



# Your Health Matters

**CCMHG – Your Town, County, District, Authority  
Working together for your health**

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**Volume 37  
November 2020**

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## ***Stress, depression and the holidays: Tips for coping***

The holiday season often brings unwelcome guests — stress and depression. And it's no wonder. The holidays often present a dizzying array of demands — cooking meals, shopping, baking, cleaning and entertaining, to name just a few. And if COVID-19 is spreading in your community, you may be feeling additional stress, or you may be worrying about you and your loved ones' health. You may also feel stressed, sad, or anxious because your holiday plans may look different during the COVID-19 pandemic.

But with some practical tips, you can minimize the stress that accompanies the holidays. You may even end up enjoying the holidays more than you thought you would.



When stress is at its peak, it's hard to stop and regroup. Try to prevent stress and depression in the first place, especially if the holidays have taken an emotional toll on you in the past. Acknowledge your feelings. If someone close to you has recently died or you can't be with loved ones for other reasons, realize that it's normal to feel sadness and grief. It's OK to take time to cry or express your feelings. You can't force yourself to be happy just because it's the holiday season.

**Reach out.** If you feel lonely or isolated, seek out community, religious or other social events or communities. Many may have websites, online support groups, social media sites or virtual events. They can offer support and companionship. It also may help to talk to a friend or family member about your concerns. Try reaching out with a text, a call, or a video chat.

**Volunteering your time** or doing something to help others also is a good way to lift your spirits and broaden your friendships. For example, consider dropping off a meal and dessert at a friend's home during the holidays.

**Be realistic.** The holidays don't have to be perfect or just like last year. As families change and grow, traditions and rituals often change as well. Choose a few to hold on to and be open to creating new ones. If your adult children or other relatives can't come to your home, find new ways to celebrate together, such as sharing pictures, emails, or videos. Or meet virtually on a video call. Even though your holiday plans may look different this year, you can find ways to celebrate.

**Set aside differences.** Try to accept family members and friends as they are, even if they don't live up to all of your expectations. Set aside grievances until a more appropriate time for discussion. And be understanding if others get upset or distressed when something goes awry. Chances are they are feeling the effects of holiday stress and depression, too.

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## What to Expect at the Dentist

Dental offices throughout the country are taking extra measures to ensure you and your family can safely continue receiving the necessary oral care. Because of this, your next visit to the dentist may seem a little different than what you are used to. A few of the changes you might experience during your next visit because of COVID-19 include:

### Day of appointment:

- Staff may ask COVID-19 screening questions take your temperature.
- You may be asked to wait in your car until you get a call or text to come in.
- Many offices will ask you to wear a mask. If you have one, you may want to bring it with you.
- You may be asked to wash your hands or use sanitizer before going to the treatment room.

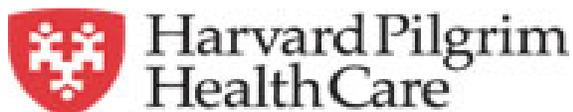


### During your appointment:

- Staff may be wearing face shields and head coverings and you may see additional dividers throughout the office.
- Treatment may be modified to reduce the number of aerosols created.

During these unprecedented times, keeping up with your home oral health care is more important than ever! With proper care, you can decrease your risk for tooth decay and gum disease, which can ultimately weaken your immune system. Remember to take care of your teeth and gums with a thorough, at-home oral care routine that includes regular brushing, flossing and healthy eating.

For tips on keeping your oral health be sure to visit: [www.deltadentalma.com/Your-Oral-Health](http://www.deltadentalma.com/Your-Oral-Health) for an extensive list of resources and tips.



## Take part in the Cape Cod Municipal Health Group Incentive Program!

Make regular preventive health screenings a priority in your life and earn an incentive. Cape Cod Municipal Health Group subscribers and spouses can earn an incentive for completing the appropriate, recommended preventive screenings:

- Health Screening: Subscribers and spouses who have a cholesterol and blood pressure screening at their doctor's office will be eligible for a chance to win one of 300 **\$50 American Express Gift Cheques**.
- Mammogram: Women subscribers and spouses age 40 and over (or recommended by a physician) who have a mammogram will receive a **\$25 American Express Gift Cheque**.
- Colonoscopy: Subscribers and spouses age 50 and over (or recommended by a physician) who have a colonoscopy will receive a **\$50 American Express Gift Cheque**.

Your participation in the incentive program is completely confidential. Your employer will not be notified if you do or do not participate.

FY20 Incentive Postcards will be mailed in July and also available on the [CCMHG](#) site.



## Prevent diabetes-related blindness in the blink of an eye check.



Eyes are one of the first places where you can become aware of diabetes complications. Yearly screenings allow you to begin treatment as soon as possible if signs do appear. Plus, the Good Health Gateway® Diabetes Care Rewards Program rewards you for staying on top of your screenings.

