

Community Health Coalition, Inc.

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Healthy People
2020

Improving the health of Durham
& NC communities since 1989

Date: December 23, 2012

Topic: [Mental Health & You](#)

The holiday season is fast approaching. You are running here, running there, running everywhere. Did you stop and take time to remember your health? Often we get caught up in the excitement of things during the holiday season. For some it is not that joyous, especially when dealing with a mental illness or with a family member with a mental illness. Stress affects all individuals. It does not disappear when the holidays come but in fact be more intense.



Carol M. Gibbs, MD

Dr. Carol Gibbs, a local Durham private practice psychiatrist states, “This holiday season let’s all make it a point to remember the reason for this joyous season. Let us also give a very special gift to ourselves and to those that love us with the focus on taking care of our bodies by reducing the stress in our lives. Be Well!”

Mental health issues span across a wide variety of emotional illnesses and include generalized stress from coping with daily life demands, resulting in anxiety and depression, or grief and bereavement following the loss of a loved one. Alcohol and substance abuse are also included under the mental illness realm, and often are used by those suffering from depression and other mental illness as a way to mask the symptoms of mental disorders. This in turn can actually cause or worsen existing depression or psychosis. Depression and other mood disorders can often be situational or linked to lifestyle changes such marriage, divorce, entering college, returning from war, the postpartum period following the birth of a child, following a traumatic event such as an assault or rape, workplace stress, holiday or bereavement anniversaries, or can even be linked to seasons and the weather! Many of these emotional illnesses can affect our interactions with others in our home, workplace or in social situations.

Warning Signs of Mental Illness:

Confused Thinking
Need your response immediately.
Long-lasting Sadness or Irritability
Extreme Highs and Lows in Mood
Excessive Fear, Worry, or Anxiety
Social Withdrawal
Dramatic Changes in Eating or Sleeping Habits
Strong Feelings of Anger
Delusions or Hallucinations
Inability to Cope with Daily Problems and Activities
Thoughts of Suicide
Abuse of Drugs and/or Alcohol

If you or someone you know is in crisis now, seek help immediately.

Call 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
to reach a 24 hour
crisis center

Call Durham Center Access
919-560-7100 or
800-510-9132.



Remembering Your ABC's To Reduce Stress:

If **you** or **your children** are stressed, you can reduce your risk of developing serious side effects by practicing your **ABC's**. **A**void alcohol, talk with someone instead. **B**e willing to ask for help if you feel depressed; and **C**ontrol your stress and anxiety by laughing, breathing deeply and learning to accept what you cannot change. Learn from your mistakes and reward yourself for your achievements. If possible participate in free events at church and listen to holiday music.

Or For More Information, Contact:

Mental Health America Resource Center

(800) 969-6642 (800) 433-5959 (TTY)

9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday–Friday (Eastern Time)

National Institute of Mental Health Information Center

(866) 615-6464

(866) 415-8051 (TTY)

8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday–Friday, except Federal holidays (Eastern Time)

www.nimh.nih.gov

Health Tip for Healthy Sunday is prepared by the Community Health Coalition for Churches to use on the 4th Sunday, and is supported by North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company, the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance of Durham and vicinity, Central Carolina Black Nurses' Council Inc., and Durham Regional Hospital.