



Supporting Mental Health Throughout The Holidays

Avoiding Holiday Burnout

- **Stress Management** - The holiday stress may always be there but you have the power to manage the stressful feelings that it may cause. Great stress management techniques may be doing some deep breathing exercises, meditation, yoga, and spending quality time with friends, family, and even pets!
- **Gratitude** - Keeping a daily gratitude practice can help you feel grounded during the constant chaos of the holiday season. Start by listing 5 things you are grateful for each day. Gratitude has been shown to reduce feels of anxiety, stress and depression.
- **Adaptogens to support cortisol balance** - Being under constant stress causes the adrenal glands to continuously release cortisol (fight or flight hormone). Having to plan for the holidays definitely gets our adrenal glands going! Signs of a stressed adrenal gland are: worry, anxiety, restlessness, insomnia and many more symptoms. Adaptogenic herbs used in naturopathic medicine help to balance cortisol release so that after a particular stressor (ex. last minus christmas shopping) your body can recover!
 - Ashwaganda, Rhodiola, Eleutherococcus are examples of adaptogens that help with this process

Holiday Depression/Anxiety

Holiday advertisements tend to create a false image of Christmas "ideals", which don't include present family/relationship dysfunctions, personal struggles and financial difficulties which may be worsened during the holiday season. Perhaps you or someone you know may be struggling with either a physical ailment or mental health condition (seasonal affective disorder [SAD], anxiety and depression) which doesn't make the holiday season enjoyable. Regardless of the type of struggle you or a family member may be experiencing, these stressors can weigh on your mental health - causing symptoms of anxiety and/or depression.



Naturopathic Strategies for Mental Health

• **Nervine Herbs** - These are herbs that are either sedative in nature or relax the sympathetic nervous system, leading to feelings of relaxation and ease. These are just some examples, but a licensed naturopathic doctor can formulate a specific blend for your needs (Ex. Anxiety and Digestive issues? A customized tincture with nervine and digestive herbs could be your personalized blend)

- Mentha Piperita (Peppermint) - Anxiety with Irritable Bowel/Digestive Issues OR Anxiety with Cold/Flu
- Matricaria recutita (Chamomile) - Anxiety with Sleep Issues
- Avena Sativa (Oat) - Burnout with Depression
- Passiflora Incarnata (Passionflower) - Anxiety & Restlessness
- Hypericum perforatum (St. John's Wort) - Depression, Seasonal Affective Disorder

• Supplements

- Vitamin D - Many individuals living in the Northern Hemisphere do not receive enough sunlight, therefore are likely Vitamin D deficient. It is worthwhile to get Vitamin D levels checked either by a Naturopathic Doctor or your Family Physician. Vitamin D levels may impact SAD.
- Other helpful supplements are B vitamins and Fish oils.

Consult a registered Naturopathic Doctor to see how you can support your mental health during the holiday season!



Kaitlyn Zorn, ND

Kaitlyn is a Naturopathic Doctor who focuses on empowering individuals to live their best life through incorporation of the mind and body. She thinks mental health is very important in enabling us to feel vital and healthy, and thus has a special interest in anxiety, stress and depression along with thyroid and other hormonal concerns, which contribute to mood and energy.

Healing Foundations Naturopathic Clinic

Phone: 519-821-1999

Email: clinic@healingfoundations.ca

Website: www.healingfoundations.ca

