

Managing Festive Stress

In the week before Christmas there are so many things have to be done it can end up being a very stressful time of year. No one likes to be exhausted on Christmas Day so make it easier on yourself!

Planning

- Prioritise the things you need to do – work out the most important things that have to be done and focus on these tasks. If you have time, you can do the rest.
- Work out the deadlines for the priority tasks. Where you have crisis points – several things that have to be done at the same time – look at delegating some of the work. Maybe others can help with cooking or you can order groceries on line.
- Everyone has a relative or family friend who asks awkward questions or is openly critical. Before going to an event where they'll be, think of a few good answers to their comments and plan an "escape" from them!

Stress Busting Life Style Tips

- Get enough sleep – if you have a late night, make sure you get a full night sleep the next night.
- Exercise – exercise not only helps the digestion but gives you energy and helps you sleep. Consider a walk in the morning or in the evening once it cools down a little.
- Relax – Spend at least half an hour each day doing something you find relaxing.
- Have some quiet time each day – meditate, listen to quiet music or sit and look at the ocean.
- Don't overheat – spending too much time in the sun or in a hot place can leave you dehydrated and irritable.
- Focus on the positive things – look for things that make you happy or that you enjoy. You may even want to spend a couple of minutes each night remembering the enjoyable things that happened that day.
- Laugh – when you laugh you relax your face and shoulders and open up your chest – an instant pick up!

Eating and Drinking

- Eat three meals a day – missed meals may lead to low blood sugar which can cause irritability, trouble concentrating and headaches.
- Try not to over eat – consider using a smaller plate or don't eat all that is heaped on your plate.
- Watch what you eat – too much sugary or rich food can leave you feeling bloated and sluggish.
- Eat lots of fresh fruit and vegetables – this will help your digestion and balance some of the richer food. Considering half filling your plate with salad, steamed vegetables or fruit before adding richer food.
- Drink caffeine, alcohol or sugary drinks in moderation – all of these will dehydrate you which will leave you tired and irritable.
- Drink lots of water – if you don't like water, consider soda water or sparkling mineral water maybe with a twist of lime.

When It Gets Too Much

- Take time out – go for a walk on your own or curl up with a book.
- Take a bath – relax in some cool water with a good book or some quiet music!
- Try a breathing exercise – breath in for a count of 4, hold your breath for a count of 4, breath out for a count of 8 – this can help you relax.
- Acupuncture – acupuncture is great for helping to get stress under control.
- Massage – massage can help to release those tight muscles.