



Healthy Habits

Tips and resources for living well



Stay Safe This Holiday Season

Holidays are meant to be spent with family and friends, not in the waiting room of an emergency room. We reached out to our Personal Health Advocates for some tips to avoid common holiday medical emergencies. Here are their suggestions:

Traveling. Wear a seat belt every time you drive or ride in a motor vehicle. Always buckle your child in the car using a child safety seat, booster seat, or seat belt according to his/her height, weight, and age.

Decorations. If you have small children or pets, keep decorations like hanging lights or glass ornaments out of their reach—even some seasonal plants like poinsettias and mistletoe can be toxic if ingested.

Children. Make sure your children are wearing proper protective equipment like helmets and gloves if they are doing any winter sports or activities. If they are going out to play in the snow, make sure they wear multiple layers and insulated, waterproof coats and pants.

Fire Safety. Be sure to keep trees well-watered and away from heat sources like air vents, burning candles and fireplaces.

Healthy Holiday Heart Tips

Trying to manage a condition like high blood pressure during the holidays can be difficult when rich, salty food abounds. We reached out to one of our Chronic Care Nurse Coaches, who offered the following tips for maintaining healthy blood pressure control this season:

Have a Plan. If you're going to a buffet-style gathering, plan to fill your plate with mostly veggies or fruits rather than salty chips.

Don't Deprive Yourself. Having a tiny slice of pie with a dab of whipped cream can satisfy you and ward off cravings.

Balance out your overindulgence. If you eat a lot of rich foods at the holiday meal, make sure that your other meals are low in calories, salt and fat.

Be vigilant about your medication doses. If you are traveling or your schedule is disrupted, wear a colored rubber wristband to serve as a reminder.

Manage Stress. It's OK to say no to some invitations.





Time to Tweak your Family Traditions?

Have your family traditions become more of a chore and less of a joy for everyone?

As families change, it's important to also adapt the details of your traditions-and perhaps your idea of what they should look like.

For example, if the grandparents live long distances away and have access to a computer, set up a webcam. They can watch you and the kids opening gifts or lighting candles.

And remember, simply visiting a senior family member in an assisted living or nursing facility provides comfort, and maintains the important links across the generations. What counts is that families share memories together, and that's what gives traditions true meaning.

National Influenza Vaccination Month



Note: For the 2016-2017 season, CDC recommends use of the flu shot (inactivated influenza vaccine or IIV) and the recombinant influenza vaccine (RIV). The nasal spray flu vaccine (live attenuated influenza vaccine or LAIV) should not be used during 2016-2017.

Getting an annual flu vaccine is the first and best way to protect yourself and your family from the flu. Flu vaccination can reduce flu illnesses, doctors' visits, and missed work and school due to flu, as well as prevent flu-related hospitalizations. The more people who get vaccinated, the more people will be protected from flu, including older people, very young children, pregnant women and people with certain health conditions who are more vulnerable to serious flu complications. This page summarizes information for the 2016-2017 flu season.

A few things are new this season:

- Only injectable flu shots are recommended this season.
- Flu vaccines have been updated to better match circulating viruses.
- There will be some new vaccines on the market this season.
- The recommendations for vaccination of people with egg allergies have changed.