



U.S. Public Health Service Nursing - TIP OF THE MONTH

Protecting, promoting, and advancing the health and safety of the Nation

December 2017

A Healthier Holiday Season



Ways to Have a Healthy Holiday Season

Take steps to keep you and your loved ones safe and healthy this holiday season.

Brighten the holidays by making your health and safety a priority. Take steps to keep you and your loved ones safe and healthy and ready to enjoy the holidays. Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/features/healthytips/index.html>

- 1. Wash hands often to help prevent the spread of germs.** It's flu season. Wash your hands with soap and clean running water for at least 20 seconds.
- 2. Bundle up to stay dry and warm.** Wear appropriate outdoor clothing: light, warm layers, gloves, hats, scarves, and waterproof boots.
- 3. Manage stress.** Give yourself a break if you feel stressed out, overwhelmed, and out of control. Some of the best ways to manage stress are to find support, connect socially, and get plenty of sleep. For more information, click: [Holiday Stress](#)
- 4. Don't drink and drive or let others drink and drive.** Whenever anyone drives drunk, they put everyone on the road in danger. Choose not to drink and drive and help others do the same.
- 5. Be smoke-free.** Avoid smoking and secondhand smoke. Smokers have greater health risks because of their tobacco use, but nonsmokers also are at risk when exposed to tobacco smoke.
- 6. Fasten seat belts while driving or riding in a motor vehicle.** Always buckle your children in the car using a child safety seat, booster seat, or seat belt according to their height, weight, and age. Buckle up every time, no matter how short the trip and encourage passengers to do the same.
- 7. Get exams and screenings.** Ask your health care provider what exams you need and when to get them. Update your personal and family history. Get insurance from the Health Insurance Marketplace if you are not insured.
- 8. Get your vaccinations.** Vaccinations help prevent diseases and save lives. Everyone 6 months and older should get a flu vaccine each year.
- 9. Monitor children.** Keep potentially dangerous toys, food, drinks, household items, and other objects out of children's reach. Protect them from drowning, burns, falls, and other potential accidents.
- 10. Practice fire safety.** Most residential fires occur during the winter months, so don't leave fireplaces, space heaters, food cooking on stoves, or candles unattended. Have an emergency plan and practice it regularly.
- 11. Prepare food safely.** Remember these simple steps: Wash hands and surfaces often, avoid cross-contamination, cook foods to proper temperatures and refrigerate foods promptly. For more information, click: [Holiday Food Safety](#)
- 12. Eat healthy, stay active.** Eat fruits and vegetables which pack nutrients and help lower the risk for certain diseases. Limit your portion sizes and foods high in fat, salt, and sugar. Also, be active for at least 2½ hours a week and help kids and teens be active for at least 1 hour a day.

Healthy Holiday Travel Tips

Quench your thirst with bottled water, diet, or low-calorie beverages instead of sugar-sweetened drinks. You can add slices of lemon, lime, cucumber, or watermelon, or any fruit you like, to flavor your water. Sparkling water is also another no calorie option. Bring along a reusable water bottle (https://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/healthy_eating/drinks.html).

Stave off hunger with nutritious nibbles. Pack healthy (https://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/healthy_eating/meals.html) snacks like fruits, vegetables, and nuts to eat instead of cookies, chips, or candy. These healthy snacks can help keep you satisfied. When you have healthy foods handy, you are less likely to eat something unhealthy.

Choose healthy food. Rest stops and convenience stores can offer a variety of food options. Choose snacks or meals that best support healthy eating. You can also bring your own food to keep your body and your wallet happy!

Increase your physical activity. A rest stop is also a good place to get active. While you're there, take 10 minutes to walk, jog, do a few jumping jacks or other exercises you like. Some physical activity is better than none! Those 10 minutes you spend being active can add to the recommended 150 minutes of aerobic physical activity you need a week.

Walk to your gate. Many airports have trains or shuttles that take you to your gate or terminal. When possible, increase your physical activity by walking there instead. Some airports now have signs to tell you how far it is to walk instead of riding the train. Try your best to always use stairs as a healthy alternative.

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TO REQUEST A MENTOR