



❧ *Holiday & Winter Safety Issue* ❧

Every year, the final weeks are often accompanied by a barrage of festivities, traffic, overspending, and way too many sweets. The holiday spirit isn't always enough to keep harried drivers from expressing their frustration, and the added holiday stress combined with seasonal colds, lack of sunshine, and unhealthy eating is enough to turn anyone into a scrooge.

During the next few weeks, many employees will be taking a few days off to travel, relax at home, or otherwise celebrate the season with family and friends. No matter what your plans are, this issue provides tips to help you truly enjoy the holidays, recharge your batteries, and start the new year off right.

Feasts & Treats: Too Much of a Good Thing

Whether it's emotional comfort food for the "holiday blues" or joyous feasts for social occasions, it is easy to overeat at this time of year. The following tips can help guide you healthfully through office parties and family dinners:

Don't leave the house starving. If you are going to cut back on eating to compensate for a party, fast the day after the party when you are full. When at the grocery store, you are less likely to purchase impulse snacks and treats if you are not hungry while shopping.



Keep it festive. Stick with the holiday foods that make the season special for you. Pass on the same old cheese and crackers that you enjoy the rest of the year.

Be more active. It isn't news, but it always helps to increase your physical activity. If you eat more, exercise more.

Check in with yourself. Be mindful of your body before you eat. Are you hungry? If not, what are you experiencing? Acknowledging emotions behind the desire to eat allows you to take action that more directly addresses those feelings.

Managing Diabetes. Diabetics can still enjoy celebrations and traveling, with some advanced planning. Find out what food will be served in advance, and if it doesn't



fit into your dietary plan, take along a snack or dish for yourself. Take extra testing and insulin supplies when you travel and check your levels more often than usual.

Chewing more, can mean eating less. Chewing food thoroughly is the first step in the complex process of digestion. Instead of rushing past this important step, improve digestion by chewing each bite enough to completely pulverize any texture. Slowing down also has the added benefit of giving your body more time to tell you when it's full.



Handwashing: A Simple Way to Stay Healthy

According to the Mayo Clinic, frequent hand-washing is one of the best ways to avoid getting sick and spreading illness, because it only requires soap and water. You accumulate germs on your hands as you touch people, surfaces, and objects throughout the day. In turn, you can infect yourself with these germs by touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Although it's impossible to keep your hands germ-free, washing your hands frequently can help limit the transfer of bacteria, viruses, and other microbes. In addition to washing your hands whenever they *look* dirty:

Always wash your hands **before**

- Preparing or eating food
- Treating wounds, giving medicine, or caring for a sick or injured person
- Inserting or removing contact lenses

Always wash your hands **after**

- Handling food, especially raw meat or poultry
- Using the toilet or changing a diaper
- Touching an animal or animal toy, leash, or waste
- Blowing your nose, or coughing or sneezing into your hands
- Treating wounds or caring for a sick or injured person
- Handling garbage, chemicals, or items like cleaning cloths and soiled shoes.



Antibacterial soap is no more effective at eliminating germs than regular soap. Using antibacterial soap may even lead to the development of antimicrobial resistant bacteria - making it harder to kill these germs in the future.

Winter Driving: Flooded Streets

Large rainstorms can cause flash-floods or flooding in suburban areas, where sewers and drains become plugged with storm debris or simply cannot cope with the increase in water. Although flooded roads may not seem dangerous, never try to drive

through water you couldn't easily walk through. It takes only 6 inches of water to reach the bottom of most passenger cars— and even this depth can cause a loss of control or a stalled engine if water is sucked into the exhaust or washes into the air intake. Many cars will float in only 1 to 2 feet of water, and if it's flowing water it can sweep away most vehicles.

low enough, if other routes are available, don't try to cross it. Water can hide dips in the road, and make judging the water depth risky.

Drivers who chance these crossings, may ruin their engines and be forced to abandon their cars. If you see a flooded out road, turn around and take an alternate route or wait for waters to subside.



Even if the water might be shal-