



# December Newsletter

## Holiday Hours

Brainstim Centers is closed December 24th for the Christmas Holiday, and December 31st for the New Year. Have a peaceful and regenerative Holiday.

## Recharge and Reconnect

The Holidays are a time to reconnect with loved ones and with the self as much as they are a time to celebrate. Everybody handles the holidays differently. For some people, the holidays can be exciting, thrilling and energetic. For others they are stressful and full of to-dos and expectations, and still for others, the holidays can bring feelings of loneliness and highlight a lack of whatever it may be; friends, gifts, or experiences. Remember to recharge and breathe deeply, this is a time of play and affection before renewal.



## Mindfulness & Gratitude

This year consider starting a gratitude journal. A gratitude journal can help one

*Gratitude continued on Page 2*

## Taking Mental Health Prescriptions? You're Not Alone.

Did you know that in 2020, Mental Health Prescriptions were the second most prescribed medications in the USA behind antihypertensives? We don't have the data for 2021 yet. Does that blow your mind like it does mine? Additionally, most of these prescriptions were made by primary care physicians. Primary care physicians are extremely knowledgeable, but few have a substantive background in mental health specifically. Medication can be instrumental and life saving for many, but on the whole, it is a cost-effective option for managing symptoms but not necessarily the best long-term option in every single case.

If taking a mental health medication, one should augment their medication therapy with other supportive measures that can help the body and mind long term. Although TMS therapy and therapy with a clinical psychologist can take commitment, time, and funds, the healing process is also nuanced and individual, tailored to the person in context of their life. If you or someone you know are suffering from a mental health condition, please take time to learn about what you are going through, take a measured, reasoned approach and be gentle

*TMS Therapy continued on Page 2*

## EEG special extended through December!



EEGs are \$25 Off!

### November and December!

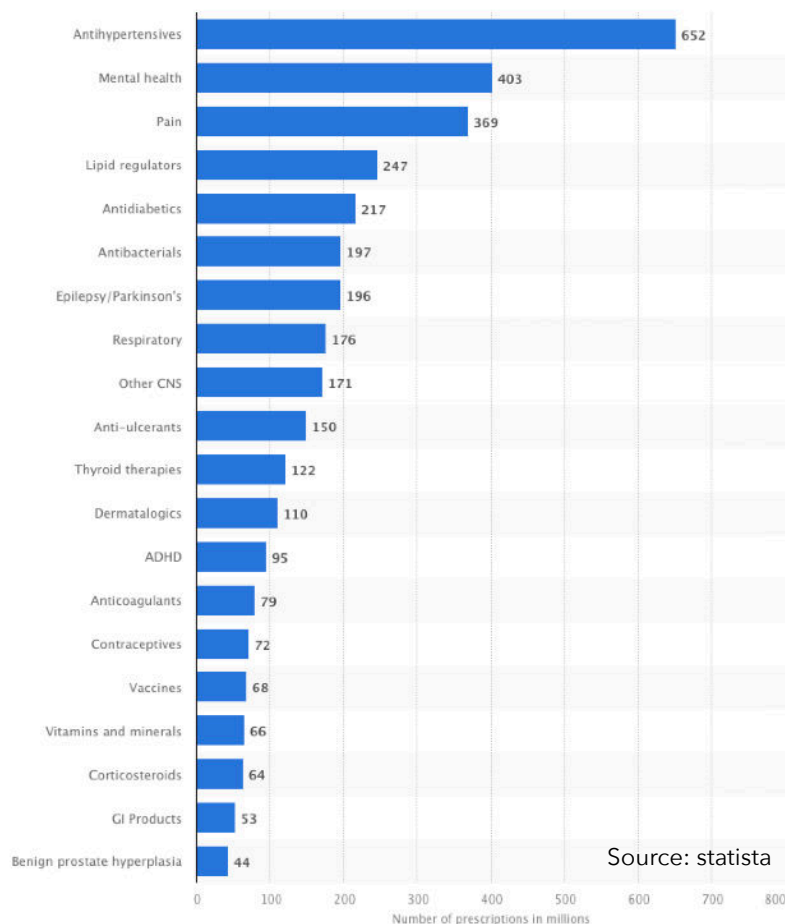
EEGs purchased for the month October are \$25 off! Call now to schedule: 661.583.6529.

*TMS Therapy continued from page 1*

with yourself.

Work with your prescribing physicians to determine what is the best choice for you long term in the ecology of your life, and consider enlisting a therapist and getting TMS. TMS is an option that works on the brain circuitry levels. It takes usually

around 6 weeks, and in many cases can permanently relieve symptoms of depression, anxiety, and more. If you are suffering from depression, we may also have you see a psychiatrist, a medical doctor with extensive mental health education, to discuss medication.



