

# CAREZONE



NOV/DEC 2024

## Stress Management for this Holiday Season

If the holidays sometimes leave you feeling overwhelmed and out of control, you're not alone. Try some of these tips to reclaim your ho-ho-ho and stay happy and healthy.

**Keep up healthy habits.** Decide that you'll move more and do something active every day over the next month or so. Start the day with a healthy breakfast, limit the sweets, and get at least seven hours of sleep each night. If you don't completely give up your healthy habits, you won't feel like you have to start over once the holidays are over.

**Beware of seasonal sweets.** The holidays often dish up extra helpings of less-than-healthy treats. Try preparing healthy snacks that are ready to eat when the urge to snack strikes. If you're hosting, make delicious and healthier options.

**Stay active.** Add some healthy activities to your daily routine. If the weather is nice and you're working from home, ride your bike around your neighborhood during a lunch break. If dinner is going to be a feast, opt for a light lunch, then take a vigorous walk. When the kids are home from school, do some active chores and add some trips to the park.

**But not too active.** Give yourself the gift of peace. If you need some down time to recharge, try yoga, meditation or spending time in nature.

**Make a plan for the new year.** Your poinsettia's pooped and the gifts are all gone. Now what? It's a great time to reset for the new year – but don't go dashing through your to-do list too fast or you might not stick to your plan. Lay out realistic, sustainable steps for the months ahead. For example, start a daily walking routine and sign up for a virtual Heart Walk before you set your sights on that marathon.

## November is American Diabetes Month

Diabetes mellitus refers to a group of diseases that affect how your body uses blood sugar (glucose). Glucose is vital to your health because it's an important source of energy for the cells that make up your muscles and tissues. It's also your brain's main source of fuel.

If you have diabetes, no matter what type, it means you have too much glucose in your blood, although the causes may differ.

**Prediabetes** is an elevated blood glucose level that is not quite high enough to be diagnosed as diabetes, but is higher than normal. One in three American adults has prediabetes, and most do not even know they have it. Many people with prediabetes who do not lose weight or do moderate physical activity will develop type 2 diabetes within 3 years.

Diabetes can cause serious health complications including heart disease, blindness, kidney failure, and amputations of the foot, toe or leg. Diabetes is the seventh leading cause of death in the United States.

### Risk factors for prediabetes and type 2 diabetes:

Researchers don't fully understand why some people develop prediabetes and type 2 diabetes and others don't. It's clear that certain factors increase the risk, however, including:

- **Weight.** The more fatty tissue you have, the more resistant your cells become to insulin.
- **Inactivity.** The less active you are, the greater your risk.
- **Family history.** Your risk increases if a parent or sibling has type 2 diabetes.
- **Race.** Although it's unclear why, people of certain races — including blacks, Hispanics, American Indians and Asian-Americans — are at higher risk.
- **Age.** Your risk increases as you get older. This may be because you tend to exercise less, lose muscle mass and gain weight as you age.
- **Gestational diabetes.** If you developed gestational diabetes when you were pregnant, your risk of developing prediabetes and type 2 diabetes later increases.
- **Polycystic ovary syndrome.** For women, having polycystic ovary syndrome — a common condition characterized by irregular menstrual periods, excess hair growth and obesity — increases the risk of diabetes.
- **High blood pressure.** Having blood pressure over 140/90 millimeters of mercury (mm Hg) is linked to an increased risk of type 2 diabetes.
- **Abnormal cholesterol and triglyceride levels.** If you have low levels of high-density lipoprotein (HDL), or "good," cholesterol, your risk of type 2 diabetes is higher.

Previous issues of our newsletters can be viewed under

“Resources” > Newsletters at: [www.MC-Rx.com](http://www.MC-Rx.com)



## DECEMBER IS SAFE TOYS AND GIFTS MONTH

This holiday season (and beyond), please consider the following guidelines for choosing safe toys for all ages:

- Inspect all toys before purchasing. Avoid those that shoot or include parts that fly off. The toy should have no sharp edges or points and should be sturdy enough to withstand impact without breaking, being crushed, or being pulled apart easily.
- Do NOT give toys with ropes and cords or heating elements; do NOT give crayons and markers unless they are labeled “nontoxic”; do NOT give toys with small parts (including magnets and “button” batteries which can cause serious injury or death if ingested) to young children as they tend to put things in their mouths, increasing the risk of choking. If the piece can fit inside a toilet paper roll, it is not appropriate for kids under age three.
- Be diligent about inspecting toys your child has received. Check them for age, skill level, and developmental appropriateness before allowing them to be played with.
- Look for labels that assure you the toys have passed a safety inspection – “ATSM” means the toy has met the American Society for Testing and Materials standards.
- Gifts of sports equipment should always be accompanied by protective gear (give a helmet with the skateboard).
- Keep kids safe from lead in toys by: Educating yourself about lead exposure from toys, symptoms of lead poisoning, and what kinds of toys have been recalled; being aware that old toys may be more likely to contain lead in the paint; having your children wash their hands frequently and calling your doctor if you suspect your child has been exposed to lead. Consult the last two websites listed below for more information.
- When purchasing toys for children with special needs try to: Choose toys that may appeal to different senses such as sound, movement, and texture; consider interactive toys to allow the child to play with others; and think about the size of the toy and the position a child would need to be in to play with it.

### Building Up Your Knowledge (Part 5) – Alzheimer’s (5-Part Series)

#### The Stages of Alzheimer’s Disease Progression

If a diagnosis is confirmed, you can work with your healthcare provider to figure out what options are available to address it. Since Alzheimer’s is a progressive disease, it’s important to be proactive.

EARLY	MIDDLE	LATE
MCI due to Alzheimer’s disease and mild dementia due to Alzheimer’s disease.	Moderate dementia due to Alzheimer’s disease.	Severe dementia due to Alzheimer’s disease.
<b>Symptoms include:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficulty remembering words</li> <li>• Forgetting appointments</li> </ul>	<b>Symptoms include:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being forgetful of events</li> <li>• feeling confused about where one is or what day it is</li> </ul>	<b>Symptoms include:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Losing awareness of recent experiences</li> <li>• difficulty communicating</li> </ul>
May affect <b>some</b> parts of daily life.	May affect <b>many</b> parts of daily life.	May affect <b>most</b> parts of daily life.

People diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease are likely to experience a range of emotions. That’s why it is so important to build a support network. Connecting with people who know what you’re going through can make a difference.

Here are a few resources that can offer additional support and information. **Alzheimer’s Association:** [alz.org](http://alz.org); **Alzheimer’s Foundation of America:** [alzfdn.org](http://alzfdn.org); **UsAgainstAlzheimer’s:** [usagainstalzhimers.org](http://usagainstalzhimers.org)