



Holiday Tips

for People with Asthma or Allergies

The holiday season is just around the corner! For many people with asthma or allergies, it may be a difficult time of year to manage their illness. Following the tips below can help you stay healthy and enjoy all the festivities and celebrations.

Take care of yourself and enjoy the holidays!

Enjoy the Season

When attending holiday social events, be aware of allergens or irritants that may be present. Smoke, animal allergens and perfumes can trigger asthma and allergy symptoms. Talk with your doctor about pre-treating with an inhaled bronchodilator medication and antihistamine before attending social events.

- * Your doctor may also recommend pre-treatment before attending church or synagogue. Candle smoke, incense and perfume can irritate sensitive airways.
- * If you have an allergy to spruce, pine or evergreen trees, it may be best to avoid live Christmas trees, garlands and wreaths. In addition, live evergreens are a common source of mold.
- * Seasonal decorations have lots of dust. Your doctor may recommend pre-treating before handling decorations or decorating artificial trees.
- * Choosing foods to eat at parties and buffets may be difficult if you have food allergies. Check with the host for recipes and ingredients.
- * Remember, if you have gastroesophageal reflux, alcohol and over-eating may increase reflux. Reflux can trigger asthma symptoms. Drink and eat in moderation.

Healthy Habits for the Holidays

- * Be sure to get enough rest.
- * If you have asthma, monitor peak flow numbers regularly.
- * Even though your normal, daily routine may be disrupted, don't forget to take your medications at regularly scheduled times.
- * Take time out to take good care of your asthma or allergies.

Tips for Travel and Vacations During the Holidays

- * Pack all of your asthma and allergy medications. Make sure your medications are up-to date and you have packed extra. It is also important to pack emergency medications prescribed by your doctor (i.e. oral steroids, epinephrine injection kits).
- * If you use a nebulizer, be sure to take it with you on your holiday trip. In addition, pack all necessary supplies; nebulizer cups, pediatric masks, tubing, saline preparation, etc.
- * If you are sensitive to dust mites, pack your own allergy-proof mattress encasing and pillow cover, especially when traveling to a humid climate.
- * Be prepared in case you need to access emergency care. Locate hospitals and pharmacies within the area of your travel destination.