

January 2018-10 Ways to Health

The holidays are a great opportunity to enjoy time with family and friends, celebrate life, to be grateful, and reflect on what's important to us. They are also a time to appreciate the gift of health. Here are some holiday tips to support your efforts for health and safety this season.

1) Wash your hands often

Keeping your hands clean is one of the most important steps you can take to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others. Wash your hands with soap and clean running water, and rub them together for at least 20 seconds. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow, not your hands.

2) Stay warm

Cold temperatures can cause serious health problems, especially in infants and older adults. Stay dry, and dress warmly in several layers when outdoors.

3) Manage stress

The holidays don't need to take a toll on your health and pocketbook. Set goals to: keep your commitments and spending in check, balance work, home, and play and ask for help from family and friends. It is also important to get enough sleep.

4) Travel safely

If you are traveling across town or longer distances, help ensure your trip is safe. Adults and children should be buckled into a car seat, booster seat or with a seat belt whichever one is appropriate based on age, height and weight.

5) Be smoke-free

Avoid smoking and breathing other people's smoke. If you smoke, quit today! Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW or talk to your health care provider for assistance.

6) Get check-ups and vaccinations

Exams and screenings can help find potential problems early, when the chances for treatment and cure are often better. Vaccinations help prevent diseases and save lives. Christmas vacation is a great time to schedule a visit with your health care provider for needed exams and screenings.

7) Keep an eye on the kids

Children are at high risk for injuries during the holidays. When adults are distracted with meal preparations and visitors, unsupervised children can get into trouble. You should take a minute to "kid proof" your house, move potentially dangerous toys, food, drinks, household items, choking hazards (like coins and hard candy) and other objects out of kids' reach. There should be rules about acceptable and safe behaviors, including using electronic media.

8) Prevent fires

The majority of residential fires occur during the winter months. Candles should be kept away from children, pets, walkways, trees, and curtains. Fireplaces, stoves, or candles should not be active when the house is empty. Generators, grills, or other gasoline- or charcoal-burning devices should not be used inside your home or garage. Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors should be installed in your home and tested monthly.

9) Handle and prepare food safely

As you prepare holiday meals, keep yourself and your family safe from food-related illness by washing hands and surfaces often. Cross-contamination can be prevented by keeping raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs (including their juices) away from ready-to-eat foods and eating surfaces. Foods should be cooked to the proper temperature, and then refrigerated promptly after the meal. Perishable foods should not be out for more than two hours.

10) Eat healthy and be active

Fresh fruit can be a festive and sweet substitute for candy, limit fats by exploring different recipes and stay active. Kids and adults alike can explore new ways to be active, try ice skating, making a snowman or dancing to your favorite music. Adults should be active for at least 2½ hours a week, while our kids and teens need to be active for at least one hour a day. Healthy choices can be made without sacrificing the joy of the season, though moderation and balance.