

“Sharing the holiday with other people, and feeling that you’re giving of yourself, gets you past all the commercialism.” ~ *Caroline Kennedy*



Happy and Safe Holidays: How to Buy Safe Toys

One of the best things during the holiday season is seeing children’s eyes light-up when they see the festive decorations, delicacies and gifts. As the spirit of the holidays begins to fill us with joy, we seem to smile more and our inner child emerges, allowing us to experience life, again, as a child. Take some time to honor your spirit. This is the real gift of the holiday season welling up in us and to share with others.

For happier holidays with your family, here are answers to parent’s most frequently asked questions about toy safety.

How do I pick out safe toys? Choose a toy that matches your child’s age and interests. Always follow the age grading on toy packaging and be sure to keep toys labeled 3+ away from children under 3. These toys may contain small parts, which are a choking hazard.

Are certain toy brands safer than others? All toys sold in the U.S. must comply with strict federal safety standards. So when you shop at a reputable retailer, you can feel confident that the toys sold in the establishment are safe.

Is it safe to buy a toy from a seller I’m not familiar with? Whether online or in person, shop only at retailers you know and trust. Store staff at established businesses will be knowledgeable about the toys on their shelves and websites. Exercise caution when buying toys at flea markets, garage sales and unknown online sellers, as these vendors may not be monitoring for recalled products.

How do I find out if a toy has been recalled? 0.003 percent of the 3 billion toys sold each year are recalled. Stay informed by visiting PlaySafe.org for a current list of recalled products.

What’s your last piece of advice for parents? Always supervise your children at play and demonstrate the correct way to use a toy or game.

Make sure the toys you give are right for the child’s age, abilities and interests.

For more tips on toy safety, visit WWW.PLAYSAFE.ORG, now available in English and Spanish.

5 Tips for Beating Holiday Stress

While the holidays “Tis the season to be jolly”, it can be far from that for many people. It can be a season filled with additional stress. *But it doesn’t have to be that way.* There are things you can do to prevent excess stress and enjoy the season.

HERE ARE 5 WAYS TO KEEP THE “JOLLY” IN YOUR FESTIVE HOLIDAYS:

Control your eating instead of letting it control you. With office parties, holiday meals and various festive gatherings, it is easy to overeat...only just to feel guilty later. Curb your appetite by eating a light snack before going to a party. Another tactic is to bring a healthful dish for everyone to enjoy. At least you’ll have one thing there that you can eat without guilt.

Get adequate sleep. Not getting enough sleep can put any of us in a foul mood. With all of the holiday activities and late-night parties, it is easy to get sleep deprived during this time of the year. Besides not getting enough sleep can lead to weight gain, something most of us are trying to avoid this time of year.

Exercise. By exercising at least three times per week for at least a half-hour at a time, you’ll be able to burn off some of the extra calories you are consuming. It is a simple process of

burning off the same number of calories that you are taking in to maintain your current weight. This time of year you may have to exercise more times and for longer periods. Plus exercising releases the hormone endorphin which will improve your mood.

Avoid typical holiday stress triggers. We all have them. Things that when happen induce that “fight or flight” response, thereby increasing our stress level. If things typically in the past around this time of year send you into a downward spiral, vow to avoid these triggers this year if you can. Some things are outside of your control, but many aren’t. Don’t let those things control you – you control them by not putting yourself in those situations in the first place.

Plan ahead. Holiday shopping, going to parties, rushing here and there only adds stress to what can be a stressful time of year anyway. Plan out this time of year the best you can, so you have time to do what you have to do. Getting behind and feeling rushed can be one stress trigger you can avoid this year.

The festive holiday season is a great time of year. This year make the most of it by using these 5 tips to make it as enjoyable and “jolly” as you can.



Look & Feel Your

Best[®] Tips of the

Month...

Cold Weather and Cardiovascular Disease

The cooler temperatures of winter can pre-sent health challenges for those with heart disease—and those who love them. To help, the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association offer some tips.

- People who are outdoors in cold weather should avoid sudden exertion, such as lifting a heavy shovelful of snow. Even walking through heavy, wet snow or snow drifts can strain a person's heart.

Many people aren't conditioned to the physical stress of outdoor activities and don't know the dangers of being outdoors in cold weather. Winter sports enthusiasts who don't take certain precautions can suffer accidental hypothermia.

Hypothermia means the body temperature has fallen below 95 degrees Fahrenheit. It occurs when your body can't produce enough energy to keep the internal body temperature warm enough. It can kill you. Heart failure causes most deaths in hypothermia. Symptoms include lack of coordination, mental confusion, slowed reactions, shivering and sleepiness.

Here are some additional tips:

- To keep warm, wear layers of clothing. This traps air between layers, forming a protective insulation. Also, wear a hat or head scarf. Heat can be lost through your head. And ears are especially prone to frostbite. Keep hands and feet warm, too, as they tend to lose heat rapidly.
- Don't drink alcoholic beverages before going outdoors or when outside.
- Flu and pneumonia pose greater dangers for people who have heart failure, or any heart condition, than for healthy people. Ask a healthcare professional about getting a yearly influenza vaccine and a one-time pneumococcal vaccine (to guard against the most common form of bacterial pneumonia). Both vaccines are generally safe and seldom cause any severe reactions.
- As much as possible, avoid anyone who has a cold or the flu.
- Stay out of crowds during the height of flu season—usually October through March and peaking in February.
- Be sure to wash your hands thoroughly and frequently, especially after using the bathroom and before eating. Keep your hands away from your face and insist that all caregivers wash their hands thoroughly before approaching you.
- Always read the labels on all over-the-counter (OTC) medications, especially if you have blood pressure of 120/80 mm Hg or higher. Look for warnings to those with high blood pressure and to those who take blood pressure medications. Consult your doctor before taking any over-the-counter medications or supplements.
- Using decongestants may raise blood pressure or interfere with the effectiveness of some prescribed blood pressure medications.
- Check the sodium content of any OTCs. Some are high in sodium, which can raise blood pressure. People with high blood pressure should have under 1,500 mg of sodium a day from all sources.

