

# FITTING ALL THE PIECES

Central Michigan District Health Department  
HIV/AIDS Case Management Program

December 2008

Volume I, Issue 8

## IT'S THE HOLIDAYS...SHOULDN'T I BE HAPPY?

The holiday season can be a time full of joy, cheer, parties and family gatherings. But for many people, it is a time of self-evaluation, loneliness, reflection on past failures and anxiety about an uncertain future.

### What Causes Holiday Blues?

Many factors can cause the "holiday blues": stress, fatigue, unrealistic expectations, over-commercialization, financial constraints, and the inability to be with one's family and friends. The demands of shopping, parties, family reunions and house guests also contribute to feelings of tension. People may also develop other stress responses such as headaches, excessive drinking, over-eating and difficulty sleeping. Even more people experience post-holiday let down after January 1. This can result from disappointments during the preceding months compounded by the excess fatigue and stress.

### Coping with Stress & Depression During the Holidays



## Holiday Wishes from your friends at CMDHD

*What is Christmas? It is tenderness for the past, courage for the present, hope for the future. It is a fervent wish that every cup may overflow with blessings rich and eternal, and that every path may lead to peace.*

*-- Agnes M. Pharo*

## Clinic Dates

December 19, 2008  
9:00am-4:00pm

January 23, 2008  
9:00am-4:00pm

February 27, 2008  
9:00-4:00

Clinic is located on the  
2nd floor of the county  
building in Harrison.

Look for the Family  
Planning clinic sign

## Office Closures

December 22nd - January 2

Commitment To Change

Ready.

Willing..

And Able...

Making Health A Priority

# KATI'S TIPS

As the holiday season approaches, you may find yourself bombarded with treats and sweets. And whether it be a cocktail party or a family potluck, it is likely that these treats will tempt you. Though overindulgence during the holiday season is common, it can be detrimental when you are HIV positive. By overdoing sweets you may find yourself eating less nutrient-rich foods that your body needs to remain healthy and function properly. Also, many of the sweets available during the holiday season are high in saturated fat and cholesterol. This is particularly harmful if you are taking HIV medications that increase your blood cholesterol levels or if you suffer from other conditions such as high blood pressure or heart disease. In fact, if you struggle with any of these conditions, it is recommended that you avoid foods high in cholesterol as much as possible. High cholesterol foods include items such as cookies, pies, whole and 2% milk, fried meats and vegetables, egg yolks, and butter.

So how can you not only eat well during the holidays, but also enjoy what you eat? Try incorporating some of the following foods into your holiday feasts:

**Cranberries.** These traditional holiday fruits taste sweet and are high in vitamin C.

**Roasted Sweet Potatoes.** These sweet tasting vegetables work as a great substitute for the white variety at any dinner table. They are rich in beta-carotene, vitamin C, fiber, and potassium and help give your immune system a boost.

**Fresh Turkey (not the pre-basted kind!).** Traditional and timeless, the turkey is a great source of protein at the table. It is also low in fat and cholesterol and high in vitamin B6, niacin, and iron.



**Salad.** Greens on the table not only look good, but taste good too! Salads can provide a lot of vitamins and minerals your body needs and can be prepared in a variety of ways. Typically, a salad will be high in beta-carotene, vitamin C, folate, calcium and fiber; however, depending on the ingredients you add, it can be a rich source for other minerals and vitamins as well.

**Pumpkin Pie.** Yes, even pumpkin pie can be good for you! It is actually a rich source of beta-carotene, vitamin C, potassium, and fiber; however, because of its crust it is considered a high cholesterol food. Therefore, try eating it without the crust or treat yourself to a very small portion of it to decrease the amount of cholesterol you are consuming.

By incorporating these food items into your holiday meals, you may find yourself less tempted to eat poorly or to overindulge in sweets loaded with cholesterol and fat. Eating small, healthy snacks throughout the day can also decrease your desire to overeat at holiday potlucks and parties. Whatever your method, remember... it is okay to have a few treats during the holiday season, but moderation is the key! By resisting the temptation to overindulge in sweets and by eating more of the nutritionally-dense foods available during the holiday season, you may find yourself feeling better than ever and enjoying the seasonal festivities even more! Happy holidays!

Keep expectations for the holiday season manageable. Try to set realistic goals for yourself. Pace yourself. Organize your time. Make a list and prioritize the important activities.

Be realistic about what you can and cannot do. Don't put the entire focus on just one day (i.e., Thanksgiving Day). Remember that it's a season of holiday sentiment, and activities can be spread out to lessen stress and increase enjoyment.

Remember the holiday season does not banish reasons for feeling sad or lonely; there is room for these feelings to be present, even if the person chooses not to express

them.

Leave "yesteryear" in the past and look toward the future. Life brings changes. Each season is different and can be enjoyed in its own way. Don't set yourself up in comparing today with the "good ol' days."

Do something for someone else. Try volunteering some of your time to help others.

Enjoy activities that are free, such as taking a drive to look at holiday decorations, going window shopping or making a snowperson with children.

Be aware that excessive drinking will only increase your feelings of depression.

Try something new. Celebrate the holidays in a new way.

Spend time with supportive and caring people. Reach out and make new friends, or contact someone you haven't heard from in a while.

Save time for yourself! Recharge your batteries! Let others share in the responsibility of planning activities.



## Support Group

December 15, 2008 Christmas Party at the Surrey House in Harrison. Please RSVP to Catrina no later than 12/12/08.

January 19, 2008 To Be Announced

February 16, 2008 To Be Announced

March 16, 2008 To Be Announced

April 20, 2008 To Be Announced

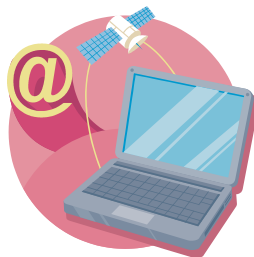
May 18, 2008 To Be Announced

Support Group meets 5:30-7:00pm. Call Catrina at 989-539-6731 ext. 8221 for location and directions

## Websites

[www.thebody.com](http://www.thebody.com)

[www.cmdhd.org](http://www.cmdhd.org)



## Contact Information

Bay/Arenac Behavioral Health Arenac Center  
1000 W. Cedar  
Standish, MI 48658  
989-846-4573

Community Mental Health for Central Michigan  
789 N. Clare Avenue  
Harrison, MI 48625  
989-539-2141

Community Mental Health for Central Michigan  
655 E. Cedar Avenue  
Gladwin, MI 48624  
989-426-9295

Community Mental Health for Central Michigan  
301 South Crapo - Suite 100  
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858  
989-772-5938

Northern Lakes Community Mental Health  
2715 S. Townline Rd.  
Houghton Lake, MI 48629  
989-366-8550