



December 2017

Happy Holidays

Holiday Safety Tips

The Christmas and New Year holidays come with some unique safety hazards. Thousands of people are seen each year for holiday related accidents. Here are some tips to ensure you have a safe and happy holiday season.

Decorate Your Tree With Your Kids in Mind

Move the ornaments that are breakable or have metal hooks towards the top of the tree. Hang the ones that are safer for young kids at the bottom.



Water the Tree Regularly

Natural trees look beautiful and smell great, but the needles can dry out and pose a fire hazard. Make sure your tree has plenty of water by checking it regularly.

Check the Lights



Take a look at the lights on your tree and in and around your home for exposed or frayed wires, loose connections or broken sockets. Throw out those that are damaged.

Blow Out Candles

Keep holiday candles at least 12 inches away from anything that can burn, and blow them out when you leave the room or before you go to sleep.

Store Matches Out of Reach

Always place matches and lighters in a safe place, out of children's reach. Avoid novelty lighters or lighters that look like toys.

Keep Harmful Plants Out of Reach

Keep those holiday plants that may be poisonous out of children or pets reach. This includes mistletoe berries, holly berry, and Jerusalem cherry.

In a poison emergency, call the national Poison Control Center at **1-800-222-1222**.

Find the Perfect Toy for the Right Age

Consider your child's age when purchasing a toy or game. It's worth a second to read the instructions and warning labels to make sure the gift is just right.

Before you've settled on the perfect toy, check to make sure there aren't any small parts or other potential choking hazards.

Keep Button Batteries Away from Young Kids

Keep a special eye on small pieces, including button batteries that may be included in electronic toys. These kinds of games are great for older kids but can pose a potential danger for younger, curious siblings.

Don't Forget a Helmet

If your child's heart is set on a bike, skateboard or scooter this holiday season, be sure to include a helmet to keep them safe while they're having fun.



Prevent Hot Spills

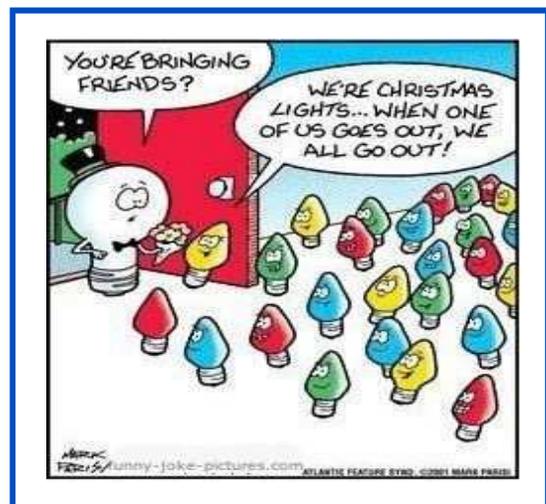
To prevent burns from hot holiday food or liquid spills, use the back burner of your stove and turn pot handles away from the edge.

Avoid Placing Foods on an Open Oven Door

To prevent oven tip-overs, place heavy foods or other items on a counter top out of the reach of young children, and not on an open oven door.

Engage Older Kids in Cooking

Teach older responsible kids how to cook safely: 1) never leave the kitchen while using the stove or oven, 2) use oven mitts or potholders to remove items from the oven or stove, 3) use a microwave safely.



Wash Your Hands

Handwashing is one of the best ways to protect yourself and your family from getting sick.

Handwashing is one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of germs. Clean hands can stop germs from spreading from one person to another and throughout an entire community—from your home and workplace to childcare facilities and hospitals.

When should you wash your hands? You can help yourself and others stay healthy by washing your hands often, especially at times when germs are likely to get on your hands and can easily spread to others:

- ◆ **Before, during, and after** preparing food.
- ◆ **Before** and **after** caring for someone who is sick.
- ◆ **Before** eating food.
- ◆ **Before** and **after** treating a cut or wound.
- ◆ **After** blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- ◆ **After** touching an animal, animal feed, or animal waste.
- ◆ **After** using the toilet.
- ◆ **After** changing diapers.
- ◆ **After** cleaning up a child who has used the toilet.
- ◆ **After** touching garbage.

What is the right way to wash hands? Follow these 5 steps to wash your hands the right way every time.

- ◆ **Wet** your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
- ◆ **Lather** your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Be sure to lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
- ◆ **Scrub** your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the “Happy Birthday” song from beginning to end twice.
- ◆ **Rinse** your hands well under clean, running water.
- ◆ **Dry** your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.



What about hand sanitizer? Washing hands with soap and water is the best way to get rid of germs in most situations. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol—check the product label. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers:

- ◆ Can quickly reduce the number of germs on hands, but do **NOT** get rid of all types of germs.
- ◆ May not be as effective when hands are visibly dirty or greasy.
- ◆ Might not remove harmful chemicals like pesticides and heavy metals from hands.

Be cautious when using hand sanitizers around children; swallowing alcohol-based hand sanitizers can cause alcohol poisoning if a person swallows more than a couple mouthfuls.

How do you use hand sanitizers?



- ◆ Apply the gel to the palm of one hand (read the label to learn the correct amount).
- ◆ Rub your hands together.
- ◆ Rub the gel over all surfaces of your hands and fingers until your hands are dry.

Cheese-Crusted Squash

Parmesan, breadcrumbs and sage leaves create a salty and crunchy crust on seasonal acorn squash. Pair this side with any holiday meal or serve as an appetizer. Total time: 25 minutes. Yield: 4 Servings.

Mix together:

- 2 minced garlic cloves
- 8 minced sage leaves
- 1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese
- The zest of 1 lemon
- 3 tablespoons each breadcrumbs
- 3 tablespoons of olive oil
- A little salt and red pepper flakes



Pat onto thin wedges of acorn squash

Bake in a single layer at 450 degrees F for 15 to 20 minutes.

Recipe courtesy Food Network Magazine

Fit Tip—Dancing: Good for the Brain



When 26 older adults took dance lessons or did endurance and flexibility exercises at least once a week for 18 months in a recent study, their brain's hippocampus increased in size. That's good news, because the hippocampus plays a key role in learning and memory. The participant's balance also improved. During dance lessons, they learned steps including the cha-cha and the grapevine.

Source: Frontiers in Human Neuroscience, June 15, 2017