

HEALTHY HOLIDAY TIPS

THIS HOLIDAY SEASON GIVE THE GIFT OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS TO YOURSELF, AND THOSE YOU LOVE BY FOLLOWING THESE SIMPLE TIPS.



- Wash Your Hands Often
Frequent hand washing, especially during cold and flu season, can reduce your risk of catching or spreading a cold or the flu. Wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds (hum the “Happy Birthday” song from beginning to end twice). Cough or sneeze into a tissue and then throw it away. Cover your cough or sneeze with your sleeve or elbow if you do not have a tissue. Hand sanitizers may also help, but they are not a substitute for washing with soap and water.
- Stay Warm and Dry
Cold temperatures don’t mean that you are confined to the indoors, but they can cause serious health problems, especially in infants and older adults. Stay dry and dress warm in several layers of loose-fitting, tightly woven clothing. Be sure to top off your cold weather outfit with a warm hat.
- Manage Stress
The holidays don’t have to be stressful! Keep your holiday to do list manageable. Don’t put unreasonable pressure on yourself to do everything. Set limitations. Do not overspend your financial and emotional resources. Schedule time for yourself to refresh your body, mind and spirit. Reach out for support if you need it — don’t always wait for the invitation.
- Travel Safely
Whether you’re traveling across town or around the world, help keep your trip safe. Don’t drink and drive, and don’t let someone else drive who has been drinking. Always wear a seat belt no matter the distance of your trip. If you have a child, always follow the height, weight and age recommendations for their child safety seat, booster seat or seat belt.
- Prevent Injuries
Injuries can occur anywhere and anytime, including around the holidays. Use step stools instead of furniture when hanging decorations. Wear protective sports equipment or gear when participating in winter sports activities.



According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, most residential fires occur during the winter months. Keep candles away from children, pets, walkways, trees and curtains. Never leave fireplaces, stoves or candles unattended. Don't use generators, grills or other gasoline-burning — or charcoal-burning — devices inside your home or garage. Install a smoke detector and carbon monoxide detector in your home. Test them once a month, and replace batteries twice a year.



- Handle and Prepare Food Safely

As you prepare holiday meals, keep you and your family safe from food-related illness. Wash and sanitize cutting boards, dishes, utensils and counter tops with hot, soapy water or a sanitizing cleanser. When preparing food, designate one cutting board for fresh produce and a different one for raw meat, poultry and seafood. Cook foods to the proper temperature. Refrigerate promptly. Do not leave perishable foods out for more than two hours and know how long you can store food safely before it should be discarded.

- Eat Healthy and Keep Active

With balance and moderation, you can enjoy the holidays the healthy way. Choose fresh fruit as a festive and sweet substitute for candy. Limit fats, salt and sugary foods. Find fun ways to stay active, such as dancing to your favorite holiday music or taking an after-dinner stroll to enjoy the holiday decorations. Be active for at least 2 ½ hours a week. Help kids and teens be active for at least one hour each day.

- Live Smoke Free

Avoid using tobacco products or breathing secondhand smoke during holiday festivities. Don't lose sight of the bigger picture during the holiday season. The reasons to quit tobacco are as valid this time of year as they are the rest of the year. Take five minutes and refresh your memory by creating a list of reasons.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- For added support or questions, please call a Blues On CallSM health coach at 1-888-BLUE-428.
- Log in to your member website (found on the back of your insurance ID card). Click on the **Health and Wellness** tab and select the **Healthy Living** link to find additional information on nutrition, exercise and stress management.
- [cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html](https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html)