



COVID-19 Helpful Tips to Combat Stress During the Holiday Season

Coronavirus (COVID-19) has many of us thinking about our health. As we draw closer to the holidays, we might worry about how our holiday plans will be affected. Anxiety is normal and expected in these situations. Stress is already prevalent during a normal holiday season, however, there are ways to cope during this time and still make the best of this difficult season.



New Directions services include:

- Crisis Management
- Account Management
- Dedicated Helpline
- Life Coaching
- Manager Tools
- Online Tools
- In-person, Phone or Text, or Video Counseling
- Work-Life Resources

**Connect With New
Directions Today!**



Call the Helpline
1-877-300-9103
Available 24x7



Online
www.NDBH.com

You or your loved ones may be feeling:

- Overwhelmed or helpless
- Anxious or fearful
- Numb
- Lonely or Isolated
- Irritable
- Angry

Physical symptoms might include:

- Rapid or erratic heart rate
- Upset stomach
- Low energy
- Hyper energy
- Difficulty falling or staying asleep



Here are a few things you can do to cope with holiday stress:

- **Speak Up:** Talk about your feelings with people you trust, such as family and friends. Being open about your anxiety is the first step to relieving it.
- **Keep Your Routines:** Closures and social distancing may make this challenging, stick to your normal holiday traditions and routines.
- **Stay Connected:** We're all in this together and need to support one another. Keep in contact with friends and family, especially during the upcoming holiday season. Your support system is critical.

Employee Assistance Program

Your participation in the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) program is **completely confidential** and never reported to your employer. When dealing with a personal or professional matter, most employees who connect with EAP do so independent of their employer, and can receive counseling via in-person, telephone, text message or video on almost any situation. Visit the New Directions Behavioral Health website or call the EAP Helpline for more information.

You are not alone in your struggle and having others in your corner can make all the difference. If you are at a point where you could use support to manage a crisis or if you need someone to listen (or if you have a family member who does), **EAP is available to you at any time, and it's free through your health plan.**





Avoid the “Twindemic”... Get a Flu Shot!

This year, more than ever, it is critical that you and your loved ones get the flu vaccine. Why? With the COVID-19 virus still not fully under control, the flu could potentially make the current situation worse and could lead to a “twindemic.” While there isn’t a vaccine for COVID-19, there is one for the flu.

We are making it easy for members to receive the flu shots. **You and your family members, who are over the age of seven, may be able to get the flu shot at your pharmacy without even paying a co-pay.** Check with your pharmacy to see if you and your family are eligible for the flu shot at no-cost.

If you need more motivation, consider:

- **Hospitals and health care professional will have their plates full with COVID-19 related illnesses:** An influx of flu patients could put even more of a strain on our healthcare system.
- **It is possible to have COVID-19 and the flu at the same time:** Having both illnesses simultaneously increases the likelihood of experiencing life-threatening conditions.
- **It can decrease your chances of getting the flu:** The vaccine is not 100%. If you do happen to get the flu, it could turn a bad case into a mild one.

Make a plan for the whole family to get a flu shot, continue to wash your hands, social distance, and wear face coverings. **A small percentage of people should not get a flu shot due to underlying health conditions. Learn more [here](#).*

Support to Manage Chronic Conditions

November is the awareness month for both diabetes and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). More than 30 million Americans live with diabetes. More than 12 million Americans live with COPD, and millions more may have COPD but don’t know it.



Your ARBenefits health plan offers a year-round **smoking cessation program** through New Directions that can help you quit. ARBenefits can also help you manage COPD, diabetes, and other illnesses such as asthma, congestive heart failure, and cardiovascular disease.

Chronic condition management support is available at no additional cost. Visit our [website](#) to learn more.

Use or Lose It: FSA Funds Expire on 12/31/2020

The end of the year is fast approaching, and this means you still have ample opportunity to spend down your remaining funds in your flexible spending account. With the upcoming flu season, you may choose to take advantage of the following eligible expenses:

- **Fever reducers**
- **Cough Medicines**
- **Cough Drops**
- **Antihistamines**
- **Decongestants**
- **Nasal sprays**
- **Steam inhaler/humidifier**

Review the full list of eligible expense [here](#).



ARBenefits complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. Language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call 1-877-815-1017.