Decorating Safely For a Joyful holiday

Setting the stage for an event is a project. When it comes to Christmas, the stage can be a huge task with decorations on the roof, strung on trees, and set up throughout the house.

Crawling on the roof, placing the star atop the Christmas tree and lighting the house with candles are dangerous activities. They send about 12,500 people to the emergency room every year. The Consumer Product Safety Commission recommends:

Trees: When buying an artificial tree, look for the "Fire Resistant" label. For a fresh tree, find one on which it's not easy to pull needles from a branch. Keep the stand basin filled with water. Christmas trees are involved in some 300 fires each year.

Lights: Buy light strings that are approved by a testing laboratory. Check last year's strings for broken sockets or wires. Toss any that are damaged. Replace a burned-out light with one of equal wattage. Don't use any lights on a metallic tree because of shock danger.

Electrical connections: Use a power strip to connect several power cords inside the house. It will turn off instead of blowing a breaker if there is a power overload, because it has a circuit breaker. It's also easier to turn off several strings at once.

Outdoor connections: They should be plugged into circuits protected by a ground fault circuit interrupter. Portable GFCIs can be purchased, or they can be installed permanently to household circuits by an electrician.

Candles: They start about 11,600 fires a year and cause 150 deaths and 1,200 injuries. Always keep burning candles in sight. Put them out if you move to another room or go to bed.

Decorations: Use only non-combustible or flame-resistant materials to trim a tree. In homes with small children, avoid decorations that are sharp or breakable. Don't use any that look like candy or food.



Fireplaces: “Fire salts” produce colored flames when thrown on a wood fire, but they contain heavy metals that can cause gastrointestinal irritation and vomiting. Keep them away from children. Never burn wrapping papers in a fireplace. They can cause a flash fire and burn intensely.

Ask the Doctor...



2018 Body & Face Makeover Series:

Adults- Is It a Cold Hanging On, or Is It a Touch of Asthma?

Your doctor could have an unexpected diagnosis for that pesky cough or bronchitis that won't go away.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention say one in 12 adults are now diagnosed with asthma. Symptoms can develop at any age.

Diagnosis is important, because you can then get the right treatment.

Inhaled corticosteroids are the most common anti-inflammatory

medications. Sometimes a quick-relief inhaler is prescribed for asthma attacks.

Avoid triggers, which commonly include allergens such as pet dander, dust mites and mold (wash your sheets in hot water every week). Tobacco smoke can be a trigger as well.

Your doctor will develop an action plan designed to help you know whether your treatment is working or has to be changed.

Bonus Medication Safety Tips (for Cold & Flu Season)

Every year, more than 126,000 hospitalizations and 17,000 deaths in the U.S. are due to overdose or overuse of acetaminophen and NSAIDs, which are present in many prescription or over-the-counter pain medications.

Acetaminophen, which is an active ingredient in brands such as Tylenol® and NyQuil®, is safe when taken as recommended, but can lead to liver damage when taken in excess. NSAIDs, which are a class of pain-relieving drugs that include brands such as Advil®, Motrin® and aspirin, can cause stomach damage when overused.

During cold and flu season, misuse of over the counter medicine can be common because people may be treating multiple symptoms—especially people taking medicines for chronic pain. It is important that you read medicine labels and only take one product at a time that contains the same active ingredient, even if it is for different ailments. For example, if you take Tylenol® for a headache and at the same time take Theraflu® for a cold, you are actually doubling up on acetaminophen, which can be harmful.

Gut Check: Know Your Medicine, a campaign from the American Gastroenterological Association, aims to educate consumers about medication safety. Learn more at www.GUTCHECKFACTS.ORG.



Health Quiz...



A. LAST ISSUE'S QUESTION WAS...

Q. “What is Mindful Eating?”

A. “A term dietitians and other health experts use to describe paying attention to what you eat. Consciously taking notice of every single thing you eat and drink, no matter how small the quantity.”

B. NOW FOR THIS MONTH'S QUESTION...

Q. “What is generally considered the height of flu season?” (*hint see page 2*)

Each month we post general health and entertainment questions to all our readers. To be eligible for our free prize drawing, just mail in or call my office with your answer and if it is correct, you will be entered. The correct answer will be revealed in next month's issue. Winners will be notified by phone.

Refer A Friend Rewards...

My staff and I would like to say thanks and give recognition to the following patients and readers of this newsletter for their kind referrals:

L. Hwang from San Mateo

M. Colclasure from San Jose

As a way of saying thank you for entrusting your family, friends and loved ones to our practice come in before the end of the month and receive a \$25 referral credit..

Thank you again for thinking of us.

Until next time, Live your life to the fullest!

Dr. Susan Lin

*Susan Lin MD
MD Laser & Cosmetics
448 N. San Mateo Drive
San Mateo, CA 94401
650.340.7546*



Have a happy and safe holiday!

Check out our specials for the month!

- 1) ***Growth Factor Full Face: \$1000 Bonus Area Hands or neck region \$500 Value Free***
 - 2) ***Buy MD Nutri Hair and receive Free Shampoo***
 - 3) ***Buy any skin care product and receive a Free gift***
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