

## HOLIDAY STRESS & FATIGUE

### Ask Your Pharmacist

Each year it's the same scene; parties, food, drink, and merriment from Halloween through New Year's, and then suddenly we wake up on January 2nd with overwhelming sluggishness that lasts through March in some cases. Studies now show that most of the problems associated with the post-holiday season; fatigue, depression, weight gain, and digestive problems, have at least some origin in the diet we consume during November and December.

It's no wonder that with all the celebrations and food consumption during the holiday season, our stress levels and digestive function can take a beating. These two functions are very much tied to each other. Digestion and proper absorption of vitamins and minerals directly affect energy production and the ability to cope with stress. Let's consider some suggestions that, hopefully, will offer you some aid and comfort this New Year.

#### HOW CAN I EASE THIS CHRONIC INDIGESTION I'VE HAD SINCE NEW YEAR'S EVE?

Physicians and pharmacists see many patients during January for complaints about unexplained digestive problems, elimination problems, and yeast infections. In fact, many of the top-selling drugs are digestive aids.

Let's look at two important ways to improve digestive function.

**Enzymes.** Studies have proven that supplementing certain enzymes can actually improve health and energy in people with digestive problems. Enzymes not only aid in digestion of nutrients, they are involved in the use of nutrients. Most enzymes are plant-based and cooking our plant foods destroys them. If there are inadequate enzymes and poor foods, we

have a harder time using our foods to generate energy.

**Probiotics.** Our digestive tracts naturally contain billions of beneficial bacteria ("probiotics"), which actually work to improve digestion and nutrient absorption. But all the sugar consumed during the holidays may disrupt this balance, leading to an overgrowth of yeast or unpleasant elimination problems. Supplementing with probiotics like acidophilus (commonly found in yogurt) will restore this balance and improve digestive function.

For more information about enzymes and probiotics, please feel free to contact our pharmacist.

#### WHAT SHOULD I DO TO IMPROVE MY ENERGY LEVELS AND MOOD?

We often set ourselves up for a post-holiday mood and energy crash. During the holiday months most of us "go" nonstop with shopping, gift-wrapping, parties, cooking, cleaning, and eating. Then January hits us, often bitterly cold and gray, and we're faced with trying to keep our resolutions without the sugar and merriment of the holiday. Let's take a quick look at some simple ways to increase energy and improve mood.

**Cut back on sugar.** Sugar can be addictive in a way, since it provides a quick energy "high," but for the process of sugar metabolism to take place the body has to work pretty hard. The various systems utilized in the process can overtax our energy supply, and we become lethargic. Excessive sugar is also a problem in mood. Sugar blocks the neurotransmitters that allow our endorphins to work properly. To overcome these effects, it's best to completely avoid refined sugars (like candy and other sweet treats) and drastically

for your best health

**Visit our pharmacy or website to learn more about how to reduce holiday stress and fatigue**



# STRESS & FATIGUE (continued)

reduce white breads, pasta, and rice.

**Increase complex carbohydrates.** If you really want to be energetic this year, stick to complex carbohydrates as the main food group. Complex carbohydrates break down into glucose at a much slower pace, spreading the energy system over a longer time period. This could help with elimination problems, add energy instead of yeast, and provide the sort of energy that keeps us active and in an aerobic state throughout the day.

**Supplement with B-vitamins.** Studies show that deficiencies of B-vitamins may be responsible for many imbalances in the body, including our ability to cope with mental and physical stress. The B-vitamins are considered energy vitamins, and yet they are partially responsible for keeping us calm. B-vitamins are water soluble, meaning that the body eliminates them quickly, and nutritionists believe B-vitamins should be taken twice a day.

**THERE'S ONLY ONE  
SURE-FIRE METHOD  
COMMON TO EVERY  
WEIGHT LOSS PROGRAM**

**EXERCISE**

Contact our pharmacy today to learn more about B-vitamin supplementation and other supplements, which may help to improve your individual energy levels and mood control.

## **WHAT ABOUT WEIGHT LOSS?**

Weight gain this time of the year is not unusual. Most families enjoy several holiday meals in which we can eat three to four times more than usual. Come January, it seems like everyone embarks on some kind of new diet, designed to shed holiday pounds and tone muscles before spring.

Let's take a look at one important method for weight management. That's right, one. Hundreds of diets offer weight loss tips through hundreds of different methods, but all agree that this one method works.

**Exercise.** Nutritionists will tell you that the best dietary tip they can offer is to get cardiovascular exercise during and after the holidays. Food management alone will not keep you healthy and vibrant. Our bodies need to move. And it's actually really simple to add exercise to your daily life; take the stairs, park farther away from your building, do some sit-ups while watching the evening sitcoms. Just make sure that you incorporate regular exercise into your daily routine.

Ask our pharmacist about our weight loss products.

## **HOW CAN I PREVENT HOLIDAY WEIGHT GAIN NEXT YEAR?**

New research shows that most people never lose holiday weight gain, we just keep piling it on year after year, leading to obesity. While nobody wants to bypass holiday indulgence entirely, making just a few small changes during the holiday season may prevent weight gain. Limit your caloric intake by eating smaller portions throughout the day. This will provide you with more "free" calories for major holiday meals. Take enzymes before your meal and vitamins with your meal. Keep sweets as treats reserved for the really special days during the holidays. Take a brisk

walk, enjoy the season, and don't let the holidays control your emotions. You control the holidays with energy and stress management. For more information about holiday stress relief, ask our Wellness pharmacist today.