



December 2018



Christmas Tree Safety

As you deck the halls this holiday season, be fire smart. A small fire that spreads to a Christmas tree can grow large very quickly.

PICKING THE TREE

- Choose a tree with fresh, green needles that do not fall off when touched.

PLACING THE TREE

- Before placing the tree in the stand, cut 2" from the base of the trunk.
- Make sure the tree is at least three feet away from any heat source, like fireplaces, radiators, candles, heat vents or lights.
- Make sure the tree is not blocking an exit.
- Add water to the tree stand. Be sure to add water daily.



LIGHTING THE TREE

- Use lights that are listed by a qualified testing laboratory. Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use.
- Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections. Read manufacturer's instructions for number of light strands to connect.
- Never use lit candles to decorate the tree.
- Always turn off Christmas tree lights before leaving home or going to bed.



After Christmas

Get rid of the tree after Christmas or when it is dry. Dried-out trees are a fire danger and should not be left in the home or garage, or placed outside against the home.

Check with your local community to find a recycling program.

Bring outdoor electrical lights inside after the holidays to prevent hazards and make them last longer.



FACTS!

- One quarter of home Christmas tree fires are caused by electrical problems.
- Although Christmas tree fires are not common, when they do occur, they are more likely to be serious.
- A heat source too close to the tree causes roughly **one in every four** of the fires.

Christmas Tree Vegetable Platter

What could be a more perfect appetizer for your Holiday party than a Christmas tree made entirely out of vegetables? It is super easy to make using different colored veggies:

- Broccoli makes the green branches
- Cherry tomatoes for ornaments
- Cauliflower for white snow
- Yellow bell pepper makes the bright star!

In this example, pretzels are used to make the tree trunk but carrots would work just as well.

Lay out the veggies on a large platter in a Christmas tree pattern. Not only does it look great, it's super healthy.



To make the broccoli and cauliflower florets lay flat as shown on the picture, cutting off the stems will do the trick.

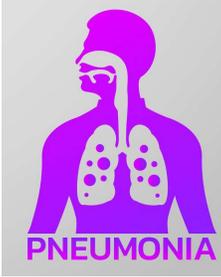
Put some dipping sauces next to the platter and you are all set!

The kids can even help make this fun project. It's also a great way to encourage them to eat their veggies!

Check out Pinterest for more ideas!



Pneumonia Vaccination: What Everyone Should Know



Pneumonia (pneumococcal disease) is a lung infection that makes it harder to breathe. It is common in young children, but older adults are at greatest risk of serious illness and death.

Do I Need a Pneumonia Vaccine?

Although the pneumonia vaccine can't prevent all cases, it can lower your chances of catching the disease. And if you've had the shot and you do get pneumonia anyway, you will probably have a much milder case.

Older adults and some people with health problems are more likely to get pneumonia, It's more common among people whose immune systems are weak.

Who Should Get the Vaccine? CDC recommends vaccination for:

- ◆ All children younger than 2 years old
- ◆ All adults 65 years or older. As you age, your immune system doesn't work as well as it once did. You're more likely to have trouble fighting off a pneumonia infection.
- ◆ People 2 through 64 years old with certain medical conditions. Many diseases can cause your immune system to weaken, so it's less able to fight off bugs like pneumonia. These can include: heart disease, diabetes, emphysema, asthma, or COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease). People on chemotherapy, have had an organ transplant, or with HIV or AIDS. Heavy drinkers. People getting over surgery or a severe illness.
- ◆ Adults 19 through 64 years old who smoke cigarettes

Not everybody needs to get a pneumonia vaccine. If you're a healthy adult between ages 18 and 64, you can probably skip it. Also, you shouldn't get it if you're allergic to what's in the vaccine. Not sure? Ask your doctor.

There are two kinds of vaccines that help prevent pneumococcal disease.

- ◆ **PCV13** helps protect people from 13 of the most severe types of bacteria that cause pneumonia.
- ◆ **PPSV23** protects against an additional 23 types of pneumonia bacteria. Neither can prevent every type of pneumonia, but they work against more than 30 common, severe types.



People who need a pneumonia vaccine should get both shots.

For most people, one of each shot should be enough to protect them for their entire lives. Sometimes, you may need a booster shot. Ask your doctor whether you should get one.

Holiday Exercise Tips

It is important to recognize and accept that the Holidays will have some impact on our regular exercise routines. But with a little planning and creativity you can keep this to a minimum. Here are a couple of ideas.

- ◆ First, make exercise a priority. Drop some of the usual holiday activities to make room for exercise.
- ◆ If you can't get to the gym work out at home. Try doing body weight exercises like aerobics, yoga, and Pilates. Get DVD's to follow, or just do exercises like push-ups and crunches.
- ◆ Have to go to the mall? Park further away from the door or go early and walk a few laps before you start your shopping.
- ◆ Make a plan with co-workers to walk at lunch each day. If we are accountable to someone else, we are less likely to make excuses and not exercise.
- ◆ By exercising in December, you can get a jump on your New Year's Exercise Resolutions!



How can I relieve heartburn after holiday meals?



Eating in moderation and avoiding or limiting triggers—such as fatty, spicy, or acidic foods—can help prevent stomach acids from backwashing into your esophagus, which causes the burning sensation in the throat and chest associated with heartburn.

- ◆ If you do indulge, get relief by taking a few sips of water and then an over-the-counter liquid antacid like Gaviscon, which will form a protective layer over you stomach's contents.
- ◆ Antacid tablets, such as Tums, are also a good choice for occasional heartburn.