

Holiday Health and Safety Tips



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

Traveling: Don't drink and drive, and don't let someone else drink and drive. 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 glassware out of their reach—even some seasonal plants like poinsettias and mistletoe can be toxic if ingested.

Children: Make sure your child is 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.

Express Gratitude

Do you ever feel stuck, unsatisfied and unfulfilled? If so, you may want to try expressing gratitude. Being gracious for all that you have while appreciating others can have a big impact on your well-being and increase feelings of happiness. This can reduce stress and negative emotions. Plus, you may feel more confident and satisfied with your life. Try these tips to help you cultivate gratitude:

- **Keep a gratitude journal.** Whether handwritten or digital, keeping a journal of all of the positives in your life can help foster a sense of gratitude.
- **Compliment someone.** Saying something nice to at least one person a day can make them and you feel good. At the same time, if someone compliments you, accept it sincerely with a smile and thank you—avoid brushing it off.
- **Give to those in need.** Volunteer at a soup kitchen, donate food, send care packages to hospital patients, or visit an eldercare facility. You'll improve someone else's day and your own!
- **Make gratitude a daily habit.** Every day, write down three things you are grateful for and one thing that you'll do for someone else. Making this a daily habit yields great results!
- **Don't dwell on the negative.** When life hands you lemons, make lemonade! Turning a negative experience into a positive experience can help you grow and learn to appreciate each experience for what it is—an opportunity to learn.



Stay Calm This Holiday



Despite the merriment of the holiday season, many people find that the demands of cooking, guests, decorating, gift buying, and financial pressures leaves them exhausted and irritable. By managing unrealistic expectations, it's possible to keep stress in check so you can truly enjoy the holidays. Try these tips:

- **Focus on what's doable, drop the rest.** Cooking a large dinner can be an undue strain, especially if you're juggling work and taking care of kids or elderly loved ones. Opt for a potluck or a low-key gathering with shared appetizers. If you need help with any festivities, delegate... and don't expect perfection!
- **Don't go over budget.** Spending "more" on gifts or decorations doesn't necessarily enhance joy. Pay cash when you can. Or limit credit card spending to what you can pay off in 2-3 months.
- **Avoid unresolved family disputes.** Not all family get-togethers fit the ideal image. Plan to keep everyone positive and redirected to shared activities like a concert, play or sporting event.
- **Slow the rush.** Remember, taking personal time outs enhances enjoyment. A half hour of exercise at least three days a week can help reduce anxiety, improve sleep and mood.

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