



The Wellness Family

Dr. Brayton Keeps You Informed

Stress-Free Home for the Holidays

If it's hard to remember a holiday season that wasn't stress-filled, then it's time to take a step back and try to focus on the true purpose of the holidays. The arrival of November should never feel like a reason to consider hiding out until January.

The holiday season is busy; there's no doubt. Decorating, shopping, family gatherings (some of which will require traveling) and all the other numerous demands can be a drain on not just your time, but also, on your family. It's no surprise that this is often considered the most stressful time of year.

Find Some Space

Despite all the stress of this season, there is one thing you can control: your own home. This is the one place that you can declare to be your stress-free zone and there are a lot of little things you can do to make this happen.

It's important to remember that all of those demands on your time also place demands on your resources: financial, mental, and emotional. Making sure that there is some place where you can de-stress is vital.

Scents of the Season

The most popular and accessible aromatherapies come in the form of scented candles. Vanilla or lavender scents are known to be calming, while pine or lemon are supposed to be invigorating or uplifting; however, a study performed at the Weizmann Institute of Science in Israel may have added a new twist.

Scientists have proven that scents are one of the most powerful links to our memories. Studies have shown that memories triggered by smells are more vivid and more emotional than those triggered just by sounds. Perhaps this is why the scent of apples and cinnamon can evoke memories of pies in the oven, or the smell of pine and peppermint can bring a rush of emotions from childhood Christmases.

Considering this fact, one of the most beneficial things you can do is find the scents that bring back warm memories for you and your loved ones and place candles or aroma pots with oil strategically around your home. These scents can be placed in all living areas, but be cautious about fire hazards.

Music and Your Mood

Don Campbell, the founder of the Institute for Music, Health, and Education, theorizes that music is linked to measurable changes in body function. Based on your choice of music you can be relaxed or energized, angry or calm, muscles can tense, and skin temperature can even change. He has gone so far as to say that music can improve circulation and cardiovascular function. If every thought and feeling has a musical pattern, then it figures that music can affect our moods.

Considering this fact, a great way to help your home be your oasis is to put together a playlist that will help you feel calmer and more relaxed. Find a compilation of



Make your home your stress-free zone for the holidays!

songs that evokes feelings of peace, and be sure to have them ready to turn on any time that you begin to feel overwhelmed by the holiday season.

Whether you're a subscriber to Pandora, Spotify, or Apple Music, or if you have a playlist on YouTube, or if you're old school with your CD mixer, have your playlists ready to go the minute you feel yourself getting tense. This is also an excellent opportunity to introduce your family to a variety of music such as contemporary, classical, or multi-cultural.

Apps to the Rescue

Surely the most stress-inducing part of the holidays is the sheer volume of things that you have to do. The usual chores of keeping the house clean, organizing the children's school programs, sporting events, dance recitals, etc. increases to include gift shopping and wrapping, decorating, dinner parties and more.

The Apple App Store and Google Play have a host of organizational apps that will help you get started; a quick Google search will reveal your many options.

Two that will definitely be helpful to the busy parent would be Todoist and Any.do. The first app operates

under the premise that breaking a project down into smaller pieces makes it easier to accomplish. The other helps you organize your To-Do Lists, add tasks, and apply due dates, but where it's really helpful is the "Plan my Day" feature. With busy holidays, these apps can be a real blessing.

If your goal is simply to ensure that everyone is on the same page, and you're not getting double-booked, you can't go wrong with an online scheduler like "Google Calendar". It's a free feature for anyone with a Gmail account and the benefit is that you can sync it to your iPhone or Android devices. Simply add the calendar option to your phone and make sure that everyone refers to it prior to adding something to the family's already busy holiday schedule.

Focus on the Family

Probably the hardest thing to remember is that the holidays are supposed to be joyful. Taking time to focus on and spend time with your children may be a helpful reminder. Arts and crafts projects and special mealtime activities are great ways to connect with your children.

One mealtime activity includes placing photos from past Christmases into a large bowl. Have each family member take a picture out and share a memory based on that photograph. This can lead to joyful reminiscing and shared laughter.

Another activity with photographs is to place pictures of different relatives in the bowl and, once a week, have each child pull a photo from the bowl. They can then write a short note or letter to that family member for the holiday. This activity can also easily be turned into a craft project. The photo can be glued to a piece of cardstock and the child can decorate the photo with sequins, stars, and ribbons after writing a brief note on the back. Remember to have the child write the note first, as the decorations will make it difficult for the child to place it face down.

If your child doesn't know what to write, help them out by suggesting they write a list titled either: "Five things I love about you" or "Five reasons I'm grateful for you". With smaller images, you may choose to punch a hole in the top and place ribbon in it so that it can be used as a tree ornament.

Arts and Craft Time

It's never too late to start a new family tradition and your children will love being allowed to participate in the holiday planning and decorating. Consider allowing each of your children the honor of creating the centerpiece for a week.

Using candles, pine branches, ribbons, ornaments, glitter, Styrofoam balls and rings, stickers, clay or foam shapes, and more, your children can release their imaginations and create something wonderful to sit in the center of your dinner table. When the week is up, their centerpiece can be gifted to an elderly neighbor or a grandparent.

Children love being involved in the activities of grown-ups, but more than that, they love having something they created be treated as a precious work of art and gifted to someone with care.

In Summary

There are three causes of subluxation: physical, chemical, and emotional. Yes, it's true, negative emotions can lead to vertebral subluxations. That's why it's important to remember that we make the choice about how we're going to feel from one moment to the next, and our emotions will be reflected in our attitudes, and our attitudes will affect our children and household. With this in mind, think about what this season is supposed to be all about: peace, joy, and love. If those aren't what you're feeling, then take a moment and ask yourself, "Why not?" Once you know the answer to that question, make conscious and mindful decisions to change it. Make your home your stress-free zone for the holidays!



*Dear Patient,
Dr. Brayton is dedicated to providing you with the absolute best in family wellness care. So take a moment today to discuss with your Family Wellness Chiropractor any concerns you may have regarding your family's overall health and wellness.*

This newsletter is provided to you by:

Hoboken Family Chiropractic + Wellness
Laura T. Brayton, D.C.
113 Monroe Street; Suite 2S
Hoboken, NJ 07030
201.792.3544