

## Practice Safety, the Best Gift of All This Holiday Season

December 21, 2011 |

**T**he UC San Diego Division of Trauma, Surgical Critical Care & Burns offers these holiday safety tips to insure an enjoyable time for everyone:

**Holiday Sweets & Treats:** Prevent overindulgence by keeping cookies and candies out of the reach of children. Keep in mind that nuts, in particular, may cause allergic reactions. Limit sweets for diabetics and remember that small edibles may pose a choking hazard to children.

**Poisonous Plants:** Holiday plants such as holly berries, poinsettia plants, and mistletoe leaves are poisonous. Keep these plants out of the reach of little ones and family pets. If your child does ingest any poisonous plants, contact Poison Control at 1-800-876-4766.

**Décor & Trimmings:** Decorations may lead to unexpected slips and falls. Scatter rugs and long table cloths are potential tripping hazards while glass figurines and bulbs can shatter and cut little fingers. Use unbreakable décor or place delicate decorations up high.

**Lights, Candles & Batteries:** Holiday lights and candles can cause burn injuries, which are common during the holidays, as are tree and house fires. Be sure to test your smoke detectors and keep in mind that flameless candles and musical cards may contain small batteries that can be lethal if swallowed.

**Ribbon & Wrapping:** Ribbons and plastic bags can cause accidental suffocation. Immediately pick up and throw away used wrapping and don't burn it in your fireplace; it can clog your chimney. Be sure children's gifts are age appropriate. If not, exchange them or put them away until they're older.

**Closet & Pool Check:** Put coats and bags in a designated closet; visitors' purses often contain medicine, coins and other dangers. Lock cabinets with cleaning supplies and keep the garage door shut. Make sure to check for unfenced pools and spas when visiting friends' or relatives' homes.

**Alcohol & Spirits:** Alcohol during get-togethers should be kept out of the reach of children and teens. Alcohol is toxic and can cause death in infants and toddlers. Limit consumption, and never drink and drive. More than 17,000 people died in alcohol related crashes last year.

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