**Leading 20 therapy areas in the United States in 2020, by number of prescriptions (in millions)**

*Gratitude continued from page 1*

develop skills such as self-reflection and mindfulness. Studies show that mindfulness and gratitude can increase resilience and acceptance, acting as moderators for depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder. Give it some thought, what do you have to be thankful for? Even the very simple things in life can become a big deal if we don't have them. Actively find meaning in your life and recognize your talents. Taking a moment to be appreciative of the gifts our lives contain now can be very therapeutic. A daily gratitude journal practice may provide one with tools for positive self-esteem and reference.



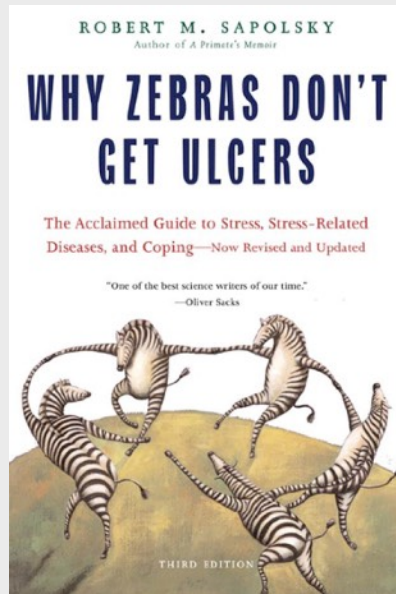
This year, maybe gift yourself a gratitude journal, or gift one to a friend who needs to remember how lucky they are!

## New Developments in 2022

Brainstim is looking into providing an additional TMS machine, one that may not require an MRI and is excellent for children struggling with autism, and those who are generally uncomfortable with MRIs. We will keep you posted but wanted to let you know that we are looking at a 2022 start date.

## Reading List

One way to help you refresh and recharge is through some self-care reading, or maybe just for fun:



- *Beasts of a Little Land*: – Juhea Kim
- *Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers: The Acclaimed Guide to Stress, Stress-Related Diseases, and Coping, 3rd Edition* – Robert M. Sapolsky
- *Spark: The Life of Electricity and the Electricity of Life (audible version)* – Timothy J. Jorgensen
- *Red Comet* – Heather Clark
- *The Way of the Superior Man* – David Deida
- *Before We Were Yours: A Novel* – Lisa Wingate
- *Anxiety Relief for Teens: Essential CBT Skills and Mindfulness Practices to Overcome Anxiety and Stress* – Regine Galanti
- *Sex Cult Nun* – Faith Jones
- *Just Haven't Met You Yet* – Sophie Cousins

## Simple Reminders for the Holiday Season

These times are different than ever before, and developing a plan to reduce stress and enjoy your holiday is vital. Normally the two biggies are to plan ahead and to have low expectations, however, we'll just go with the latter since it is so close to the line. Some simple reminders for the Holidays:

1. Give yourself ample time to get from point A to point B
2. Permission to not be helpful
3. Make things easy
4. Have low expectations and a good time

5. Take time to recharge
6. Bring a jacket and some flats
7. Drive carefully
8. Be patient with yourself and with others



## Your December To-Do List:

Here's a list of things to do this month to promote brain health:

- Hike: nothing better than spending time in Nature to

reset and reassess. Franklin Canyon Lake is quiet, beautiful, and accessible.

- Get a friend or two together and just play some board games
- Simple card games like "Telestrations" or puzzles can be fun when mixing generations together.
- Karaoke sets abound on Amazon
- Baking cookies is a great cross generational activity
- Share the holidays and have a Tamalada.





# December Recipes

## Tamales (Tamalada)

Have a Tamalada with a few close friends, it's easier than you think, relaxed and fun.

As a little vegetarian Jewish girl, I was always a bit nervous when I saw my Latina Granny, she was my father's grandmother and quite old, I didn't really know her well, or speak Spanish, but she smelled like yummy food, especially around Christmas. I would turn on to her street and I could smell the thick savory charged goodness of chile in the air several blocks away. She and my grandmother and aunts were up all-night making pots of meat and delicious sauces for tamales. Two of them were professional chefs. I remember anxiously hoping that there were a few sweet corn or veggie ones left for me. (This was before vegetarians were commonplace and no one but my grandmother remembered I did not eat meat, or, that chicken was in fact meat).



Once and awhile, I got there on time, gobbled every last Tamale I could find, and you better believe when I got old enough to figure out how to make delicious vegetarian tamales, I did so. Guess what, they are super easy!!!

