How to reduce Christmas stress!!
BY HANNAH NICHOLS  MEDICAL NEWS TODAY

"It's the most wonderful time of the year," but also a time when stress levels soar. We have put together some top tips to stop stress in its tracks and make the season of goodwill more enjoyable.

The holidays can be a time of high stress levels, but managing stress can help you to have a happy and healthy Christmas.

While Christmas is known as "the season to be jolly," it can be a significant source of stress, pressure, and conflict for many of us. Some people can feel overwhelmed by the excess, expectations, and exchange and become depressed during the holidays.

A lack of time and money, credit card debt, and the pressure of gift giving can often contribute to stress during the holiday season.

Most of us are aware of the adverse effects that stress can have on our body. It can impact our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, and it can lead to high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, and obesity if left unchecked.

In fact, research has shown that there is an increase in the occurrence of heart attacks and heart-related deaths during the festive season, which may be due to stress, heavy alcohol consumption, a fatty diet, or all three. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that holiday stress is dealt with pronto.

With all the cooking, decorating, visiting, and gift giving, the holidays can seem more like trying to meet a high-pressure deadline than a vacation. So, try this Christmas stress-busting strategies to ease the strain and help stress melt away.

Limit spending
Money issues are one of the leading causes of stress during the holiday season, according to a poll conducted by the American Psychological Association (APA) in 2004. Recent data collected in the APA's annual Stress in America survey reflect this finding and report that 62 percent of us feel stressed about money.

Avoid overspending by setting a budget.

Holiday retail sales in November and December 2017 are expected to increase between 3.6 and 4 percent and total between $678.75 billion to $682 billion, according to the National Retail Federation. These figures are up from $655.8 billion last year.

Gift buying, entertainment, and travel can all fuel financial burden, even for the savviest shoppers. However, here are some steps that you can take to limit financial stress.

Set a budget. First of all, make sure that all your usual expenses are accounted for so that you do not fall short on bills such as rent. Plan for any other spending over the holidays, including any parties you may be hosting or traveling to visit friends or family.

Once these items have been subtracted from your budget, you can then work out how much you can spend on gifts. Being organized and realistic about your budget will help you to ensure that you do not overspend.

Make one financial decision at a time. Make sure that you space spending-related decisions out. Trying to make too many decisions at once can be overwhelming, which can lead to depletion of your willpower and an increased risk of overspending.

Avoid temptation. It is often impossible to steer clear of stores and shopping malls altogether over the festive season, but limiting the time that you spend in these places can also help you to curb your spending.

Manage impulsive spending by taking only the cash you can afford to spend on shopping trips and leaving all credit and debit cards at home.

For Full Article on reducing Christmas Stress click the link below.<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/320295.php>
Soft Christmas Cookies

**Ingredients**

- 3 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup margarine, softened
- 1 1/2 cups white sugar
- 2 eggs
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract

Add all ingredients to list

**Directions**

1. Sift flour, baking powder, and salt together, set aside. In a large bowl, cream together the margarine and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the eggs one at a time, then stir in the vanilla. Gradually blend in the sifted ingredients until fully absorbed. Cover dough, and chill for 2 hours.

2. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F (200 degrees C). Grease cookie sheets. On a clean floured surface, roll out small portions of chilled dough to 1/4 inch thickness. Cut out shapes using cookie cutters.

3. Bake 6 to 8 minutes in the preheated oven, or until edges are barely brown. Remove from cookie sheets to cool on wire racks.

**Tip**

Aluminum foil can be used to keep food moist, cook it evenly, and make clean-up easier.