

Fast Facts for Managing Holiday Stress

Holidays, traditionally thought of as a time for grand celebration, can be especially difficult and painful for those individuals and families struggling with substance abuse and mental health disorders. It is important to develop strategies to assist with combating holiday stress, remaining safe, and keeping healthy. Please keep the following helpful hints in mind:

- ✓ Stay in contact with close friends and family. Having positive, supportive people in your life can evoke a sense of comfort and calm.
- ✓ Set limits - If you are feeling vulnerable (overwhelmed, angry, tired, sad, etc.), it's ok to say no to an event, or go late and leave early.
- ✓ Set boundaries - Stay away from the people, places, and things that are not emotionally healthy for you – even if this includes family members.
- ✓ Be conscious of social messaging that depicts alcohol as relaxing and fun. Be aware that alcohol is a depressant drug that can exacerbate existing mental health disorders.
- ✓ Read prescription bottle labels to ensure that alcohol will not cause a negative reaction.
- ✓ Know the facts about alcohol - Alcohol affects each person uniquely, and it can have a different effect each time you drink.
- ✓ It takes approximately one hour to metabolize a standard drink. A standard drink is considered a 12 oz. beer, a 5 oz. glass of wine, or a drink with 1½ oz of hard liquor. Drink per drink, each beverage contains the same amount of concentrated alcohol.
- ✓ Don't drink and drive - Even one drink can affect reaction time, concentration, and motor coordination. Even though you think you may be driving safely, alcohol prevents you from using good judgment and making quick decisions.

This flyer is for informational purposes only. If a mental health crisis arises, there are screening centers in every county. Call 211 for locations. If an addiction emergency arises, call 911 or to speak with an addiction specialist, call the Addictions Hotline of New Jersey at 1-800-238-2333.

**Presented by the NJ Department of Human Services -
Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services**