

Focus on Fire Safety This Winter

Most residential fires occur during the winter months. Here are some fire safety tips from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).



- ✓ Never leave food unattended on a stove.
- ✓ Keep cooking areas free of flammable objects (e.g., potholders and towels).
- ✓ Avoid wearing clothing with long, loose-fitting sleeves when cooking.
- ✓ Never place portable space heaters near flammable materials (e.g., curtains or bedspreads).
- ✓ Keep all matches and lighters out of reach of children. Store them up high, preferably in a locked cabinet.
- ✓ Install smoke alarms on every floor of the home, including the basement, and particularly near rooms in which people sleep.
- ✓ Use long-life smoke alarms with lithium-powered batteries and hush buttons, which allow you to stop false alarms quickly. If long-life alarms are not



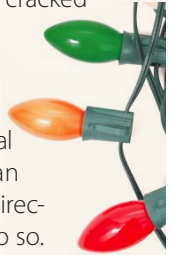
available, use regular alarms, and replace the batteries annually.

- ✓ Test all smoke alarms every month to ensure that they work properly.
- ✓ Devise a family fire escape plan and practice it every 6 months. Describe at least 2 different ways of escape from each room. Designate a safe place in front of the home for family members to meet after escaping a fire.
- ✓ If possible, install or retrofit fire sprinklers into your home.



Especially for the Holidays...

- ◆ Inspect holiday lights before use. Discard any with frayed wires, gaps in the insulation, broken or cracked sockets, or excessive wear.
- ◆ Turn off your lights before you leave home.
- ◆ Avoid overloading electrical outlets. Don't link more than 3 light strands unless the directions indicate it is safe to do so.
- ◆ Never leave lit candles unattended or put candles on a Christmas tree. Place lit menorahs or kinaras away from vents or flammable materials.
- ◆ If you use a real Christmas tree, make sure it is freshly cut and that it is kept in water at all times. Needles on fresh trees should be green and should not fall off easily. Don't put your tree up too early or leave it up longer than 2 weeks.
- ◆ If you use an artificial tree, make sure it is flame retardant.
- ◆ Place your Christmas tree in a safe place, away from heat sources such as a fireplace or heat vent.



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2009.

Turn Off the TV and Get Stronger!

Obesity isn't the only negative side effect of excessive television watching. A new Finnish study suggests that young adults who tune in to 2 hours or more of TV a day have low levels of muscular fitness regardless of their overall physical activity level.

"To our knowledge, our study is the first to report such an association," said researcher Tuija Tammelin. "It's possible that some young adults are doing basic levels of aerobic physical activity, but leaving out the important strength-training element."



Read how to do strength-building exercises:
www.wellsources.info/wn/strength.pdf

The problem of sedentary screen time (e.g., TV, movies, or computer activity), may be further magnified for American adults who, according to Nielsen ratings, watch approximately 142 hours of television a month on average, equal to more than 4 hours a day.

Instead of watching TV or being on the computer all evening, carve out 15-30 minutes to do strengthening exercises.

When you do watch TV, do pushups and curl-ups during commercials. Or try jump roping and lifting weights while watching movies.

American College of Sports Medicine. Nov. 2009.



Should You Exercise When You're Sick?

Many studies have shown a 25-50% decrease in sick time for active people who complete at least 45 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise (such as walking) most days of the week, according to David C. Nieman, DrPH, FACSM.

"This reduction in illness far exceeds anything a drug or pill can offer," Nieman said. "All it takes is a pair of walking shoes to help prevent becoming one of the thousands predicted to suffer from the common cold this winter."

However, if you're already sick and aren't sure whether to hit the gym or the couch, Nieman offers these tips:

- ✓ **DO exercise if your cold is confined to your head**, such as illnesses with runny noses and sore throats.
- ✓ **DON'T overdo it.** If you have a cold, keep exercise to a moderate-intensity level (i.e., walking). Studies have not shown any negative effects of moderate exercise for those suffering from common colds.

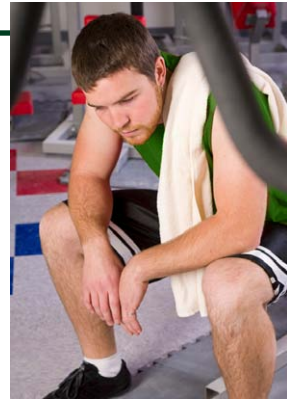
Moderate exercise prior to a flu shot can boost immunity.

- ✓ **DO stay in bed if your illness is "systemic"** – that is, beyond just the sniffles of a regular cold. Respiratory infections, fever, swollen glands, and extreme aches and pains are all good reasons to rest up instead of work out.

- ✓ **DON'T jump back in too soon.** If you're recovering from a more serious bout of cold or flu, gradually ease back into training after at least two weeks of rest.

Nieman also advises exercising prior to receiving a flu shot. Moderate-intensity exercise just before getting the shot has been shown to improve the body's response to the vaccine, boosting immunity.

American College of Sports Medicine. Nov. 2009.



Holiday Treats That Are Good For You!

Walnuts Help Your Heart

Several studies have shown that nuts are protective to the heart. A recent meta-analysis (combined results of 13 studies) showed that walnuts help lower blood cholesterol levels. The average reduction was about 10 points (mg/dL).

Other studies have shown that for every 1% your cholesterol levels drop, your risk of heart disease drops about 2%. That means by eating more nuts (walnuts in this study) you could drop your risk of a heart attack by about 20%. That's not a bad return for such a simple dietary change.

The researchers also found that weight gain was not a problem when walnuts were added to the diet.

Walnuts are a good food to include in a heart-healthy diet. Add them to granola, fruit salads, lettuce salads, and baked items (muffins, cookies, breads), or simply eat them by the handful.

American Journal of Clinical Nutrition. 2009.



Traditional Hot Wassail (Non-Alcoholic)

Wassail is a traditional holiday drink in the United Kingdom and other European countries. In ancient times, farmers celebrated the twelfth night after Christmas with greetings of "Waes Haeil!" (good health) and drank wassail in hopes of a good apple harvest. The original recipe was primarily ale and some spices. This recipe is a delicious modern alternative.

- 1 large orange stuck with whole cloves
- 1 gallon apple cider
- ¼ C lemon or orange juice
- 2 quarts other juice (try pineapple, cranberry, or peach)
- 6 cinnamon sticks

Insert cloves into the orange about 1/2" apart. Bake the orange in a 350° oven for about 30 minutes. Remove the orange and puncture it in several places with a fork or a small ice pick.



Place the orange and the remaining ingredients in a large, covered pot. Bring it to a boil and simmer it over low heat for 30 minutes. Transfer to a heat-proof punch bowl or hotpot. Float the orange and cinnamon sticks. Serve in heat-proof punch cups or mugs. Makes 30-40 servings.

History.uk.com. 2009.

ASK THE WELLNESS DOCTOR

Q: I'm allergic to dairy. How can I get enough calcium?

A: Go to www.wellsource.info/wn/ask-calcium.pdf to read the answer from Don Hall, DrPH, CHES.

To ask your question, email: well@wellsource.com, subject line: Ask the Wellness Doctor. Emails with any other subject line will be directed to the spam folder.

Health Challenge: "Stay Fit During the Holidays" available at: www.wellsource.info/wn/hc-StayFit.pdf. The days from Thanksgiving through New Year's present a special challenge for people trying to maintain a healthful lifestyle. This month, make smart food choices and stay physically active – at least 30 minutes daily.