



Depression & Aging: Coping with Holidays

Although depression is not a normal part of aging, significant life changes can make holidays a very difficult time for older adults.

Some factors that may increase the risk of depression:

- Move from home, such as to retirement/assisted living facility
- Financial concerns
- Loss of independence
- Being alone and/or separated from loved ones
- Feeling the distance or loss of friends/siblings/children
- Loss of traditions
- Failing eyesight/less able to read & write cards
- Loss of mobility and/or inability to get to religious services
- Coping with chronic illness

How to help a friend or loved one:

- Include him/her in plans & activities
- Help out with errands & chores
- Listen
- Offer support and understanding
- Encourage him/her to talk to a healthcare provider
- Never ignore comments about suicide, and report them to their doctor or therapist

How to help yourself prevent the holiday “blues” or depression:

- Plan ahead to stay active
- Volunteer
- Drink responsibly
- Accept your feelings
- Talk to someone

If you are thinking about harming yourself, get help immediately.

Call your doctor ▪ Call 911 or go to ER

Call the 24-hour National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255