



Staying in Touch®

Happy Holidays!

Wow, it's already that time of year again! Are you ready for the holiday season?

Before you get caught up in all the holiday happenings, get prepared. This month's feature article, from the Mayo Clinic's website, offers some helpful hints on handling holiday stress.

Also, covered in the second article, a reminder that getting quality sleep is critical to maintaining a healthy heart.

Getting proper rest and handling stress are both things that your regular massage sessions support, so make your next massage a priority!

I hope your holidays are filled with happiness and you have the chance to relax and enjoy time with your favorite people.

Thank you for including my services in your health plans and allowing me to contribute to your well being. Your trust is important to me.

If you have questions on how massage can help you to reach your health goals, please ask.

Have a wonderful holiday season; I'll see you soon!

Tips to fend off holiday stress *by Peter Reisner, M.D.*

The holidays are a time for family and cheer, but making sure the house is clean, the food is ready, and the presents are wrapped and ready to be opened can be overwhelming. These factors can bring unwanted stress and depression in a time meant for happiness.

Through the endless parties, cooking, shopping and cleaning, try taking these steps to ensure you have a stress-free holiday:

Plan ahead— Between co-workers, friends and family, it's inevitable that some commitments will end up on the same day. Make sure to plan on what you can attend in person or virtually. If you're hosting the holidays, create a menu to help you stay organized and make grocery shopping easier.

Say no— With holiday commitments, it is OK to say no to a few or all of them. It also will help relieve some stress. Try sharing your to-do list with other family members.

Create relaxing surroundings— Turn on some music, light some candles or open the windows on a sunny day. Research has found that listening to music and the scent of citrus can boost feelings of well-being, and vitamin D is always a happiness booster.

Maintain healthy habits— The holidays are notorious for ruining healthy habits. A short workout each morning will help your decision-making throughout the day. ... Eat healthy snacks like fresh fruit or vegetables throughout the season and to fill up before a dinner party or celebration with tempting, but unhealthy, foods.

Be realistic— You are only one person, and you can only do so much. Be realistic with how much you can handle this season. Forget about perfection, and relax and enjoy the company surrounding you.

*See **Holiday stress ...** (Cont. on back page)*



If you want a healthy heart, regularly getting high-quality sleep is 'vital' *by John Anderer*

Some people are natural night owls while others can't help but rise with the sun. Wherever you fall on that spectrum, the American Heart Association wants everyone to prioritize getting a good night's rest on a consistent basis. Sleeping a solid seven to nine hours nightly isn't always easy, but your heart will thank you in the long run. Scientists report losing out on sleep can be a major risk factor for cardiovascular disease.

It isn't just how long you sleep that matters. The quality of that sleep plays a key role, too. Both factors can significantly influence the heart, as well as overall health outcomes. Besides just increasing the risk of heart attack and stroke, inadequate sleep can also

*See **Healthy heart ...** (Cont. on back page)*

Healthy heart ... *(Cont. from front)*

increase one's risk of depression, cognitive decline and obesity.

"Getting a good night's sleep every night is vital to cardiovascular health. Adults should aim for an average of 7-9 hours, and babies and kids need more depending on their age," says Dr. Donald M. Lloyd-Jones, chair of the Department of Preventive Medicine at the Eileen M. Foell Professor of Heart Research ...

"Unfortunately, we know that as many as 1 in 3 people do not get their recommended amount of sleep each night," he adds.

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Holiday stress ...

(Cont. from front page)

Take a break— Don't forget about your own needs. Take a nap, go for a short walk, read a book or watch a funny movie. Laughing relaxes the whole body, and can relieve physical tension and stress.

Holidays are meant to be a fun, enjoyable time with friends and family. These tips can help ensure you truly enjoy your holidays when stress starts to set in.

Source: mayoclinichealthsystem.org

Dr. Lloyd-Jones stresses that even small shifts in daily habits can make a big difference and promote better sleep quality. Here are some tips from the American Heart Association:

Make healthy living a habit: Eat a balanced diet, exercise regularly, and do your best to manage stress. A healthy lifestyle supports a healthier night's sleep.

Set the alarm—for morning and night: Stick to specific times to go to bed and wake up each day and commit to a consistent sleep schedule as much as possible. Besides a typical alarm clock in the morning, you can also try using a 'bedtime alarm' to indicate it's time to start winding down.

Establish bedtime habits: Once your bedtime alarm goes off, move into a familiar, set routine; brush your teeth, wash your face or take a warm bath.

Relax and unwind: Take a few minutes to de-stress. This may include reading, journaling, meditating or listening to music to ease into a good night's sleep.

Take a technology break: A bedroom free of light and technology is much more conducive to better sleep. Keep your phone and other electronic devices far away from the bed. Consider logging off your electronic devices at least an hour before bedtime as a rule. ...

Source: studyfinds.org

**What could be better than a gift certificate
for massage this holiday season?**

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A loving heart is the truest wisdom.

—Charles Dickens

The content of this newsletter is not intended to replace professional medical advice. If you're ill, please consult a physician.
