

## Enjoy Your Holidays - Before, During, and After

When we were younger and invincible, Johnny Mathis sang "It's the most wonderful time of the year". We pulled joy out of stockings, hung with our names on them, and our smiles were as abundant as the snowflakes we counted as Christmas approached. Over the years we grew to adulthood and faced its responsibilities. The wonderful holidays came with the same enthusiasm, but when they left us, adults with many responsibilities, we had new emotions of wonderment. "I wonder how I can pay off this credit card bill", thus, creating muscle tension and physical, as well as emotional, problems. In today's current troubled economic climate, the national news recently reported a significant increase in muscle tension headaches, neck aches, and TMJ headaches.

But you don't have to have a blue Christmas or worrisome post-Christmas. There are many easy techniques to help erase those physical and emotional blues. It would be nice if a Santa could simply pay all the bills, but in reality most medical insurances can help with coverage for easing the pain in the neck, the headache, and the eye or ear pain that stress can cause.

It's fun for the kids to open their presents and then play with them until school starts again, but parents and grandparents, unfortunately, don't play like they used to and they commonly suffer the consequences of responsible adulthood.

A charley horse in a neck, face, or jaw muscle can become a source of gnawing pain that stays and affects concentration, vision, balance, and interrupts the happiness that we deserve in our daily lives. Eye muscle strain can cause intermittent blurred vision, excessive tears (even when you're not crying), and pain behind the eyes. TMJ muscle tightness can cause dizziness, lightheadedness, balance problems, ear pain, ear congestion, muffled hearing, even loss of hearing and, of course, otalgia (or ear pain). It's amazing how many problems can be associated with tense, tight muscles when you're stressed. President Kennedy's personal physician, Dr. J. Travell, mapped every muscle in the body and charted what else could hurt or malfunction when a charley horse was present. A half a century later, no one has improved on her muscle chart. Even JFK had more stress around the holidays as he juggled personal and political careers. Pain doctors have used Dr. Travell's knowledge to help their patients for years.

After the last holiday of the year passes, make it a New Year's resolution to take care of your

physical and emotional happiness. Don't put up with pain anywhere in the head and neck. You've got the rest of the year and the rest of your life to enjoy. You deserve to feel that this is "the most wonderful time of your life".

Happy Holidays and a Wonderful New Year are wished for you.

Dr. Richard Klein

Michigan Head & Neck Institute  
Treating Sleep Apnea and Head & Neck TMD Pain and Dysfunction since 1985

Michigan Head & Neck Institute  
3665 Eleven Mile Road  
Warren Michigan, 48092  
586-573-0438

Visit us on the web:

[www.michiganheadandneck.com](http://www.michiganheadandneck.com)

[www.BodyMindSpiritGuide.com](http://www.BodyMindSpiritGuide.com)

December 2009