



# WARREN COUNTY HEALTH DISTRICT

## Prevent-Promote-Protect



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## NEWS & INFORMATION

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[www.wcchd.com](http://www.wcchd.com)

### Holiday Safety Tips

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Family gatherings, special traditions, delicious treats — the holiday season may be the most wonderful time of the year, especially for kids. Unfortunately, for emergency room doctors it's also one of the busiest. Here are some simple steps to help keep your little ones safe from some common holiday dangers, so you and your family can enjoy a season that's happy and healthy:

- A lot of cooking goes on during the holiday season, so there are many opportunities for burns. Keep pot handles turned away from the front of the stove and always keep the oven door closed. To prevent accidents, watch children closely while you bake or cook.
- Keep breakable ornaments out



of young kids' reach — or keep them off the tree until your children are older.

- There is an increased incidence of car accidents and injuries to children during the holiday season. Parents can help prevent a holiday ER visit by making sure the kids are buckled up securely during car rides and by not driving after drinking alcohol.
- Mistletoe, holly, poinsettias, Jerusalem cherry plants, and other seasonal plants are commonly used as decorations during the holidays. Like many plants, these are considered potentially poisonous and should be kept out of the reach of children.
- Tree ornaments, light bulbs, icicles, tinsel, and small toys are

potential choking hazards for small children because they may block the airway. The general rule of thumb is that if it's small enough to fit in the mouths of babies and toddlers, it's too small to play with.

- Food poisoning is another potential holiday hazard. Practice food safety by following these 4 simple steps :  
**Clean:** Clean surfaces and hands frequently.  
**Separate:** Don't cross contaminate. Keep raw meats, eggs and seafood separate from ready to eat foods.  
**Cook:** Cook all foods to the correct temperature.  
**Chill:** Refrigerate perishable foods within 2 hours.  
For more holiday safety tips visit [www.wcchd.com](http://www.wcchd.com) or [www.cdc.gov/family/holiday](http://www.cdc.gov/family/holiday)

### Eggnog

Eggnog may be safely made at home by using whole or liquid eggs that are pasteurized rather than whole raw eggs which may contain salmonella. Pasteurized eggs are found next to regular eggs at the store. Egg substitutes can also be used. These products are pasteurized which means that they have been heated to the point that will kill bacteria. If you must use regular eggs that have not been pasteurized, use a recipe in which you cook

the egg mixture to 160° F. At 160° F., the egg mixture thickens enough to coat a spoon. Follow the recipe carefully and refrigerate the prepared product immediately. When refrigerating a large quantity of eggnog, divide it into several smaller containers so that it will cool quickly. If a recipe calls for folding raw, beaten egg whites into



the eggnog, use pasteurized eggs. It has not been proven that raw egg whites are free of salmonella bacteria. If you purchase eggnog from your local grocery store, the product has been pasteurized and you do not need to cook it. The holidays are usually hectic and by following these tips on the use of raw eggs vs. pasteurized eggs, you will have one less worry on your list.

## Hot Water Heater Safety

The majority of injuries and deaths involving tap water scalds are to the elderly and children under the age of five. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) urges all users to lower their water heaters to **120 degrees Fahrenheit**.

In addition to preventing accidents, this decrease in temperature will conserve energy and save money. Most adults will suffer third-degree burns if exposed to 150 degree water for two seconds. Burns will also occur with a six-second exposure to 140 de-

gree water or with a thirty second exposure to 130 degree water. Even if the temperature is 120 degrees, a five minute exposure could result in third-degree burns. Various procedures for lowering water temperature in the home exist, depending on the method of heating. Here are some suggestions: **Electric water heaters.** Call your local electric company to adjust the thermostat. Some companies offer this service at no-charge. Hot water should not be used for at least two hours prior to setting. To make the adjustment your-

self, start by shutting off current to the water heater, then turn off the circuit breaker to the heater or remove the fuse that serves the heater. Most electric water heaters have two thermostats, both of which must be set to a common tem-

perature for proper operation. To reach these thermostats you must remove the upper and lower access panels. Adjust the thermostat following the instructions provided with the appliance. Hold a candy or meat thermometer under the faucet to

check water temperature.

**Gas water heaters.** Because thermostats differ, call your local gas company for instructions. Where precise temperatures are not given, hold a candy or meat thermometer under faucet for most accurate reading first thing in the morning or at least two hours after water use. If reading is too high, adjust thermostat on heater, according to manufacturer's instructions, and check again with thermometer.

**Furnace heater.** If you do not have an electric, gas, or oil-fired water heater,

you probably have an on-line hot water system. Contact your fuel supplier to have the temperature lowered. If you live in an apartment, contact the building manager to discuss possible options for lowering your tap water temperature. Reducing water temperature will not affect the heating capacity of the furnace. CPSC notes that a thermostat setting of 120 degrees Fahrenheit (49 degrees Celsius) may be necessary for residential water heaters to reduce or eliminate the risk of most tap water scald injuries.

Consumers should consider lowering the thermostat to the lowest settings that will satisfy hot water needs for all clothing and dish washing machines. Never take hot water temperature for granted. Always hand-test before using, especially when bathing infants and young children. Leaving a child unsupervised in the bathroom, even if only for a second, could cause serious injuries. Your presence at all times is the best defense against accidents and scalding to infants and young children.

For more information visit

[www.cpsc.gov/Safety-Education/Safety-Guides](http://www.cpsc.gov/Safety-Education/Safety-Guides)



**Caution  
Very hot water**

## It's Not Too Late to Get A Flu Shot

The Centers for Disease Control and the Warren County Health District recommends a yearly flu vaccine as the first and most important step in protecting against flu viruses.

The Warren County Health District is currently offering flu shots to individuals 6 months of age and older, by appointment. Flu shots are \$25.00. Contracted Private Insurance, Medicaid and most Medicaid managed care plans are accepted. Please call 513-695-1229 to schedule your appointment..

You can also take daily steps to pre-

vent the spread of the flu:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water.
- Try to avoid contact with sick people.
- Stay home if you are sick with flu like symptoms.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Cover your cough/sneeze with a tissue.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces/objects that may be contaminated with germs like the flu..

*The Offices of the  
Warren County  
Health District will be  
closed December 25th and  
January 1st.*

