

12 Holiday Health & Safety Tips

presented by **NorthShore University HealthSystem**

Deck the halls with health & safety! Celebrate a happy, healthy holiday season this year with the help of these 12 tips from NorthShore University HealthSystem.

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1 Shovel Safety

~**16,500** people are treated in emergency departments for snow shoveling injuries annually.

Shoveling Tips:

Take frequent breaks. & Warm up before shoveling with light stretching.

Correct Form:

Straight back
Bend from hip
Lift with legs



2 Bundle Up

At **-5°F** with **35 mph winds**, frostbite can develop in **10 mins.**

Tips for Staying Warm:

Wear a hat. **40% of body heat is lost from your head.**

Mittens that fit tightly at the wrist provide more warmth than gloves.

Outerwear should be:

- Tightly woven fabric
- Water-repellent
- Hooded

3 Light Your Tree, but Not on Fire

Christmas trees are reported to cause **200+** structure fires annually.

Tree Safety Tips:

Pick a flame retardant tree (if artificial).

Pick a healthy tree with fresh green needles that don't fall off easily.

Keep the tree watered.



Tree must be at least 3 feet away from all heat sources.

At least 3 feet



4 Deck the Halls Safely

Fires caused by decorative lights account for **\$7.9 mil.** in property damages annually.

The Perfect Lights:

Tested, rated & stamped with the (UL) label



Not hung near flammable objects

Not frayed

Only 3 sets of lights per extension cord

Used where designated (indoor/outdoor)

5 Cook with Care

2/3 rds of all holiday fires start in the kitchen.

Safety Tips:

Don't leave pots and pans unattended.

Grease Fires:

Smother the flame and then shut off the heat.

Don't use water or fire extinguishers because this can spread the flames.

6 Celebrate Responsibly

~**30%** of Americans will be involved in **alcohol-related car accidents** in their lifetime.

Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) Legal Limit: **0.08** How many drinks is that?



140 lbs.
1 hour
+ **3 drinks**
BAC **0.10**



180 lbs.
1 hour
+ **4 drinks**
BAC **0.08**



Always have a designated driver.

A designated driver always has a **BAC of 0.00**

7 Prepare & Serve Food Safely

Foodborne illnesses affect approximately **1 in 6** Americans each year.

How to Avoid Contamination:

Wash hands before handling food.

Use clean utensils & dishware.

Throw out perishables that have been sitting out at room temp. for 2+ hours.

Cook to Appropriate Temperatures:

Thick cuts of red meat & pork **145°F**

Ground red meat & pork **160°F**

Poultry **165°F**

8 Avoid Holiday Heartburn

20% of Americans experience acid reflux at least once a week.

Beat the Burn:

Give yourself **2 - 3 hours** to digest food before bed.

Wear something that **doesn't fit tightly** at the waist.

Avoid Common Heartburn Culprits:

Peppermint High-Fat Foods Coffee

Alcohol Citrus

9 Keep the Holiday Weight Off

Studies show that **14%** of individuals reported gaining

5+ lbs. over the holidays.

Stay Active:

Make physical activity a holiday tradition.

Ice Skating **475 calories**

Skiing **410 calories**

Walking **300 calories**

Other Tips:

Stay hydrated throughout the day so you don't confuse thirst for hunger.

Eat a healthy snack before the big meal to keep your appetite under control.

10 Keep Holiday Plants Away from Children & Pets

Some holiday plants are harmful if ingested.



Poinsettias:

Nausea
Vomiting

Holly:

Vomiting
Diarrhea
Abdominal pain

Mistletoe:

Hallucinations
Severe drop in blood pressure
Breathing problems

11 Spread Cheer, Not Germs

5-20% of Americans get the flu each year.

Beat the Bug:

Wash your hands often.

When possible, avoid contact with sick people.

Get the flu vaccine. **It reduces your risk by 70-90%.**

12 Don't Get SAD

10-20% of Americans may suffer from mild seasonal affective disorder (SAD), which results from insufficient exposure to sunlight.

Stay Happy:



Symptoms:

- Depression
- Change in appetite
- Weight gain
- Fatigue
- Irritability

Get outside! Spend time in the sun but remember your sunscreen.

Ask your doctor about light therapy and vitamin D supplements.

Sources:

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