



THE DISPATCH

Safety | Health Services | Chaplain Corps



November 2023

The Dispatch is for informational purposes. Unit Safety Officers are encouraged to use the articles in The Dispatch as topics for their monthly safety briefings and discussions. Members may go [eServices - Learning Management System](#), click on "Go to AXIS," search for this month's The Dispatch, take the quiz, and receive safety education credit.

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The Theme for This Month's Dispatch is Healthy Eating. We wish to bring awareness to a healthy eating lifestyle, which can have a significant impact on your mindset. These articles from Health Services, Chaplain Corps, and Safety provide beneficial information to our members.

The Holidays Are Here: Too Much to Eat!

By: Lt. Col. Gordon Helm, CAP HSAT PIO, AZ-013

Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's celebrations are my most favorite times of the year. The decorations, the fall season, gathering together with family and friends, and of course, the food!

Do your celebrations tend to go over the top? Ours do. There is more of everything, lots of hard work and the preparation that goes into the feast. The results are a lot of food and drinks, and desserts to complete the overindulgence.

And it doesn't stop there. After all the preparation, there's food left over! It can't go to waste. Instead, we have the same rich food again. This time it does go to the waist – my waist, that is.

The average American consumes somewhere between 3,000 to 4,500 calories during a Thanksgiving meal. A normal-sized dinner, by comparison, is 500-700 calories.

And the Thanksgiving meal, and all those tasty leftovers, are just the start of the holiday season that runs through the first of the year. (Don't forget Super Bowl parties, either, where anything healthy is out of bounds!)

History books tell us that fall celebrations came at a time when there was a marked calorie deficit at the end of the growing season. The celebratory meals were quite different from what hungry people ate as part of their regular diet. The result, at that time, was some recovery during a period of lower calorie intake. And the extra food and drink help make up for shorter days, cooler temperatures, and extra work to take in enough supplies for the winter.

Those early holiday celebrations were also an opportunity to gather socially and enjoy good company along with the bountiful food. According to research, eating with others can make food taste better, and overindulging is much easier with friends.

Back then, times were hard, and celebrations helped ease the toil needed to live day to day. Those days are past, at least for most Americans. Now, the average American gains about one pound during the holidays, which is not that much. So why do we seem to gain weight during the holidays?

WebMD, an accredited online medical information resource, says that holiday weight gain is a big lie. "Very few people really gain as much as five pounds between Thanksgiving and New Year's. The weight gain comes after the holidays, when people don't lose that one little pound (they actually gained)."

Results from an initial six-month study conducted by the *New England Journal of Medicine* in March 2000 showed that, "People who are overweight or obese to begin with, were more likely to gain five pounds or more."

"The good news is that most people are not gaining five or six pounds during the holidays, but the bad news is that weight gained over the winter holidays isn't lost during the rest of the year," said study author Jack A Yanovski, MD, head of growth and obesity at the National Institutes of Health.

And those weight gains add up over the years, leading to potential medical issues as we age.

What can we do?

- Recognize that holidays are fun and bring people together, and binging on food is part of the experience for many. Enjoy them, without going overboard if you can.
- Don't keep the holiday eating going past the holiday.
- If you are already overweight, it's important to remember your risk of further weight gain.
- Consider your ongoing health needs during the holiday season and make them a priority, especially if you have chronic health conditions such as diabetes or heart disease.

Thankfulness and Thanksgiving

Ch Maj. Michael Morison, PCR-001

Our national celebration has historically consisted of two important and interconnected elements – a sense of thanksgiving and a festive feast.

Thanksgiving began as a [harvest festival](#) and a [day of thanksgiving](#), this holiday revolves around giving thanks and the centerpiece of Thanksgiving is a [Thanksgiving dinner](#).

A human being is composed of body, mind, and spirit. **Health Services and Safety focus on the importance of how the physical aspects of eating wisely affect our general health, energy level, and performance. The Chaplain Corps focuses on how we nourish our mind and spirit.** A healthy body involves eating well and appropriate exercise. Together with proper rest, the body provides a foundation for resilience.



Using the dual elements of Thanksgiving and a festive feast, we can experience a wholeness that enriches one within the communal experience, displaying personal and collective appreciations. There is an opportunity to experience an emotion (mood) by reflecting on identifying things that one can be grateful for By doing so, we are preparing to bring our whole self to the celebration, to be present in the moment.

Developing a daily sense of thankfulness is an important characteristic of a positive mindset that contributes to one's resilience. Taking a few moments at the end of the day, on a regular basis, to look at those things that you are grateful for (large and/or small) contributes to developing a more positive attitude toward life. Instead of being caught in a negative spiral of only seeing the negative, you can increase your resilience by identifying those positive things that provide balance in your day, the good things which make your day purposeful and worthwhile.

One also has an opportunity on Thanksgiving to express gratitude to a higher power or to their God. It is an opportunity to recognize and reaffirm that we are a part of something greater than ourselves and to deepen that connection with others by sharing the Thanksgiving meal with others who we are close to.

Prepare yourself for Thanksgiving by identifying what you can be thankful for. This will assist you in being present in the moment as you are celebrating. Your experience will be more than good food and great activities. Bringing your thankfulness into Thanksgiving provides an opportunity to nourish and be renewed in body, mind, and spirit.

Source:

[America's Favorite Holidays by Bruce David Forbes - University of California Press](#)

Stress and Safety

By: Capt William "Bill" Trussell, CFI, IA, MEI, DE-019

The FAA Safety Summit held this past March noted that "Pilots and flight attendants expressed concerns that they continue to feel stress in the workplace, including long work hours under adverse conditions. The group acknowledged that risk models should also incorporate human factors."

