

HEALTHY WAYS TO AVOID

Holiday Blues

The holidays are a difficult time of year for those who are depressed. You may also experience feelings of loneliness during this time.

Hold off on the bubbly.

It can be tempting to indulge in unhealthy behaviors, such as drinking, to help you cope. With scores of parties and family gatherings this time of year, there's often plenty of alcohol available. Or you may be tempted to smoke, take drugs, or overeat to escape difficult emotions.

The truth is, these behaviors can even make you feel worse. The following tips can help you navigate tough times.



Keep your expectations realistic.

You may feel pressure to take on more tasks than you have energy for or give more gifts than you can afford. Overextending yourself and not being able to follow through can make you feel worse. Only commit to those things you know you'll be able to do.



Make time for exercise.

When you're active, your brain releases chemicals that improve your mood and decrease stress. Exercise also protects your mind. Aim for 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise, such as brisk walking, each week.



Take care of yourself.

When you treat your body right, you're able to deal with problems more easily. Get seven to nine hours of sleep every night. Avoid sugar and caffeine. They can cause a dip in your energy level and leave you feeling worse. Instead fill your diet with fruits, vegetables, beans, and whole grains.



Talk to someone.

Discuss your problems with a friend or family member. That person may recommend solutions. And tell your doctor what you're going through. There are treatments for depression that can help.



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- 1-888-674-1367 (from Bermuda)
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- 1-519-251-5185 (from outside Bermuda: collect calls)

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REACH OUT FOR A HELPING HAND

Whether you're looking for a support group or are interested in mental health treatments, the Bermuda Mental Health Foundation can help. Visit www.bmhfbm.com.

Should You Be Tested for CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE?

Have you noticed your kidney health lately? Probably not. Many people have chronic kidney disease (CKD), but most are unaware of their condition.

CKD is an illness in which the kidneys are damaged or cannot filter blood well. Therefore excess fluid and waste from the blood remain in the body and may cause high blood pressure, anemia, weak bones, poor nutrition, and nerve damage.

DIABETES, HYPERTENSION AMONG RISK FACTORS

You are at particularly high risk for CKD if you are obese or have diabetes, high blood pressure, or heart disease. CKD is most common in women, African-Americans, and Hispanics.

Symptoms of CKD include:

- Lack of concentration
- Muscle cramping at night
- An urge to urinate often, especially at night
- Tiredness

- Less energy than usual
- Poor appetite
- Difficulty sleeping
- Swollen feet and ankles
- Dry, itchy skin
- Puffiness around the eyes, mostly in the morning

EARLY DETECTION CAN PREVENT COMPLICATIONS

It is possible to have CKD without noticing any symptoms. Your best bet is to get tested. Your doctor will check your blood and urine.

CKD can be treated with lifestyle changes, such as choosing healthier food and drink options, and medications to lower blood pressure. Keep your kidneys healthy by controlling your blood sugar and blood pressure.



Many Teen Girls—and Boys—Aren't Getting a Cancer Vaccine

Can you be immunized against cancer? Both girls and boys have an option for protecting themselves from cancers caused by human papillomavirus (HPV)—but many of them aren't taking it.

A series of two shots can protect against HPV, a virus that causes most cases of cervical cancer.

In 2012, the disease was the second most common type of cancer (tied with colorectal cancer) among women in Bermuda. But many children haven't gotten even one HPV shot. And fewer have completed the series.

The Bermuda Department of Health recommends that all girls and boys age 11 get the shots. The vaccine also is recommended for young women and men between the ages of 13 and 26 who have not been previously vaccinated.



GET ANSWERS TO YOUR CANCER QUESTIONS

Do you know what else you can do to prevent cancer? Are you familiar with Bermuda's cancer screening guidelines? The Bermuda Cancer and Health Centre has the information you need. Visit www.cancer.bm.

5 Things the Night Sweats Are Telling You

Interrupted sleep can be very frustrating—especially if you wake up drenched in sweat. Night sweats are associated with daytime tiredness, sleep problems, and sometimes serious health issues.

