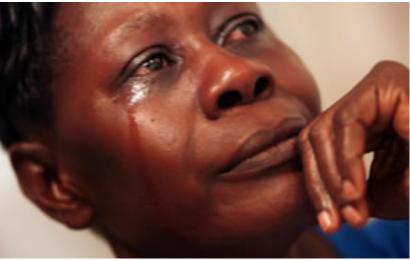
Written by MHMRA Harris County Thursday, 08 December 2011 11:55

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From your friends at MHMRA of Harris County

While the holidays are supposed to be a joyful time, many people can become overwhelmed by the flurry of activity that accompanies the season.

Holiday blues, the result of the stress and fatigue that can accompany winter festivities, are common. It is important, however, to recognize when the holiday blues might be something more serious like depression.

According to the DSM-IV, a manual used to diagnose mental disorders, depression occurs when you have at least five of the following nine symptoms at the same time that last longer than two weeks.

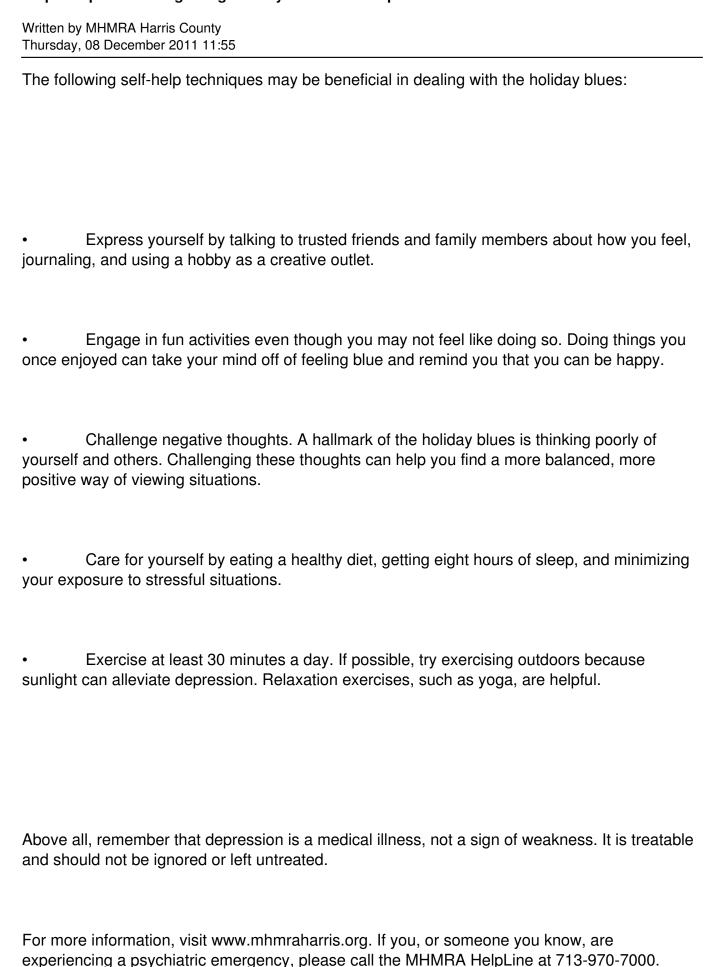
- Depressed mood most of the day
- Loss of interest in activities that you once enjoyed

Helpful Tips for Distinguising Holiday Blues from Depression

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• gain	Changes in eating pattern, such as significant weight loss when not dieting or weight
• (hyperso	Changes in sleeping pattern, such as little sleep (insomnia) or excessive sleep omnia)
•	Psychomotor agitation or retardation
•	Fatigue or loss of energy
•	Feelings of worthlessness or excessive or inappropriate guilt
•	Diminished ability to think or concentrate, or indecisiveness
	ecurrent thoughts of death (not just fear of dying), recurrent suicidal ideation without a plan, a suicide attempt or a specific plan for committing suicide
should s	you experience all or only some of these symptoms for more than two weeks, you eek professional help. When ignored or left untreated, depression likely will not go d may even become worse.

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MHMRA of Harris County is a public agency providing community-based mental health and intellectual/developmental disability (IDD) services and supports to Harris County residents. More than 1,800 staff delivers personalized care through 40+ programs and services to unserved and underserved populations with wide range of mental disorders. The largest mental health and IDD authority in Texas, MHMRA of Harris County is a catalyst for positive change on a local, state and national level in mental health and IDD services and supports. To learn more, please visit www.mhmraharris.org.