



Wellness Today

For Parents & Families

How to Help Loneliness

Whether you are quarantined because you've been exposed to Covid-19, you're staying indoors to avoid getting sick, or you can't be with all your loved ones for the holidays, you may be feeling lonely.

Here are a few tips on how to cope with the loneliness that Covid-19 and the holidays can bring.

- **Have a routine.** Keeping things as normal and consistent as you possibly can helps give you a sense of control.
- **Exercise.** Moving your body improves your mental health.
- **Create meaning in your life.** Do something that makes you feel important, like you belong or like you're contributing something.
- **Connect with others.** Send a text, start a video call, or write a letter to family members and friends near and far.
- **Find healthy comfort and distraction.** A foot massage, bath, certain food, pet, movie, book, etc. can help ward off feelings of loneliness.

How to Manage Holiday Stress

Though holidays are meant to be a jolly time of year, they can also be full of stress, especially this year when Covid-19 still lingers. But there are some steps you can take to manage or limit the amount of stress this season.

- **Make a small list of priorities.** It's okay not to do *everything* this year (or any year). What are the most important traditions to your family that can be done safely this year? By limiting the amount of activities, you are saving yourself from the stress of planning and doing them all.
- **Write a schedule.** Once you have chosen a few things you'd like to do for the holidays, schedule them. Make sure it's still realistic. Planning ahead also helps ease stress.
- **Simplify as much as possible.** Eliminate unnecessary work that brings you stress. For example, buy a pie instead of spending all morning baking and worrying if

it'll turn out perfectly. Cutting corners is okay; it gives you less stress and more time to really enjoy the few activities you do.

- **Acknowledge your feelings.** If you can't be with family this year or plans were canceled, let yourself feel sad. You don't have to be jolly all through the holidays. Talk with your children about how they may be feeling this holiday season and let them be sad if they need to be.
- **Keep healthy habits.** Overeating or overdrinking bring their own kind of stress, so remember that moderation is key.
- **Keep to your usual holiday budget.** This year may look different, but don't spend lots of money to try and make up for it. Overspending brings lots of stress.
- **Make time to relax and breathe.** Instead of filling in every minute of the day with some sort of activity, make sure you have time to just sit, take a leisurely walk, meditate, watch a movie, etc.