

FOR THE HEALTH OF IT!



National Safe Toy & Gift Month

National Safe Toy and Gifts month is observed in December when holiday gift giving is at its peak. However, safe toys and gifts giving recommendations should be considered for birthdays other special events throughout the year.

What To Consider When Purchasing Toys and Gifts

According to Stanford Medicine Children’s Health website a large number of children are injured by toys when adults give their children toys that are not age appropriate.

- Always check the label to make sure the toy is age appropriate.
- Consider your child’s ability to play or operate a toy. Each child is unique so even a toy that might be listed as age appropriate could be to too much for your child.
- Does the toy have the American Society for Testing and Materials “ASTM” label? This means the toy meets national safety standards. Be sure to read any warning labels before buying toys.
- Watch out for small objects for children under 3. Toys with magnets and button batteries should not be given to young children because they often put objects into their mouths.
- Read all safety and assembly instructions and explain them to your child.
- Consider any extra safety equipment that might be needed. Helmets, knee/elbow pads are a good idea to give along with any ride-on gift.
- Inspect toys for solid construction and repair or discard any broken toys. Watch out for sharp edges and/or pinch /poke points.
- If a toy makes a lot of noise make sure to include ear protection or avoid buying the toy.
- If a toy “shoots” balls, darts or other projectiles teach children to never aim them at other kids (especially the face), Consider eye protection as part of the gift.
- Set safety rules for playing with a toy and make sure if your child has friends over they follow the same safety rules.
- Explain and demonstrate for your child how to correctly use a toy.

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Holiday Safety Tips

From late November to mid-January, when families gather, parties are scheduled and travel spikes, safety should be top of mind. Following is tried-and-true advice to ensure your family remains safe and injury-free throughout the season.

Traveling for the Holidays? Be Prepared

If you're traveling this year, be sure your vehicle is in good running condition, get plenty of rest and be prepared for any emergency. Traveling by car during the holidays has the highest fatality rate of any major form of transportation based on fatalities per passenger mile. Hundreds of people die every year in crashes on New Year's Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day, according to Injury Facts. Alcohol impairment is involved in about a third of these fatalities.

Stay safe on the roads over the holidays – and every day:

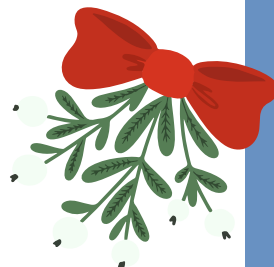
- Prepare your car for winter and keep an emergency kit with you
- Get a good night's sleep before departing and avoid drowsy driving
- Leave early, planning ahead for heavy traffic
- Make sure every person in the vehicle is properly buckled up no matter how long or short the distance traveled
- Put that cell phone away; many distractions occur while driving, but cell phones are the main culprit
- Practice defensive driving
- Designate a sober driver to ensure guests make it home safely after a holiday party; alcohol or over-the-counter, prescription and illegal drugs can cause impairment

Decorate Safely

Decorating is one of the best ways to get in a holiday mood, but emergency rooms see thousands of injuries involving holiday decorating every season.

When decorating follow these tips from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission:

- Keep potentially poisonous plants – mistletoe, holly berries, Jerusalem cherry and amaryllis – away from children
- If using an artificial tree, check that it is labeled “fire resistant”
- If using a live tree, cut off about 2 inches of the trunk to expose fresh wood for better water absorption, remember to water it and remove it from your home when it is dry
- Place your tree at least 3 feet away from fireplaces, radiators and other heat sources, making certain not to block doorways
- Avoid placing breakable ornaments or ones with small, detachable parts on lower tree branches where small children can reach them
- Only use indoor lights indoors and outdoor lights outdoors, and choose the right ladder for the task when hanging lights
- Replace light sets that have broken or cracked sockets, frayed or bare wires, or loose connections
- Follow the package directions on the number of light sets that can be plugged into one socket
- Never nail, tack or stress wiring when hanging lights and keep plugs off the ground away from puddles and snow
- Turn off all lights and decorations when you go to bed or leave the house



Maple Dijon Roasted Carrots



Serves - 6

Prep time- 10 mins

Cooking time- 50 mins

Ingredients

- 2 lbs. carrots, peeled
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1/4 cup parsley, finely chopped
- 3 tbsp. pure maple syrup
- 2 tbsp. dijon mustard
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp black pepper

Directions

- Preheat the oven to 400 F.
- Cut the carrots to 1" pieces. toss them in a bowl with olive oil, dijon, parsley, and spices. Mix well until they are all coated.
- Transfer them to a parchment lined sheet pan. Pour any remaining marinade over the carrots.
- Roast for 45-50 minutes, flipping halfway through.
- Garnish with extra parsley when ready to serve and a pinch of salt if needed.

Holiday Safety Continued

Candles and Fireplaces

Use of candles and fireplaces, combined with an increase in the amount of combustible, seasonal decorations in many homes during the holidays, means more risk for fire. The National Fire Protection Association reports that one-third of home decoration fires are started by candles and two of every five decoration fires happen because the decorations are placed too close to a heat source.