Join at [GoodHealthGateway.com](https://www.GoodHealthGateway.com) or by calling 800.643.8028

### Getting Rewards is Simple.

- 1 Join at [GoodHealthGateway.com](https://www.GoodHealthGateway.com) at no cost to you.
- 2 Complete your routine diabetes labs and exams with your doctors.
- 3 Earn \$0 copays on all your covered diabetes medications and supplies.

During the coronavirus pandemic, it may have been difficult to schedule appointments for routine diabetes care. Good news - most doctors are seeing their patients for routine care. Schedule your appointment today!

**Join Today**  
800.643.8028  
[GoodHealthGateway.com](https://www.GoodHealthGateway.com)



The Good Health Gateway Diabetes Care Rewards Program is a private and confidential service provided by the Cape Cod Municipal Health Group for employees and their families enrolled in a Cape Cod Municipal Health Group health plan.

# Wellness News

## Couch to 5k Running Program

Our next program will be taking place in March and we are looking for a fabulous location! If you would like to host a program at your work location next Spring email me [capecodhealthyconnections@gmail.com](mailto:capecodhealthyconnections@gmail.com) and we will make it happen!! This will be a bright spot after a long winter! Remember races will be back - maybe not as soon as we would like, but they will be, and you will be ready!! Upon successful completion you will earn → **35 points on our wellness portal!**

## Wellness Portal

I was so happy to mail out 100 \$35 gift cards in August to those members that reached the 100-point goal! Four members were randomly chosen and sent an extra \$200!! I also mailed out 126 \$25 gift cards in October to those members that completed their annual Health Risk Assessments by August 31<sup>st</sup>! Remember you can still get your 25 points for completing a HRA before the end of the fiscal year!

Remember that there are several challenges that are based right in the wellness portal throughout the year such as the Fruit and Veggie Challenge which is taking place right now!

**REMINDER: Keep your address up to date with your employer to make sure you get your incentive right away!**

## Walking Programs

We are just finishing up our morning walks in Yarmouth but look forward to March when we can get back outside!! If you are retired, a second/third shift worker or are at home with young children I hope you will join us! Strollers are welcome. Attending this 8-week series without missing more than one class will earn you → **35 points for our wellness portal!** If you would like to host a walk in your town please contact me today!



## Maintain Don't Gain

Our challenge is starting this week! If you would like to participate but were not able to make one of our weigh-ins please email me ASAP [capecodhealthyconnections@gmail.com](mailto:capecodhealthyconnections@gmail.com).

Remember that the goal of this program is to NOT GAIN more than 2 pounds during the five weeks of this program. This year we need to be more mindful than ever about the choices we are making for our health. Stress around the holidays is always heavy and during Covid-19 it is much more elevated! For some, stress = unhealthy eating and drinking habits. You will stay in control with our weekly check-ins and reminders! Join our closed [Maintain Don't Gain Facebook Group](#) for more support! The successful completion of this program will earn you → **25 points for our member wellness portal!**



## Monthly Challenges!

Our Monthly challenges are Facebook based so that ALL the members of the CCMHG can have access to wellness points and programs. We have a lot of fun with the challenges and have developed a lot of connections! I hope you will join us. The successful completion of each challenge listed below could win you some prizes but will also earn you → **25 points for our member wellness portal!**

### January Winter Warrior Challenge

During January we have teamed up with Marathon Sports and using their Winter Warrior Challenge platform. We challenge members to walk or run at least a mile every day of the month OUTSIDE! Track your mileage using their online platform, at the end of the month you will be required to submit a photo of your completed challenge via post in our closed [CC5k Winter Warrior Facebook Group](#).

### February Yoga Challenge

During February we challenge members to complete 15 days of yoga sessions. In previous years we have offered free, in-person classes but I am not sure this will be possible. We may offer a virtual class instead. You will be required to complete a log form and post to our closed [Yoga Challenge Facebook Group](#).

### March Happiness Challenge

During March we challenge members to complete several different “happiness” related tasks such as holding a door, complementing a co-worker, taking a quick “mind break” and walking for 10 minutes, etc. Members will be required to record their tasks, join our closed [Happiness Challenge Facebook Group](#), and post.

### Monthly Workshops!

We have been offering monthly virtual and very limited in-person (socially separated, masks on) workshops on various topics including mindfulness, sleep, breathing and stress reduction, and financial wellness to name a few. During December we will be offering a workshop on *Beating the Holiday Blues!* Flyers will be sent in the next week. Hope to “see” you there!

## Martha's Vineyard Members: We are in it Together

MV Members are able to participate in many of the programs I offer including the Wellness Portal, Monthly Challenges, Spring and Summer Steps Challenges, Nutrition Challenges, and the Monthly Workshops.

