

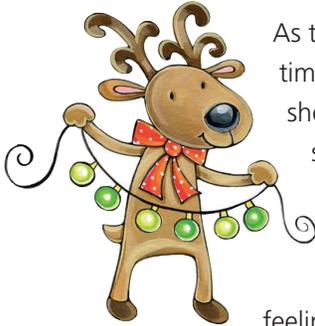
PRESSURE POINTS



December 2012

HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE NEWS YOU CAN USE

Reducing Holiday Stress



As the holiday season approaches, be mindful of how stress affects your body. The holidays can be a joyful time, providing a chance to spend time with family and friends; however, it can also be stressful. Between shopping, parties and travel, it can feel like there isn't enough time to get everything done. When you are stressed your body reacts by releasing stress hormones into your bloodstream. It makes your heart beat faster and constricts your blood vessels, which in turn causes a rise in your blood pressure.

Think about the kinds of things that trigger stress for you during the holidays. Once you have identified them, focus on one or two things that you can do to reduce the level of stress you are feeling. Here are a few examples:

- Create the holiday that you want: Make clear decisions about how you want to spend your time and resources. Consider what is most important to you. What memories will you cherish when the holiday season is over?
- Know your spending limit: Lack of money is one of the biggest causes of stress during the holiday season. This year, set a budget and don't spend more than you've planned.
- Get organized: Make lists to keep track of tasks to do and events to attend.
- Share the tasks: You don't have to do everything yourself! Share your "to do" list with others.
- Learn to say no: It's okay to say no to events that aren't important to you.

Questions for Your Health Care Team

- How much exercise should I get daily?
- Should I get a flu shot?

This holiday season help yourself stay healthy and keep your blood pressure in check by taking steps to reduce the stress in your life. Remember to relax, live in the moment, count your blessings, and simply enjoy the holidays.

Happy holidays from the staff of Pressure Points, Stick to It and The Center for the Advancement of Primary Care!

Helpful Resources for The Holidays

From food assistance programs to information about the flu, here are some helpful resources to get you through the holidays.



American Heart Association Holiday Healthy Eating Guide: The holiday season is about family and food – and all too often, adding a few extra pounds to our waists. Visit www.startwalkingnow.org/documents/NEHDHolidayHealthyEatingGuide2012.pdf to learn how you can keep extra pounds from being a part of your holiday season.

Food Assistance Programs: The following programs offer food assistance in the Worcester area:

- SNAP – Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
- WIC – Women, Infants and Children

For more information, visit any patient financial counseling office at UMass Memorial or call 508-334-9300.

Have You Had a Flu Shot? Nothing can spoil the holidays more than being sick. The flu can be dangerous for anyone, but it's especially risky for people with chronic health problems. Protect your health during flu season and talk with your doctor about having a flu shot. Find a location in your area by visiting www.flu.gov.

The Mall: It's Not Just for Shopping

With the holidays approaching it may be difficult to find time to exercise. Before you hit the stores, try walking a few laps around one of the malls listed below. You can do a bit of window shopping along the way. For an extra calorie burn, skip the escalator and use the stairs. Don't forget your sneakers.

- **Auburn Mall, Auburn MA** – This is the ideal place to walk for exercise. Doors open for mall walkers at 7:30 am, Monday through Saturday, and 10 am on Sunday.
- **Greendale Mall, Worcester MA** – Greendale Mall welcomes mall walkers. Mall entrances open at 8 am, Monday through Saturday, and 10 am on Sunday.
- **Natick Mall, Natick, MA** – Get healthy and feel fit while walking in a climate-controlled environment. Walkers may enter through any main entrance. Doors open at 7:30 am, Monday through Saturday, and 8:30 am on Sunday. Please stop by Guest Services on the lower level near Nordstrom to complete a mall walker waiver form.
- **Solomon Pond Mall, Marlborough, MA** – Solomon Pond Mall welcomes mall walkers. To facilitate early walkers, two mall entrances open at 7:30 am, Monday through Saturday, and 8:30 am on Sunday. For more information, stop by customer service.



Recipes for Heart Health: *Eggplant Ricotta Bake*

Courtesy of Hannaford.com



Serves 12

3 small eggplants

1 1/2 cups chopped onion

1 1/2 teaspoon cloves garlic, minced

2 cups low fat ricotta cheese

1 1/2 cups mozzarella cheese, part skim, grated

3/4 cup wheat germ

1 teaspoon dried oregano

1 teaspoon dried basil

3 large fresh tomatoes, sliced

Spray cookie sheet with nonstick cooking spray. Slice the eggplant into 1/3-inch circles. Place on cookie sheet. Put a few grains of salt on each slice.

Bake for 15 minutes at 350 degrees F. Sauté onions and garlic until soft. Combine the cheeses.

Combine wheat germ and spices. Coat a large baking pan with nonstick cooking spray. Layer ingredients: eggplant, wheat germ, cheese, tomato, eggplant, tomato, wheat germ. Cover pan. Bake at 350 degrees F for 30 minutes.

Uncover and bake 5 minutes. Serve warm. Reheats beautifully in the microwave oven.

Nutritional information:

Per serving 131 calories, 12g fat, 11g saturated fat, 14mg cholesterol, 22 carbohydrates, 15g protein, 10g fiber, 65mg sodium.

Center for the Advancement of Primary Care



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