- Place candles where they cannot be knocked down or blown over and out of reach of children
- Don't burn trees, wreaths or wrapping paper in the fireplace
- Never leave candles or fireplaces burning unattended or when you are asleep
- Check and clean the chimney and fireplace area at least once a year

Turkey Fryers

Be alert to the dangers if you're thinking of celebrating the holidays by frying a turkey. The Consumer Product Safety Commission reports there have been hundreds turkey-fryer related fires, burns or other injuries, and millions of dollars in property damage losses from these incidents. NSC discourages the use of turkey fryers at home and urges those who prefer fried turkey to seek out professional establishments or consider using an oil-less turkey fryer. If you must fry your own turkey, follow all U.S. Fire Administration turkey fryer guidelines.

Food Poisoning Is No Joke

Keep your holidays happy by handling food safely. The foodsafety.gov website from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services provides some valuable holiday food safety tips:

- Wash your hands frequently when handling food
- Keep raw meat away from fresh produce
- Use separate cutting boards, plate and utensils for uncooked and cooked meats to avoid cross-contamination
- Use a food thermometer to make sure meat is cooked to a safe temperature
- Store leftovers in food safe containers and refrigerate or freeze leftovers within two hours of being served.

It's Better to Give Safely

Gifts and toys should inspire joy, not cause injuries. Thousands of children are seriously injured in toy-related incidents every year. Avoid safety hazards while gifting with these tips from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission:

- Toys are age-rated for safety, not for children's intellect and physical ability, so be sure to choose toys in the correct age range
- Choose toys for children under 3 that do not have small parts which could be choking hazards
- For children under 10, avoid toys that must be plugged into an electrical outlet
- Be cautious about toys that have button batteries or magnets, which can be harmful or fatal if swallowed.



Get Your Flu Vaccination Today

Did you know that flu season usually peaks after Christmas and it's not too late to get your flu shot in November.

Adults with certain chronic conditions are at higher risk of developing serious complications from flu.

In fact, during recent flu seasons, **9 out of 10 people hospitalized with flu had at least one underlying health condition** – that's why getting an annual flu vaccine is especially important for people with certain chronic health conditions

A flu vaccine reduces the risk of getting sick with flu. For people with certain chronic health conditions a flu vaccine has been shown to reduce the risk of flu-related worsening of chronic conditions and prevent flu-associated hospitalization.

Even if you don't have chronic health conditions you may want to get the flu vaccine to protect the people around you. The flu can be easily transmitted from a person at low risk of complications from the flu to someone at high risk.

Flu vaccines can be given at lots of different places including pharmacies, doctor's offices and community clinics.

If you do not have insurance or have trouble affording a flu vaccine contact your local health department.



Seasonal Affective Disorder Awareness

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is more than just a seasonal “funk”. SAD is a very real type of depression most commonly associated with the fall and winter months. As the weather changes and the days are darker, many people may notice changes to their moods. This time of year it is important to keep in mind symptoms of SAD.

Symptoms include:

- low energy
- depressed mood
- hopelessness
- irritability or anxiety
- poor concentration
- social withdrawal
- changes in sleep and/or appetite
- loss of interest in activities you once enjoyed



What can you do about it?

- **Structure.** Go to bed at a regular time, and get enough rest. Give focus to eating healthy meals on a regular schedule.
- **Make your environment brighter** when you can. Open blinds, and sit closer to bright windows. Consider investing in a light box.
- **Get outside.** Go for a walk, take your lunch outside, take short breaks throughout your day and enjoy the sunshine.
- **Exercise.** A regular exercise routine can help with stress relief, and being more fit can help to increase self esteem. Plus, exercise increases levels in your brain of the same chemicals used in antidepressant medications!
- **Socialize.** Connect with the people you enjoy being around.
- **Take a trip.** Make an effort to plan for vacations during the winter months when possible.

A couple things to remember:

- We all have tough days and times when life presents us with an increase in overall stress. It’s ok to have a bad day. However, SAD is a type of depression. If your symptoms do not improve, or even worsen, it is important to reach out to your health care provider.
- Treatment options can include establishing with a therapist or certain medications

Handwashing Awareness Week

Dec 1-7

Washing your hands is easy, and it’s one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of germs. Studies have shown that hand washing can prevent 1 in 3 diarrhea related illnesses and 1 in 5 respiratory infections, such as a cold or the flu.

Follow these five steps every time.

1. Wet your hands with clean, running water, turn off the tap, and apply soap.
2. Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
3. Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Sing the ABC’s!
4. Rinse your hands well under clean, running water.
5. Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

For more information on how clean hands save lives, visit www.cdc.gov/handwashing.



International
Volunteer Day
5 December

**The International
Volunteer Day is an
international
observance
mandated by the UN
General Assembly in
1985.**

**Volunteering is where
Compassion meets
Solidarity.**

**Both share same root
values- supporting
each other from a
position of trust,
humility, respect and
equality.**

**VOLUNTEER
FOR A BETTER
FUTURE.**

ALCOHOL & DRIVING: A DANGEROUS COMBINATION

December is National Impaired Driving Prevention Month. Drivers should be extra vigilant for impaired driving between 8 pm and 5 am over the holidays.