Of course, a warm bedroom or heavy pajamas could be the cause. But if you experience drenching sweats that interrupt your sleep on a regular basis, talk with your doctor. Here are five possible causes:

1 You are entering menopause. Hot-flash-related night sweats may be due to changing estrogen levels. Try sleeping in a cool room or with a fan on.

2 Your heart is in trouble. Women ages 45 to 50 who experience night sweats may have an increased risk of developing coronary heart disease within 14 years.

3 You have sleep apnea. Frequent night sweats are more common among adults with untreated obstructive sleep apnea, or the repetitive closure of the airways during sleep.

4 You are in an early stage of cancer. Night sweats can be among the first signs of some cancers. If this is the case, you are likely to also experience other symptoms, such as fever or unexplained weight loss.

5 You have a hormone disorder. Sweating during sleep can indicate problems in the glands that produce hormones.



Don't Miss a Beat with These Heart Facts

Heart attack, heart failure, and heart disease sometimes go hand in hand, but they are three very different conditions.

Heart attack occurs when the flow of oxygen-rich blood becomes blocked from a section of the heart.

- **Symptoms:** Pain or squeezing in the center or left side of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes or goes away and comes back; pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, or upper part of the stomach; shortness of breath; cold sweat; unusual tiredness (especially for women); nausea; vomiting; light-headedness; sudden dizziness.
- **Risk Factors:** Smoking, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, obesity, an unhealthy diet, diabetes, a sedentary lifestyle.
- **Manage It Well:** Call **911** at the first sign of heart attack symptoms.

Heart failure occurs when the heart does not pump blood as it should.

- **Symptoms:** Shortness of breath; feeling tired and run-down; coughing or wheezing; swelling in feet, ankles, and legs; weight gain from fluid buildup
- **Risk Factors:** A past heart attack that damaged the heart muscle; having high blood pressure, heart valve disease, diabetes, or thyroid problems; being overweight; drug or alcohol abuse.
- **Manage It Well:** Weigh yourself daily to check for weight gain caused by increased fluid. Track your daily fluid intake.

Heart disease is a lifelong disorder of the blood vessels of the heart that can lead to heart attack.

- **Symptoms:** Angina in men - pressure or squeezing in the chest. Angina in women - sharp, burning pain in the neck, jaw, throat, abdomen, or back.
- **Risk Factors:** High cholesterol, high blood pressure, diabetes, smoking, obesity, sedentary lifestyle, age, family history of heart disease.
- **Manage It Well:** Eat a diet that is low in fat and salt. Fill up on fruits, veggies, whole grains, fish, fiber, and lean poultry.



HOW HEALTHY IS YOUR HEART?

Want to take a quick heart-health risk assessment or learn about common cardiac tests? Visit the Bermuda Heart Foundation at www.mybermudaheart.bm/risks.htm.

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5 Healthy Foods You Should Put on Your Grocery List

Looking to take your diet to the next nutritional level? These five powerhouse foods pack a healthy punch:

Artichokes



These Mediterranean treats are low in calories and sodium and free of fat and cholesterol. Try steaming them for 25 to 45 minutes, depending on size, or until a petal near the center pulls out easily.

Beets



Beets are celebrated for their powerful anti-inflammatory and vascular-protective effects. Try adding them to kebabs or stir-fries or bake them with carrots and sweet potatoes.

Cauliflower



This pale veggie and the purple and orange varieties are good sources of vitamin C and folate. Cauliflower is also fat-free, very low in sodium, and cholesterol-free. Try roasting or steaming it as a side dish. Or puree it into soups.

Kefir



This fermented dairy product may help lower cholesterol, increase the speed of wound healing, and ease allergies and asthma. Try drinking a glass at breakfast.

Lentils



Lentils offer high levels of protein, fiber, folate, and iron. The tannins in lentils may reduce blood pressure and cholesterol. Mix with rice, or make them into soup.