In addition, you can also join in any of the Vineyard based programming that Triva Emery, MV Consultant, offers. Triva and I work extremely hard to provide you with the best opportunities for a healthy lifestyle as possible. If you haven't already done so, please check out the [BeWell-MV](#) website today!!

So, you will hear from both of us – Triva much more than me – but we are here for YOU!

# Hot Topics

## How to Exercise Away Those Holiday Treats\*

Treat	Calories	Exercise 1	Exercise 2	Exercise 3
1 slice pumpkin pie	320	30 minutes of cross-country skiing	50 minutes swimming	1 hour walking (4 mph)
1 ounce fudge	120	40 minutes of housework	10 minutes of hard spinning	20 minutes of aerobics
1 cup stuffing	350	40 minutes of touch football	40 minutes of snow shoveling	75 minutes of weight training
1 cup eggnog	342	1 hour of gardening	38 minutes of singles tennis	100 minutes of raking leaves
6 ounces white wine	120	26 minutes of rowing machine	48 minutes of shopping	23 minutes of leisure skating
¼ cup cranberry sauce	100	30 minutes of raking leaves	25 minutes of golf	15 minutes of aerobic dancing
10 shrimp	50	8 minutes of swimming	9 minutes of biking (10 mph)	5 minutes of cross-country skiing
3 ounces homemade fruitcake	302	30 minutes of judo	48 minutes biking (10 mph)	2 hours of shopping

\*Data based on the caloric needs of a 130-pound woman.

## 11 Easy Nighttime Weight-Loss Hacks

A balanced night routine can be a game-changer for weight loss since it creates a smoother, stress-free morning. When stress is chronic and prolonged, it can directly impact our health. For example, our immune response is hampered, and we may crave more comfort foods, which could lead to weight gain. Digestion, mood, and cardiovascular measures are also negatively affected. Try ending your day by setting yourself up for success the next day with these simple, nighttime hacks that take less than 15 minutes:

- KEEP A FOOD JOURNAL
- PREP A SIMPLE BREAKFAST
- HAVE A LUNCH AND SNACK PLAN
- PLAN YOUR OUTFITS
- SET CALENDAR REMINDERS FOR WORKOUTS
- PARTICIPATE IN A RELAXING ACTIVITY
- HAVE A HYDRATION PLAN
- CONSIDER CAYENNE TEA
- KEEP A JOURNAL BY YOUR BED
- MEDITATE BRIEFLY
- GET GOOD QUALITY SLEEP

For the full article and all the detailed tips, follow this link to [myfitnesspal](https://myfitnesspal.com).

**Managing Your Blood Sugar During High Stress Times** Too much stress, no matter what causes it, may make it harder to manage diabetes. All that comes with diabetes can bring stress all on its own. COVID-19 may add more pressure. You might fear for your job safety or your health. What's more, you might feel overwhelmed by the news or lonely while you stay away from friends. Keeping all that stress in check may help you control your diabetes better.

During stressful situations, your insulin levels drop and stress hormone levels go up. That makes it harder for your insulin to work the way it should. All of this may raise your blood sugar. If you reach for comfort foods or alcohol to deal with stress, that can make things worse.

When you make a point to make healthy choices during stressful times, it may help you lower your stress, feel better, and control your blood sugar. If you start to track how stressed or relaxed you feel when you test your blood sugar, you may notice that certain triggers cause your numbers to go up. That way, you can plan to de-stress at those times.

A set schedule adds structure to your day and may help you feel calmer, even in stressful, uncertain times. With fewer decisions to make, you'll be less likely to oversleep, skip meals, forget your medicine, or stay up too late. It may comfort you to know when you'll do your daily activities. That comfort can help you get enough rest and choose healthy foods. For the full article: [WebMD](https://www.webmd.com)

# FOOD FOR THOUGHT HOLIDAY EDITION

*Here are a couple of non-traditional, high protein, side dishes to accompany your main course, enjoy and have an incredibly Happy Thanksgiving!*

## *Cheesy Buffalo Brussels Sprouts*

1 1/2 pounds Brussels sprouts, trimmed and cut in half  
 1 1/2 tablespoons coconut oil, melted  
 1 1/2 tablespoons hot sauce  
 1 tablespoon nutritional yeast  
 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder  
 1/4 teaspoon paprika  
 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper  
 Salt and pepper, to taste



Preheat oven to 375°F. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper. In a small bowl, combine the coconut oil, hot sauce, nutritional yeast, garlic powder, paprika, cayenne, salt, and pepper. Add Brussels sprouts to a medium bowl and cover with hot sauce mixture. Toss to combine. Spread Brussels sprouts evenly on the baking sheets and roast for 30–35 minutes, flipping once halfway through.

