



the FLAME®

Healthcare News and Tips

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Even if you're not a college basketball fan---whether men's or women's---it's hard **not** to know that March is tournament time---also known as 'March Madness.'

The term '[March Madness](#)' has [been linked to basketball since 1939](#), but March has also been associated with another kind of madness. In the mid-1900's, people began using the term to refer to a form of madness or uncharacteristic behavior said to affect people in March. It was thought that winter's inclement weather and shorter days with less sunlight may have led to that expression.

Of course, mental health difficulties occur year-round but as spring approaches, and with it the NCAA men's and women's basketball tournaments, the next few weeks will be challenging for basketball fans and those who love them!



It's March, and the madness is about to begin. March Madness, otherwise known as the NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament, starts March 19th. The NCAA Women's tournament starts March 20th.

As March Madness sweeps in with its exhilarating, competitive basketball games, it's crucial ---whether you're a die-hard fan or just caught up in the tournament fever----to find ways to maintain your sanity amidst all the excitement.

Over almost three weeks, 68 men's teams from around the country will play in "win or go home" basketball games, with up to 16 games played in ONE DAY in the early rounds. That's **JUST** in the **men's** tournament and doesn't count the National Invitational Tournament (NIT) or the College Basketball Invitational. The NCAA Women's tournament also has 68 teams vying for the championship with a similarly frenetic schedule.

We offer some suggestions to take care of yourself during March Madness in this issue of *The Flame*.



Happy
Spring!!!!!!

Betty
Betty Long, RN
President/CEO

The Worm Moon Is Coming!

The first full moon of the spring will appear on the nights of Sunday, March 24th and Monday, March 25th. Specifically, [March's full Worm Moon reaches peak illumination at 3AM Eastern Time on Monday, March 25th.](#)

Why is it called the Worm Moon? In the 1760s, Captain Jonathan Carver visited the Naudowessie (Dakota) and other Native American tribes and wrote that the name Worm Moon refers to a different sort of "worm"—beetle larvae—which begin to emerge from the thawing bark of trees and other winter hideouts at this time.

Action-packed games! Nail biting finishes! Double overtime games! Whether you are watching and following the men's tournament or the women's tournament or both, the pressure and excitement can also take a toll on your mental health. They don't call it March Madness for nothin!

The constant adrenaline, stress of predictions and winning the office pool (or other more costly gambling opportunities), and the emotional roller coaster of wins and losses can lead to increased anxiety and pressure as well as loss of sleep. And that combination is no good for your mental health. That's why it's essential to practice self-care during the tournament so you don't lose more than your office pool wager.

- If you're sitting watching the games, get up every 15 or 20 minutes or whenever there's a time out. (*I have been known to watch games while I'm on the treadmill*)
- Between games, take a break to stretch, meditate, or go outside for a walk amidst the fresh air to refresh your mind and body
- If you're going to drink multiple beers, drink water in-between. Drinking water between alcoholic beverages helps keep you hydrated, considering alcohol naturally dehydrates you. If you're drinking water, it will help prevent you from developing a headache or having a hangover in the morning at work. At the very least, your employer will thank you!
- Between meals at the bar, try to eat healthier. No lecture here about the empty calories in beer or chicken wings, as it's understandable how well these go along with March Madness, but if you're going to go to the bar three nights a week and enjoy nachos, chicken fingers and beer, make sure that your other meals during the week consist of whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Ensure you get enough sleep to keep your energy levels up. Consider using your DVR. That way, you can easily record the games and you can cut through commercials afterwards. Your biggest challenge will be keeping friends from prematurely revealing the results of games already played. Stay off social media, don't read any texts, avoid your cell phone, and enjoy the game on your own time.
- Of course, if you're going to bars to watch the games, you'll be surrounded by people, which will leave you vulnerable to catching a number of infections.
- Enjoy the games without letting them consume **all** your time and energy
- Don't forget to connect with loved ones and friends to ask how they're doing, not just talk about basketball

- Set boundaries and remember, it is only a game!

Prioritizing self-care during this year's March Madness will help you stay grounded, focused, and enjoy your tournament experience. Remember, it's not just about the game; taking care of your mental health is the ultimate win during this exciting time of year. (And I guess it wouldn't be bad if your favorite team won the championship!)

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