Stress Management: How to make holidays the “Most Wonderful Time of the Year”

‘Tis the season for celebrations, get-togethers with family and friends, holiday music and festive light displays. But for many, the holidays also bring unwanted stress and depression as expectations, calendar commitments and to-do lists grow longer while the hours in the day begin to feel shorter.

Learn these stress management and relief strategies so you can enjoy a healthy and happy holiday season:

Set realistic expectations
If you strive for the “perfect” holiday, you’re bound to create anxiety and unrealistic expectations. One year you may have time to bake cookies from scratch and create homemade gift bows, and the next time you could settle for store-bought baked goods and easy gift bags.

Learn to say “no”
Instead of jam-packing your schedule, prioritize your commitments and only join in the activities and events that are truly important to you. Learn to say “no” guilt-free. After all, your friends, family and colleagues should understand if you can’t participate in everything.

Make your own traditions
Once you learn to set realistic expectations and say “no,” it gives your family an opportunity to create your own, new holiday traditions and memories. It can be as simple as introducing a special food that becomes a tradition or starting an annual family night with board games and hot cocoa.

Need a Physician?
Call St. Joseph Health’s Physician Referral Line at (877) 449-DOCS or go to StJosephHealthMedicalGroup.org.