

What's So Scary About Friday the 13th?



Say the words “Friday the 13th” and someone you know is bound to recoil in fear and horror.

It’s supposed to be a very unlucky day — if you believe in superstitions.

This year, there are three Friday the 13ths on the calendar, starting with January 13th.

In each of the past two years, there has been only one.

But that doesn’t mean 2012 is going to be an unlucky year – for you or anyone else.

Why do people think Friday the 13th is an unlucky day?

According to historians, it’s a superstition that goes back thousands of years – at least as far back as Jesus’ time.

According to the Christian Bible, it was the 13th guest at the last supper who betrayed Jesus.

And Christians believe that Jesus was crucified on a Friday.

Historians say the ancient Vikings of northern Europe also believed that 13 is an unlucky number.

And according to at least one account, the ancient Romans considered the number 13 a symbol of death.

What does that have to do with our daily lives today?

Not a whole lot.

But people still believe that Friday the 13th is a very unlucky day.

In fact, experts say as many as 21 million Americans are afflicted with “paraskavedekatriaphobia” – an irrational fear of Friday the 13th.

In reality, phobia experts say Friday the 13th isn’t any more or less lucky than any other day.

According to them, when bad things happen to people on Friday the 13th, it’s often because those people are in a negative frame of mind to begin with.

In other words, they’re expecting something bad to happen.

So if something bad does happen, it confirms their expectations.

“(You) should concentrate on being lucky ... looking on the bright side,” said British psychologist Richard Wiseman, in an interview with National Geographic News. “(Remember) the good things that have happened. And most of all, be prepared to take control of (your) future.”

In other words, don’t let old superstitions control your life.

You’re the one who’s in charge.