

# ON THE BRAIN

THE HARVARD MAHONEY NEUROSCIENCE INSTITUTE LETTER

## Holiday Stress and the Brain



“It’s the most wonderful time of the year... It’s the hap-happiest season of all.” So says a classic song of the holiday season. But is it? The end-of-year holidays are certainly a happy time for most of us, but the stress of the season puts many of us on such an edge that we wish it would all just go away.

“The holidays are filled with both joy and stress,” says Ellen Braaten, PhD, an HMS associate professor of psychology at Massachusetts General Hospital and associate director of its Clay Center for Young Healthy Minds. [Read more »](#)

## Faculty First Person



### A conversation with Edward Kravitz, PhD

People handle stressful situations in different ways. The holidays, which are often stressful, can lead to aggression in some people. My lab studies the fruit fly model of aggression. [Read more »](#)

## In the News

### Genetic Repurposing

A gene that regulates bone growth and muscle metabolism in mammals may take on an additional role as a promoter of brain maturation, cognition, and learning in human and nonhuman primates, according to a new study led by neurobiologists at HMS. [Read more »](#)

### How Do You Know You Know?

Philosophers have long struggled to define human consciousness. Now, a team of researchers led by neurologists at HMS and Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center has pinpointed the regions of the brain that may play a role maintaining it. [Read more »](#)

### Peeking Between Memory and Perception

The human field of vision is only about 180 degrees. Despite that limited view, people’s brains are able to stitch together a coherent 360-degree panorama of the world around them, and now researchers are beginning to understand how. [Read more »](#)

### The HMS Department of Neurobiology 50th Anniversary

[Learn more about the history of the nation’s first academic entity conceived of and built upon the multidisciplinary study of the brain »](#)

[View videos and photos from the celebration event »](#)