

news & notes

AIR TRAVEL TIPS

If you're planning to travel by air this holiday season, remember these tips:

- Get a good night's sleep before your flight. This is especially important when you change time zones.
- Drink plenty of fluids before and during the flight so that you don't get dehydrated.
- Avoid caffeine and alcohol. They make you even more dehydrated.
- Get up and move around during the flight, if possible. If you have a layover, get off the plane and take a walk.
- When you arrive at your destination, take a walk or enjoy your favorite form of exercise. If you've changed time zones, exercise helps reset your body's inner clock.

WHY IS THAT?

Why does your mouth feel cool when you suck on a mint? When the mint comes in contact with your saliva, a chemical reaction begins. But to work, this reaction requires heat. So the heat is drawn from your tongue and mouth—and your mouth feels cool.



Most accidents occur around or under the house.



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Always on the Job

Use your safety sense at home, too

More people die and are injured in accidents at home than at work. Over 20,000 people die in home accidents every year, and more than 30 percent of all injuries occur at home. Like accidents on the job, most of these can be prevented. The largest number of serious accidents at home result from:

- Falls
- Fires
- Drowning
- Poisoning

Here's how to protect your family from falls:

- Keep floors, and especially halls and stairs, free of clutter. Don't stack magazines, tools, laundry, toys, or other items on the floor or steps.
- Make sure stairways are well lit.
- Check that all stairs, including those to the basement, have sturdy railings.
- Tack down any loose pieces of carpet or linoleum.
- Use nonskid mats or decals in bathtubs or showers.

Small children can drown in bathtubs, so NEVER leave them unattended. If you have a pool, make sure everyone knows how to swim and take these precautions:

- Never let anyone swim alone.
- Never let anyone swim when they're tired or have used drugs or alcohol.
- Fence in the pool and keep it locked when no one's there.
- Cover the pool when it's not in use.
- Learn CPR, so if there is an accident you'll be able to act quickly.

Here's how to prevent poisoning:

- Read labels on household cleaners, paints, and garden supplies, and follow their instructions for use, storage, and clean-up.
- Store cleaning solutions, pesticides, and other hazardous chemicals in places where children can't reach them.
- Keep containers closed when not in use.
- Dispose of old, used, or unlabeled substances properly. Find out about your town's or region's hazardous materials collection days.

Bring your safety sense home so you can always be on the job for the safety of yourself and your family.

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DECORATING DO'S AND DON'TS

The best places for holiday decorations are in lobbies, reception areas, and break rooms. Follow these recommendations:

DO USE

- Artificial trees and greenery made of noncombustible or fire-retardant materials or treated with flame retardant
- Nonbreakable decorations
- Flame-retardant paper or cloth decorations
- UL-approved holiday lights and extension cords only

DON'T USE

- Decorations made of flammable or combustible materials
- Electric lights on metallic trees
- Decorations that block emergency equipment, signs, and exits
- Lighted candles
- Stapling of light cords to the wall
- Cords in aisles, dangling over partitions or anywhere they could be tripped over
- Lights left on overnight or over weekends

OSHA FACTS

OSHA is a federal agency with 2,150 employees, including 1,100 inspectors, and an annual budget of nearly \$500 million. Since OSHA was created in 1971, the agency has helped to cut workplace fatalities by more than 60 percent and occupational injury and illness rates by 40 percent.



Wash Away Illness

How to prevent colds and flus—including H1N1

The second week of December is **National Handwashing Awareness Week**. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), frequent and careful handwashing is one of the best ways to prevent infection—and to keep you healthy and on the job.

Believe it or not, there's a right way to wash your hands effectively:

- Wet hands with clean running water (warm water if available) and apply soap.
- Rub hands together to make lather and scrub all surfaces. Pay particular attention to fingers, fingertips, and under fingernails where germs love to breed. Palms are heavy germ zones, too.
- Continue rubbing hands for 15-20 seconds—about the time it takes to sing "Happy Birthday" twice.
- Rinse hands well under running water.
- Dry hands using a paper towel or air dryer. If drying hands with a paper towel, use it to turn off the faucet.

If soap and clean water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub to clean your hands. Alcohol-based hand rubs significantly reduce the number of germs on skin and are fast acting.

- Apply product to the palm of one hand.
- Rub hands together.
- Rub the product over all surfaces of hands and fingers until hands are dry.

Joy to the World

Spirituality linked to better health

For many people, the holidays are a time of spiritual reflection, which is a good time to remember that spirituality is one of the foundations of a wellness lifestyle. Studies have shown the mind-body connection in our health profile. Patients with negative or stressful moods, for example, have been shown to develop more serious illnesses than those with positive outlooks. Another study revealed that people who reported positive emotions showed greater resistance against colds.

So how can you make the goodwill of the season last all year?

- **Have a regular quiet time.** Practice prayer or meditation to focus on the bigger picture in life and realign your priorities with what's important to you.
- **Contemplate a higher power.** Whether at church, synagogue, temple, mosque, a mountain meadow, or the open sea, explore your beliefs about the universe and your place in it.
- **Make meaningful connections with family and friends.** We are a communal species and draw strength and comfort from our relationships with each other. Studies have shown that chronically ill people fare better when they have people who care.
- **Volunteer.** Studies also show that helping others—whether they're struggling because of an economic downturn or a natural disaster—can increase your overall well-being.

These practices can give you a sense of purpose that leads to a fulfilling life.