



TIPS

for Coping With the Holidays

Celebrations with family and friends can be joyous, but they can also create stressful situations. The following pointers may help people with neurologic or psychologic disorders and their family members enjoy the season more fully.

- ❑ **Be on your best behavior.** You can't control how your relatives act, but you can take satisfaction in being understanding and tolerant. Set aside past resentments, and ask your relatives to do the same.
- ❑ **Look outward, not inward.** Volunteering to help the elderly, disabled, or unfortunate can reduce feelings of depression and loneliness. Many organizations would be thankful for your time.
- ❑ **Stick to a schedule.** By organizing your time, you can avoid the stress that comes from racing to meet your commitments. It's okay to decline invitations to keep your schedule manageable.
- ❑ **Don't try to relive past holidays.** Enjoy the holidays as new occasions. The celebrations won't be the same as they were when you were younger, just as you are a different person than you were.
- ❑ **Seek counseling for your grief.** The holidays can remind us of loved ones who are no longer with us. If you are overwhelmed by sadness, you may need help in accepting your loss.
- ❑ **Be conscious of your budget.** Estimate how much money you can afford to spend on food and gifts. Staying within your means now can help you avoid a lot of stress in the future.
- ❑ **Eat and drink in moderation.** Holidays are times to enjoy good food and drink, but overindulgence can lead to feelings of guilt. Exercise can improve your health and mood.
- ❑ **Make time for yourself.** If you have time off during the holidays, take advantage of it by engaging in activities that you enjoy, such as reading, woodworking, sewing, or playing an instrument.

This page is part of an ongoing series of practical tips for patients with neurologic disorders. If you have compiled clinically relevant tips that you wish to share, please contact the editor at info@neurologyreviews.com.

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