Having tamales on Christmas is a wonderful Latin American tradition, can be a great way to bring the family together as well as create meals to send home with loved ones. It's fun work on the assembly line and worth it. Looks like lots of steps but it's easy, you'll figure it out and be able to do it blindfolded before you know it. If the chile sauce scares you (it shouldn't) go ahead and buy some, who is looking?

Really anything can go in a tamale if you get the masa right, and nothing tastes as good as home-made. So, this year, why don't you have a tamalada with family, or friends who have become family. It is a great excuse for friends and family to get festive together, which is really the core of the holiday spirit. Historically, tamale making has always been a social event, gathering many people together to pitch in and get the job done before Christmas. The parcels of goodness date back to pre-Columbian times and have roots in Aztec and Mayan culture. Tamales are an original to-go food, with the corn husks making them portable snacks. They are great with guacamole and salsa, or an egg for breakfast, or packed for work or school lunch, they freeze beautifully and make the best snacks - we can't get enough of them at my house! A tamalada invitation is special, delight your friends this year and put together a tamalada.

You'll want to start early, around 10 or 11am, and have everyone pitch in. By evening you'll have plenty and more than enough to send home. I suggest having snacks around for people to munch on, as the smells will be so good everyone will want to nosh, but the tamales won't be ready

until hours later. Ingredients are inexpensive but as expansive as your imagination. If you eat meat, make meat and pour some of the chile sauce in below, let it simmer on low heat. However, this is what we do at my house:

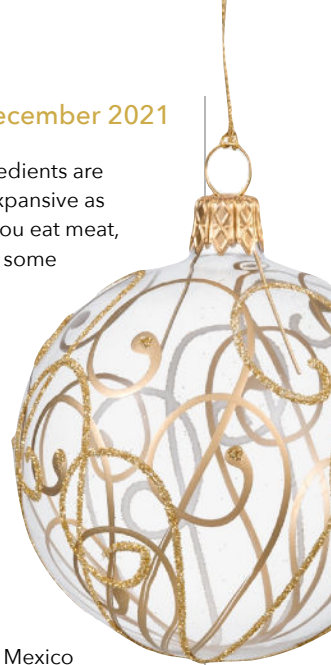
### Ingredients

- 6 pounds unprepared masa harina
- 9 large dried California peppers
- 3 large dried New Mexico Peppers
- 1 1/4 quarts water
- 3 Tablespoons Flour
- 3 Tablespoons Oil
- 2 cloves garlic
- ~1 teaspoon oregano
- ~1 teaspoon cumin
- salt to taste
- 1 3/4 cups Crisco, you can use butter (traditional is lard)
- 1-3 cup vegetable broth OR chile water, or a combination
- 2 tablespoons baking powder
- 2 lbs corn husks
- String or extra corn husks for tying

### Filling Ingredients

Whatever you like! You can make these vegan, vegetarian, or meat. I try and chop and lightly roast vegetables with a bit of EVOO and oregano. You'll undoubtedly find you need more filling or cheese, so have lots handy. I will grab a few bags of non gmo corn and frozen veggies too, just in case. We do make the traditional chile sauce and pour it in as well. Anything goes. We all make different ones, my mom likes pumpkin, spinach, white cheese and black bean. My favorite is poblanos, corn, and cheese - I typically roast the poblanos on open fire then stick in a bag until cool, peel and slice.

The kiddo likes mushroom, beans and cheese; hubby eats anything. Some things we've put in tamales



*Tamalada continued from page 4*

(lightly steam or roast before using):

- Veggies: squash, zucchini, carrots, peppers of all kinds, mushrooms, corn, broccoli, cauliflower, any root vegetable
- Beans: we love black or pinto, sometimes white northern beans. Refried is best but we have used whole in a pinch. Season with cumin and garlic and sometimes chipotle
- Cilantro
- Onion
- If you like cheese have a lot handy (especially if kids around)
  - Queso fresco
  - Jack cheese
  - Pepper jack cheese (I love this)
  - Any cheese you like
- Impossible meat in chile sauce
- Jackfruit in chile sauce

*Directions**Prepare Corn Husks*

Rinse well and soak corn husks in warm water a few hours. To keep them pliable and easy to work with, keep in water while filling tamales. Place a handful of wet corn husks in a colander to drain just before using. They need to be pliable. Some use banana leaves which are just fine as well. Some even wrap tamales with parchment paper over their husks, which makes for a clean, easily transported tamale (I do not do this step).

*Prepare Chile Sauce*

1. Usually 3:1 California to New Mexico dried chiles, split and deseeded.
2. Boil in the water (or broth) for 15-20 minutes until very soft.
3. Working a small batch at a time, blitz the chiles in a blender with some of the cooking liquid, and the transfer to a strainer, and push through the mesh with a wooden spoon. Return any amount left in the strainer to the blender, then repeat

process until you've used up all the chiles and cooking water.