Serves: 4 | Serving Size: About 1/2 cup | Calories: 125; Total Fat: 6g; Saturated Fat: 5g; Monounsaturated Fat: 0.4g; Cholesterol: 0mg; Sodium: 114mg; Carbohydrate: 16g; Dietary Fiber: 7g; Sugar: 4g; Protein: 7g

## *Garlicky Broccoli “Zoodles” with Bacon*

3 large broccoli crowns with stems  
 6 slices bacon  
 2 tablespoons olive oil  
 1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper  
 Salt and pepper to taste  
 5 cloves garlic, thinly sliced  
 1 lemon, zested and juiced  
 3 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese



Slice off the broccoli florets, taking as little stem as possible, and set aside. Then spiralize the stems into linguine. Fill a large saucepan halfway with salted water and bring to a boil over high heat. Add the broccoli florets and noodles. Cook for 2–3 minutes or until easily pierced with a fork. Drain and pat dry. Place a large skillet over medium heat, and coat with cooking spray. When water flicked onto the skillet sizzles, add the bacon slices in an even layer, working in batches if needed. Cook for 3 minutes per side, or until browned and crisped to your liking. Set aside to drain on a plate lined with paper towels. Wipe out the skillet, return it to medium heat, and add the olive oil. When the oil is shimmering, add the broccoli florets, broccoli noodles and crushed red pepper, season with salt and pepper. Cover and cook for 2 minutes, uncovering occasionally to toss. Add the garlic, half the lemon zest and the juice. Cover and cook for another 5 minutes, or until the broccoli is lightly browned. Remove the pan from the heat and stir in the cheese. Toss to combine and serve warm.

Serves: 4 | Serving Size: 1 cup | Calories: 194; Total Fat: 13g; Saturated Fat: 3g; Monounsaturated Fat: 5g; Cholesterol: 14mg; Sodium: 234mg; Carbohydrate: 13g; Dietary Fiber: 4g; Sugar: 3g; Protein: 10g

## Stress, depression and the holidays: Tips for coping

*Continued from page 1*

**Stick to a budget.** Before you do your gift and food shopping, decide how much money you can afford to spend. Then stick to your budget. Don't try to buy happiness with an avalanche of gifts.

### Try these alternatives:

- 🌲 Donate to a charity in someone's name
- 🌲 Give homemade gifts
- 🌲 Start a family gift exchange

**Plan ahead.** Set aside specific days for shopping, baking, connecting with friends and other activities. Consider whether you can shop online for any of your items. Plan your menus and then make your shopping list. That'll help prevent last-minute scrambling to buy forgotten ingredients. And make sure to line up help for meal prep and cleanup.

**Learn to say no.** Saying yes when you should say no can leave you feeling resentful and overwhelmed. Friends and colleagues will understand if you can't participate in every project or activity. If it's not possible to say no when your boss asks you to work overtime, try to remove something else from your agenda to make up for the lost time.

**Don't abandon healthy habits.** Do not let the holidays become a free-for-all. Overindulgence only adds to your stress and guilt.

### Try these suggestions:

- 🍷 Have a healthy snack before holiday meals so that you don't go overboard on sweets, cheese, or drinks
- 🍷 Eat healthy meals
- 🍷 Get plenty of sleep
- 🍷 Include regular physical activity in your daily routine
- 🍷 Try deep-breathing exercises, meditation, or yoga
- 🍷 Avoid excessive tobacco, alcohol, and drug use

Be aware of how the information culture can produce undue stress and adjust the time you spend reading news and social media as you see fit.

**Take a breather.** Make some time for yourself. Find an activity you enjoy. Take a break by yourself. Spending just 15 minutes alone, without distractions, may refresh you enough to handle everything you need to do. Find something that reduces stress by clearing your mind, slowing your breathing, and restoring inner calm.

### Some options may include:

- 📖 Taking a walk at night and stargazing
- 📖 Listening to soothing music
- 📖 Reading a book

*Seek professional help if you need it. Despite your best efforts, you may find yourself feeling persistently sad or anxious, plagued by physical complaints, unable to sleep, irritable and hopeless, and unable to face routine chores. If these feelings last for a while, talk to your doctor or a mental health professional.*

Don't let the holidays become something you dread. Instead, take steps to prevent the stress and depression that can descend during the holidays. Learn to recognize your holiday triggers, such as financial pressures or personal demands, so you can combat them before they lead to a meltdown. With a little planning and some positive thinking, you can find peace and joy during the holidays. *Source: [MAYOCLINIC](https://www.mayooclinic.com)*

**Your Health Matters is a quarterly publication for municipal employees and family members of the Cape Cod Municipal Health Group. All questions and correspondence should be directed to Deanna L. Desroches, Health & Wellness Consultant, Cape Cod Healthy Connections, LLC [capecodhealthyconnections@gmail.com](mailto:capecodhealthyconnections@gmail.com) 508-631-7263**

## The Last Word

