



Eye on Safety | Enjoy a Safe Holiday Season

From late November to mid-January, when families gather, parties are scheduled, and travel spikes, safety should be top of mind. Here is some tried-and-true advice to help you and your family remain safe throughout the season.

Holiday Travel

If you're traveling this year, be sure your vehicle is in good running condition, get plenty of rest and be prepared for any emergency.

Stay safe on the roads over the holidays — and every day:

- [Prepare your car for winter](#) and keep an [emergency kit](#) with you
- Get a good night's sleep before departing and avoid drowsy driving
- Leave early, planning ahead for heavy traffic
- Make sure every person in the vehicle is properly buckled up
- Put that cell phone away
- Practice defensive driving
- Designate a sober driver to ensure guests make it home safely after a holiday party

Decorate Safely

Decorating is one of the best ways to get in a holiday mood, but emergency rooms see thousands of injuries involving holiday decorating every season.

- Keep potentially poisonous plants – mistletoe, holly berries, Jerusalem cherry and amaryllis – away from children and pets
- If using an artificial tree, check that it is labeled "fire resistant"
- If using a live tree, cut off about 2 inches of the trunk to expose fresh wood for better water absorption, remember to water it, and remove it from your home when it is dry
- Place your tree at least 3 feet away from fireplaces, radiators and other heat sources, making certain not to block doorways
- Avoid placing breakable ornaments or ones with small, detachable parts on lower tree branches where small children can reach them
- Only use indoor lights indoors and outdoor lights outdoors, and [choose the right ladder](#) for the task when hanging lights
- Replace light sets that have broken or cracked sockets, frayed or bare wires, or loose connections
- Follow the package directions on the number of light sets that can be plugged into one socket
- Never nail, tack or stress wiring when hanging lights and keep plugs off the ground away from puddles and snow
- Turn off all lights and decorations when you go to bed or leave the house

Food Poisoning Is No Joke

Keep your holidays happy by handling food safely.

- Wash your hands frequently when handling food
- Keep raw meat away from fresh produce
- Use separate cutting boards, plates and utensils for uncooked and cooked meats
- Use a food thermometer to make sure meat is cooked to a safe temperature
- Refrigerate leftover food within two hours of being served
- Thanksgiving leftovers are safe for three to four days when properly refrigerated