

Up on the Roof Top ??

During the holiday season, emergency rooms across the U.S. see an increase in visits due to holiday-related injuries and illnesses. Read on to learn about some of the most common holiday injuries and how you can avoid them.

1. Decorating Injuries

Make sure that decking your halls doesn't land you with an injury! Every year, thousands of people end up in the emergency room due to decorating injuries. Many of these injuries involve falling from ladders while hanging lights or decorating the Christmas tree. To avoid a fall, use caution while decorating and follow these ladder-safety guidelines:

- Have someone hold the ladder and spot you
- Make sure the ladder is on a firm, level surface
- Stay in the center of the rung you're standing on
- Hold the side rails with both hands
- Position the ladder so you don't have to lean or reach up

2. Cooking or Carving Injuries

Emergency room visits for finger and hand lacerations spike during the holidays due to the misuse of knives and carving utensils. Be sure you are comfortable with the carving tools you are using and remember – **don't drink and carve!**

Deep frying turkey is a popular and dangerous holiday tradition. If the bird is wet or not totally thawed, it can catch on fire or even explode. Emergency rooms also see a lot of burns on the tops of the feet during the holidays. This injury occurs when cooks and kitchen helpers drop unusually heavy dishes onto their feet out of the oven.

3. When Good Food Goes Bad

Anaphylactic shock is a very common reason for ER visits during the holidays. Make sure that your hosts and your family know what your dietary restrictions are before they serve you, and remember: if anything looks suspect, it's better to be safe than to be sorry!

To avoid **food poisoning**, use a meat thermometer to avoid undercooking your turkey or other holiday dish. Also, if serving your food buffet style, make an effort to keep dishes at the appropriate temperatures, using warmers or ice buckets.

"Holiday Heart" is another common complaint during this time of year (as the name suggests). This is a term doctors have coined to reference the atrial fibrillation (irregular heartbeat) that can be caused by the overindulging that so often occurs during the holidays. Overeating and overdrinking can cause a surge of epinephrine or norepinephrine, which can cause irregular heart palpitations in a structurally normal heart. Normally, hydration will fix this holiday malady.

4. Substance Abuse

An increased number of visits due to alcohol poisonings and improperly used prescription drugs during this season. To avoid this common holiday catastrophe, follow these drug and alcohol safety tips:

- Always have a designated driver or use a taxi service to get home
- Keep prescription drugs put away and out of reach of children.
- Keep an eye on young children and minors at holiday get-togethers
- Know your limits and stick to them
- Stay hydrated.

5. Stress and anxiety: Anyone can feel the Holiday Blues!

Spending time with large numbers of family members, the extra social engagements, and preparations for the holiday season can make anybody feel a little stressed. Rates of depression, panic attacks, and anxiety climb during the holiday season. To combat the holiday blues or stress of the season, be sure to get enough sleep, schedule time to relax, and maintain a somewhat balanced diet and exercise routine. If you are feeling very overwhelmed don't be scared to reach out to family, friends, and/or a mental health professional to get the help that you need. (taken from :The Most Common Holiday ER Visits – And How to Avoid Them, Amelia Strickland, UCF Library)

Urgent Care or Emergency? For minor illnesses at times when you can't see your own doctor, an urgent care clinic or a call to a nurse hotline may be able to provide the care you need, as well as save you time and the high costs of an emergency room visit. Research the urgent care options available on your health plan. These guidelines can help you decide if you or someone else needs emergency attention:

Emergency Room/Call 911

Chest pain with shortness of breath and/or sweating

Difficulty breathing

Uncontrollable bleeding

Trauma or head injury

Severe injury, burns or electrical shock

Sudden dizziness, difficulty seeing, slurred speech, confusion

Numbness or Paralysis of limbs

Unconsciousness

Poisoning

Hold the Date!! Lunch & Learn will return on January 17 at Noon. Our guest speaker will be:

Misty Jenkins RN, BSN, ONC

Director of Orthopedics at MSHC

Misty has been a nurse for 22 years and was a graduate from ETSU. She is board certified in orthopedics, and currently pursuing a Master's in nursing.

Blood Pressure and Vital Signs will be on Dec. 31. I will be out of town Dec.23-29th.

Mary's Room is located in the Balcony Room for mothers with small children. You will find a large chair suitable for breast-feeding, a small bassinet, reading material and quiet games for the toddler or preschooler. Please feel free to visit during the Worship Hour.

Carol Jernigan, Parish Nurse, can be reached at 901-485-4280. Please contact me or the church office if you are hospitalized, need assistance for a medical appointment or have a question.

Carol Jernigan, Parish Nurse