4. Heat oil in a large pan, then fry garlic cloves until brown. Then remove and discard.
5. Add the flour to the oil, stirring quickly stirring to avoid burning. Gradually add the chili mixture, salt, oregano and simmer for 10-15 minutes.

*Prepare the Masa*

6. Using an electric hand or stand mixer, whip the Crisco to the consistency of whipped cream. I use a stand mixer.
7. You may need to do this next step in batches at a time depending on how large your bowl is. Once whipped, mix in the masa, salt and baking powder. Typically, one-part fat to two parts masa, add moisture as needed.
8. Add the masa and mix together. Slowly add broth / red chile sauce. Eyeball it. Beat again until light and fluffy. The mixture should be about the consistency of smooth peanut butter. If not, add more broth as necessary.
9. You can test when this is ready by dropping a small amount into a cup of water. When it floats, it's ready! If your masa is

still too dry to spread easily, just add a little more broth or chili water.

10. Cover the masa and set aside while you prepare your filling.

*Assembly (the fun part!)*

11. Spread Masa: Take a clean corn husk and lay it flat with the smooth side facing up. (There are two sides to a husk, one has deeper 'veins', the other has a smoother feel). Point up. Starting at the middle of the husk, spread about 2 tablespoons of the masa with the back of a spoon in a rectangular shape, using a downward motion toward the wide bottom edge. Leave about a 2-inch border on the left and right sides of the husk.
12. Add filling: Spoon ~2 tablespoons of filling in the center of the masa. Fold both sides to the center; bring the pointed end of the husk toward the filled end. Masa to filling ratio should be 50/50. Make sure it's a snug closure so the tamale will not open during steaming. Secure by tying a thin strip of corn husk or string around the tamale.

*Steam tamales*



*Tamalada continued from page 5*

13. Use a deep pot to steam tamales. Set the tamale rack over the water. Place tamales upright, with fold against the sides of the other tamales to keep them from unfolding. Stack some extra husks flat on top if you have leftover, holds the steam. Cover pot with a tightly fitting lid. Bring to a boil, about 15 minutes. Lower heat and simmer for 1 to 2 hours, depending on number of tamales. It may take more time. Keep lid on tightly. To test if done, put one tamale on a plate and take off the corn husk. If it comes off without sticking to the tamale they are done. (We have also baked them, but steaming is better)
14. Make sure your steam pot never runs out of water by adding pennies or small pebbles; when they rattle, add water! Do not uncover often, just check after one hour by removing one and let it cool to room temperature to ensure it sets.

*Notes and Tips*

- I usually have a bunch of fresh made guacamole, a couple salsas (tomatillo is my go-to), and sour cream for the kiddos and we dive in.
- If with grown ups, margaritas and a slightly naughty game of Cards Against Humanity, they've earned it!
- Tamales can be wrapped up and frozen and are great reheated.

*Cheese Platter*

My other easy go-to holiday suggestion for having people over and making life easy is a huge robust platter of cheese and charcuterie. I like to pile it up in excess and make it sexy with something for everyone.

*Ingredients*

Things I have brought out for guests:

- Cheeses, you want a nice combination of hard and soft, sweet and salty, a few whole but most sliced or in chunks
- Nuts, all kinds (I usually go for marcona almonds, brasil nuts, pistachios), sugared pecans
- Nut cheeses when vegans drop in
- Pomegranate and fruits such as grapes, thinly sliced apples or oranges, pears, any berries, papaya, guava, figs, tangerine, etc
- Sliced veggies of all kinds: peppers, jicama, mushroom, zucchini, radishes, cherry tomatoes, broccoli, asparagus, fresh haricot vert, etc
- Dehydrated fruit
- Dehydrated vegetables
- Crackers (all kinds and be sure to have some gluten free if a big mix of guests)
- Jams (fig, orange, cranberry, etc)
- Gravlox, trout or salmon, whitefish, shrimp, caviar
- Mustards

- Meats
- Dips such as mustard dill or aioli for fish, softer cheesy seasoned kinds for veggies
- Mediterranean dips: hummus, tabouli, red pepper and eggplant dips
- Olives
- Olive dip
- Edible flowers (pansy, borage, basil, nasturtium, marigold)
- Cornichons, pickled peppers or beets, artichokes, capers, etc
- Beans like favas or limas in seasoned evo
- Honey in beeswax
- Dark chocolate

*Notes and Tips*

- The key is to have an overflowing beautiful platter with something for everyone to nibble
- Make it progressive, savory on one side moving in to veggies and fruits and then sweeter items, or consider two platters.
- Round it out with sliced baguette and whole or partially opened fruit.
- Get creative and it will be a hit!

