parent night out hours. 1st, 2nd and 3rd Friday of every month - 6:00 to 10:00 p.m. at Lovers Lane United Methodist Church, at White Rock United Methodist on the 1st Friday, and at Christ Foundry United Methodist Mission on the 3rd Friday for Spanish - speaking families.
www.raysoflightdallas.org/programs

Resources

• **VIVA Pediatrics Resources**

In an effort to help our families, we constantly strive to provide them with relevant and helpful resources and information. Visit our resources page online at: www.vivaped.com/resources

For current events visit us on Facebook. www.facebook.com/VIVAPeds

• **Care Starter App**

The Connections App is a complete resource guide for families of kids, teens and adults with special needs. Their goal is to help you find providers, organizations and other resources in your community to help you along your path of care. Download the CareStarter App now! www.carestarter.co/connectionsapp



• **The Parker Lee Project**

The Parker Lee Project is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping families of children with medical needs obtain the necessary supplies & equipment, education, and support they need. While most supplies are covered by insurance, some are not, or not enough supplies are provided. If you have a need for medical supplies or have supplies to donate, please visit their website at www.theparkerleeproject.org

• **Texas Star Kids**

The Texas' Star Kids mandate threatens the lives of our weakest and most vulnerable little citizens. Join us in standing up for those who have no voice. Click this link to sign up: www.facebook.com/ProtectTXFragileKids
For more info visit: www.protecttxfragilekids.org

• **Thrive Magazine**

Need Resources for your child with special needs? Thrive Magazine shares resources and stories of other families in the DFW area who are living and thriving with special needs. www.dfwchild.com/thrive/directory

• **Recognize a VIVA Star**

Viva Pediatrics has an Employee Rewards and Recognition Program to thank and recognize employees that go "above and beyond". Both employees and patient families are welcome to recognize a VIVA employee! Call one of our offices and let us know if a VIVA employee has gone above and beyond!



Get Healthy with Giggles

Healthy Holiday Season

"Tis the season for all things jolly" happens to be the same season known for an increase in cold and flu illness. Just when everyone is getting ready to celebrate the holiday season with family and friends, someone inevitably comes down with a cough, sniffles, or worse the flu! Our team at VIVA has already had the chance to visit a few of our patients who were hospitalized with viral infections and respiratory illnesses. Getting a virus is no fun for anyone, and especially not for our patients and their families.

Giggles wants to share with you and your family several ways to boost immunity in your own home and hopefully prevent colds and flu from your joyful holiday season.

First things first – wash your hands, and we aren't talking about just running them under water. Wash the top, the back, in between your fingers, your wrists, and all the way up to your elbows. Try to make bubbles while scrubbing and singing two rounds of "Happy Birthday". Then rinse from your elbows down to your fingertips. Now dry your hands with a clean towel until they are completely dry. Drying helps to continue to remove bacteria from your hands. Did you know that bacteria spreads easier on wet hands than dry ones?

Secondly, make sure you have a colorful plate. By colorful we mean fruits and veggies. A balanced diet helps keep your immune system strong, an unbalanced diet can lead to a weakened immune system. Adding a variety of color of fruits and veggies to your diet will assure you get many types of vitamins and minerals. Try to "Eat the Rainbow" daily, or get a food with every color of the rainbow in your diet.

Here's wishing you and yours a season of joy and health!

- Jennifer Ward, BSN, RN

Food for Thought



Easy Peasy Peppermint Popcorn

Ingredients

- 8 ounces white candy coating, melted
- 3-1/2 quarts popped popcorn
- 1/3 cup crushed peppermint candies

Directions:

Drizzle candy coating over popcorn; sprinkle with candies and toss. Immediately spread onto waxed paper; let stand until set. Break into pieces. Store in airtight containers.

Enjoy!

What did the gingerbread man put on his bed?



A cookie sheet!



Just for Giggles!