



Momentum

Focus on your wellbeing



Take care of you this winter

With the winter holidays upon us and the cold weather settling in, you might be tempted to hibernate under the covers until spring. However, if you're careful with your time and follow some simple health tips, you can be happier and healthier during the cold months.

- Minimize your stress during the holidays by not taking on too many family and social obligations. Be realistic about what you can accomplish. Don't be afraid to say "no" sometimes!
- Prioritize healthy eating. To boost your immune system, eat fruits and vegetables rich in vitamin C such as oranges, pineapple, kiwifruit, peppers and leafy greens.
- Exercise regularly, safely and in a manner that you can enjoy. You don't need to overdo it, though; even a few minutes of exercise per day can help prevent simple bacterial and viral infections.

Air Force EAP
1-866-580-9078 (TTY 711)
www.AFPC.AF.MIL/EAP

Contact your program

24/7/365

for confidential, no-cost help
for you and your household
members.

Live Webinar—Join us Wednesday, December 8 for *Increasing Your Movement for Better Emotional and Physical Health*. Register [here](#).

Winter wellness tips

Get more light. Reduced levels of sunlight in the cold months decrease the body's production of serotonin, a mood-regulating neurotransmitter. Get as much natural sunlight as possible, particularly in the morning.

Stay active. Keep your body in motion through indoor exercise or outdoor winter sports—either solo or in groups. This releases feel-good endorphins in the brain that help improve your mood.

Seek out new experiences. Avoid the gloomy winter rut by exploring varied activities. Visit a museum, gallery or bio-park; take up a new hobby or craft; enroll in a class; or do some volunteer work.

Mind Your Mental Health

December is National Stress-Free Family Holidays Month

This year, try de-emphasizing the hustle, bustle and material excesses that can accompany the winter holidays.

1. Establish a realistic set of expectations and create an achievable set of goals for your holidays.
2. Don't try to recreate hallowed holidays of the past. Try celebrating the holidays in new ways.
3. Make lists and share tasks among friends and family. Ask for lots of help with decorating, gift wrapping and food preparation.
4. Set a holiday budget and stick to it. When 2022 arrives, you'll be glad you spent cautiously.
5. Take care of yourself throughout the holidays. Follow a routine sleeping, eating and exercise schedule. Limit alcohol intake and late hours.
6. If you're feeling lonely or otherwise disconnected, try volunteering some time to help others.
7. Schedule some stress relief activities just for you. Take a warm bath, listen to music, read a book or take long walks.

Visit www.MagellanHealthcare.com/About/MYMH or call your program for confidential mental health resources.

Working on Wellness

Staying active and healthy

- Without enough sunlight in the winter, it's common to feel sluggish or down. It helps to do more outdoor, sunny walking or take indoor workout classes. Drink plenty of water.
- If an exercise plan seems intimidating, simply add more movement to your day. Take a ten-minute walk after lunch, park at the far end of the lot, and/or take the stairs instead of elevators.

Showing Support

Extend kindness to someone who is alone

- Offer support if you learn that someone will be spending the holiday season alone. Bake holiday cookies and personally deliver them. Invite the individual to your home or to a group holiday event.
- Extend simple gestures such as sending the person a card or small gift, inviting them out for coffee or other treat, or encouraging them to join you in volunteering at a charity.



Managing Work-Life Balance

Leave stress out in the cold

If you're feeling cooped up and cranky this winter, create a schedule of enjoyable activities and tasks you can look forward to. Fun activities can include spending the weekend at a cabin, constructing an indoor fort with the kids, building a backyard bonfire and/or repainting rooms in brighter colors. Try cozy winter recipes such as cheeseburger meatloaf, easy skillet lasagna or spinach and artichoke mac 'n' cheese. If you experience seasonal depression, contact your program for helpful resources.