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# Lakeshore Health Notes

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Manitowoc County Health Department

November/December 2017

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## Holiday Health and Safety Tips

The holidays are a time to celebrate, give thanks, and reflect. They are also a time to pay special attention to your health. Give the gift of health and safety to yourself and others by following these simple holiday tips.

### 1. Wash your hands often.

Wash your hands with soap and clean running water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based product.

### 2. Stay warm.

Cold temperatures can cause serious health problems. Stay dry, and dress warmly in several layers of loose-fitting, tightly woven clothing. Check on children, the elderly and pets.

### 3. Manage stress.

Give yourself a break if you feel stressed out, overwhelmed, and out of control. Keep a check on over-commitment and over-spending. Some of the best ways to manage stress are to find support, connect socially, and get plenty of sleep.

### 4. Travel safely.

Whether you're traveling across town or around the world, help ensure your trip is safe. Don't drink and drive, and don't let someone else drink and drive. Wear a seatbelt every time you ride or drive in a motor vehicle. Always buckle your child in the car using a child safety seat, booster seat, or seat belt according to his/her height, weight, and age. Get vaccinations if traveling out of the country.

### 5. Be smoke-free.

Avoid smoking and breathing other people's smoke. Smokers have greater health risks because of their tobacco use. Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW or talk to your health care provider for more information on how to quit.

### 6. Get check-ups and vaccinations.

Exams and screenings can help find problems early or before they start. Vaccinations help prevent diseases and save lives. Schedule a visit with your health care provider for a yearly exam. Ask what vaccinations and tests you should get for yourself and your children.

### 7. Watch the kids.

Children are at high risk for injuries. Keep potentially dangerous toys, food, drinks, household items, choking hazards (like coins and hard candy) and other objects out of kid's reach. Protect them from drowning, falls, and other potential accidents.

### 8. Prevent injuries.

Injuries from falls and fireworks often occur around the holidays. Use step stools instead of furniture when hanging decorations. Leave the fireworks to the professionals. Don't leave fireplaces, space heaters, food cooking on stoves, or candles unattended. Install a smoke detector and carbon monoxide detector in your home. Have an emergency plan and practice it regularly.

### 9. Handle and prepare food safely.

As you prepare holiday meals, keep you and your family safe from food-related illness. Wash hands and surfaces often. Avoid cross-contamination by

keeping raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs (including their juices) away from ready-to-eat foods and eating surfaces. Cook foods to the proper temperature. Refrigerate promptly. Do not leave perishable foods out for more than 2 hours.

**10. Eat healthy, and be active.**

With balance and moderation, you can enjoy the holidays the healthy way. Choose more vegetables and fruit. Find fun ways to stay active, such as dancing to holiday music. Be active for at least 2.5 hours a week. Help kids and teens be active for at least 1 hour a day.

**Get a Flu Vaccine! It's the Best Way to Help You Fight the Flu This Season**

The flu season is here. You can protect yourself and your family from the flu this season by getting a flu vaccine. It's the first and most important step to fight the flu. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that everyone 6 months and older get a flu vaccine every year. Talk to your health care provider about getting a flu shot today. For more information on the flu and/or the flu vaccine visit the CDC website at <http://www.cdc.gov/flu>, or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.

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