This Summit was attended by many of the experts in aviation safety, and representatives across the industry including airlines, FAA controllers and ground support personnel. It was significant for the attendees to highlight stress as an issue that has long been known to have an adverse impact on safety. It's back to the future for now.

Pilots will recognize stress as one of the six elements of the memory mnemonic **IM SAFE** which is used by many to evaluate the impact of conducting an operation. In most cases it involves a flight based on an individual's status for **I**llness, **M**edications being taken, recent **A**lcohol consumption, current **F**atigue level and whether the person has **E**aten an **a**ppropriate amount recently. The one thing that is the hardest to evaluate among IM Safe is **S**tress. A person's reaction to stress is highly individualized. A small amount of stress is a good thing, it is part of what helps us to achieve a high level of concentration and task performance. Too much stress from outside sources and things can fall apart quickly, often leading to a complete failure or "meltdown."

Keep in mind, a balanced diet provides energy needed to cope with stressful events. Some research suggests that polyunsaturated fats including omega-3 fats and vegetables may help regulate cortisol levels. Stress can increase blood pressure; pilots can reduce high blood pressure by reducing their weight and salt intake.

How important is a fair and accurate evaluation of stress when considering the conduct of any operation? It is well known in the medical community that increased stress for long periods of time has negative physical and mental impacts on a person which can be wide ranging in scope and magnitude. As you might expect, the impacts can, and do, vary from person to person. It is also understood that stress can be caused by factors that can occur at home, school, and work... basically, any aspect of life...personal and professional. The factors can be based on financial issues, relationships and other interactions with friends, family and co-workers or fellow students. As it turns out, Americans are one of the most stressed-out communities in the world.

The [American Institute of Stress](#) has collected some of the most alarming statistics on this subject, among which are that:

- 55% of Americans are stressed during the day.
- The global average of the number of stressed people out of 143 countries is 35%.
- The current stress level experienced by Americans is 20 percentage points higher than the global average.
- Stress causes 57% of US respondents to feel paralyzed.
- 63% of US workers are ready to quit their job to avoid work-related stress.
- Chronic stress is commonplace at work with 94% of workers reporting feeling stress at work.
- Globally, Greece has the highest reported stress level at 59%.
- Montana is the least stressed US state with a total stress score of 26.81 while Louisiana is the most stressed with 59.94.

Whatever they are doing in Montana it would be good to know so we could all emulate them.

Realizing that stress can contribute to mistakes being made in nearly every type of operation resulting in injuries, property, or equipment damage, it is important for everyone to know their limits in dealing with short term and long-term stresses in their lives. Even small periods of inattention to hazards around people and delays in reacting to the risks associated with them can cause serious harm and catastrophic loss. The FAA, having recognized the impact that stress can have as a safety issue impacting flight, included stress as part of the IM SAFE checklist.

The severe impact that stress can have is why CAP includes the IM SAFE checklist evaluation as part of the flight release procedure. High Stress periods for individuals is a cause for a "no-go" decision.

With so many people feeling stressed out for so many reasons it is a miracle at times that our safety systems work as well as they seem to. Having Air Traffic Controllers stressed out places an even higher responsibility on pilots to mitigate the risks associated with air and ground operations, and vice versa. Acknowledging that everyone in CAP has a role in the safe conduct of all our activities, the importance of keeping our level of stress out of these activities cannot be over emphasized. If you are thinking about other things outside of the operation at hand, then you are likely stressing over those things, quite literally taking brain cycles away from concentrating on the risks at hand.

If you find yourself at a higher risk due to the stresses in your life, perhaps a "no-go" is the best option.

Some of Capt Bill Trussell's accomplishments include:

CFI, IA, MEI

Squadron Safety Officer, DE-019

Assistant Stan/ Eval Officer

FAA Safety Team Representative

CAP Instructor Pilot, Check Pilot

SiriusXM Aviation Webinar - 5 Things You Must Know About Datalink Weather

A FREE webinar brought to you by SiriusXM Aviation - November 16, 2023, at 7:00PM (EST)

- A comparison of the weather guidance of SiriusXM vs. ADS-B, so you can judge for yourself which datalink service better prepares you to minimize exposure to dangerous convective turbulence.
- Join CFI, former NWS meteorologist and founder of EZWxBrief, Dr. Scott Dennstaedt, as he explains five key points that all pilots who are flying with datalink weather must know.
- Eligible for FAA Wings Credit
- **Register at : [SiriusXM Aviation Webinar \(siriusxmcommunications.com\)](https://www.siriusxmcommunications.com)**

Please consider registering and sharing this webinar opportunity. This seminar provides a great safety opportunity for pilots offering safety awareness benefits.

Healthy Eating Tips:

- Having a good support system with family and friends works best.
- Invest in healthy food!
- Practice eating healthy meals, this will eventually develop into a healthy habit.
- Drink water!
- Eat a variety of foods.
- Limit sugar and salt intake.
- Eat lots of fruit and vegetables.

Resourceful Links:

How to Build a Life - A weekly column by Arthur Brooks, discusses great topics on happiness.

Arthur Brooks is a writer at *The Atlantic* and the host of the *How to Build a Happy Life* podcast. Please read the articles, located here.

- [How to Be Thankful When You Don't Feel Thankful - The Atlantic](#)
- [The Happiness Benefits of Trying New Things - The Atlantic](#)

***** *HAPPY THANKSGIVING!!* *****