Alcohol-related fatalities accounted for 29% of roadway fatalities in 2018

29%



The rate increased to 51% during the 2018 holiday season, December 24-31, between 8 pm and 5 am

51%

Source: 2018 FARS Annual Report File (ARF)
Additional Resources: NHTSA, Drunk Driving,
<https://www.nhtsa.gov/risky-driving/drunk-driving>

December is International Sharps Injury Prevention Awareness Month

BEE SMART



WITH YOUR SHARPS!

5 ways to prevent Sharps and Needle stick Injuries

- Plan safe handling and disposal before any procedure.
- Use safe and effective needle alternatives when available.
- Activate the device's safety features.
- Immediately dispose of contaminated needles in OSHA- compliant sharps containers.
- Complete bloodborne pathogens training.

The Cost of Drinking and Driving

- In every state, it is illegal to drive drunk, yet one person was killed in a drunk-driving crash every 39 minutes in the United States in 2022.
- Driving a vehicle while impaired is a dangerous crime.
- A first time offense - DUI can set you back, on average \$10,000, and there could be a crash- people could get hurt or killed.



Snow Shoveling Safety

To ensure you stay injury-free as you clear driveways and sidewalks, here are some tips for safe snow shoveling:

Be heart conscious. If you have a history of heart problems and are physically inactive, it's best to consult with your health care team before starting heavy exercise like shoveling. In addition, don't shovel while smoking, eating or right after consuming caffeine since this may place extra stress on your heart.

Dress for the weather. Wear several layers of clothing. You can remove a layer if needed. Avoid wearing cotton next to your body. If you perspire, it can become damp, and you'll get chilled. Protect your hands, feet and face since these are common areas for frostbite. Wear a hat that covers your ears and a scarf to protect your lower face. Mittens are generally warmer than gloves.

Drink plenty of water. Remaining hydrated during cold-weather months is just as important as during warm-weather months. Drink water or sports drinks before, during and after your shoveling session, even if you're not thirsty.

Warm up. Before beginning to shovel, stretch your arms, legs, shoulders and back. You're less likely to injure muscles and joints when they're warmed up.

Shovel snow while it's fresh. Freshly fallen snow is lighter than snow that has started melting or has been moved by a plow.

Watch out for ice. There may be ice under the snow. Be careful, so you don't slip, fall and injure yourself. Learn how to walk like a penguin on icy surfaces.

Take it slow. Pace yourself and take breaks if you need to. Safety is more important than speed.

Protect your back. Bend at the knees, not the back when lifting the shovel. Lift with your legs bent, stand with your feet hip-width apart for balance and keep the shovel close to your body. Also, don't pick up too much snow at once. Consider using a smaller shovel or filling a larger shovel no more than halfway.

Beware of shoulder strain. Shoveling snow can place a lot of strain on your shoulders. Lifting and throwing heavy piles of snow or hitting hard ice hidden beneath the snow can result in shoulder damage. Lifting too much snow can aggravate arthritis or further injure a worn rotator cuff.

Listen to your body. This is the No. 1 snow shoveling tip. If something doesn't feel normal or you're tired, it's time to stop. Go inside, warm up, rest and drink water, tea or coffee. Reevaluate how your body feels before picking up where you left off.

Be careful around machinery. If you use a snowblower or plow, be especially cautious around moving parts and sharp edges. Be sure the equipment is turned off before clearing any snow jams. Keep children and pets away while you're operating machinery.

Have your phone handy. If you're experiencing an emergency, call 911 immediately. Stay safe while shoveling, and enjoy the exercise and being outside on a brisk winter day.

Paul Horvath, M.D., practices emergency medicine in Fau Claire and Menomonie, Wisconsin.



Carbon Monoxide Awareness Month

Why is November Carbon Monoxide Awareness Month?

Because colder temperatures can lead to an increased threat of carbon monoxide (CO), which kills more people in the winter months than any other time of year.

CO sources include, but are not limited to, heaters, furnaces, appliances or cooking sources using coal, wood, petroleum products or other fuels.

Attached garages with doors, ductwork, or ventilation shafts connected to a living space are also sources of CO.

Often called "the silent killer," CO is a colorless and odorless gas that is impossible to detect without an alarm.

CO poisoning is difficult to diagnose, often until it is too late. The symptoms mimic those of many other illnesses including nausea, headaches, dizziness, weakness, chest pain, and vomiting.

In more severe cases, people may experience disorientation or unconsciousness, or suffer long-term neurological disabilities, cardiorespiratory failure or death.

Protect you and your family against CO poisoning:

- Install and test CO alarms
- Have fuel-burning appliances inspected regularly - furnaces, stoves, fireplaces, clothes dryers, water heaters, and space heaters
- Run kitchen vents or exhaust fans anytime the stove is in use
- Never use generators indoors
- Be mindful of the garage
- Know who to call if a CO alarm sounds - 911!