

Road to **WELLfluent**™

Embrace better health.

December is Safe Toys and Gifts Month

When it comes to toys and gifts, the excitement and desire to get your children their favorite toys may cause shoppers to forget about safety factors associated with them. Before you make these purchases, it is critical to remember to consider the safety and age range of the toys.

Prevent Blindness America has declared December as Safe Toys and Gifts Awareness Month. The group encourages everyone to consider if the toys they wish to give suit the age and individual skills and abilities of the individual child who will receive it, especially for infants and children under age three.

This holiday season (and beyond), please consider the following guidelines for choosing safe toys for all ages:

- Inspect all toys before purchasing. Avoid those that shoot or include parts that fly off. The toy should have no sharp edges or points and should be sturdy enough to withstand impact without breaking, being crushed, or being pulled apart easily.
- When purchasing **toys for children with special needs** try to: Choose toys that may appeal to different senses such as sound, movement, and texture; consider interactive toys to allow the child to play with others; and think about the size of the toy and the position a child would need to be in to play with it. Consult the "AblePlay" website at <http://www.ableplay.org/> for more information.
- Be diligent about inspecting toys your child has received. Check them for age, skill level, and developmental appropriateness before allowing them to be played with.
- Look for labels that assure you the toys have passed a safety inspection – "ATSM" means the toy has met the American Society for Testing and Materials standards.
- Gifts of sports equipment should always be accompanied by protective gear (give a helmet with the skateboard)



- Keep kids safe from **lead in toys** by: Educating yourself about lead exposure from toys, symptoms of lead poisoning, and what kinds of toys have been recalled; being aware that old toys may be more likely to contain lead in the paint; having your children wash their hands frequently and calling your doctor if you suspect your child has been exposed to lead. Do **NOT** give toys with small parts (including magnets and "button" batteries which can cause serious injury or death if ingested) to young children as they tend to put things in their mouths, increasing the risk of choking. If the pieces can fit inside a toilet paper roll, it is not appropriate for kids under age three.
- Do **NOT** give toys with ropes and cords or heating elements
- Do **NOT** give crayons and markers unless they are labeled "nontoxic".

Source: <https://www.healthtradition.com/december-is-safe-toys-and-gifts-month/>

GIVE YOURSELF THE GIFT OF HEALTH!



The end of the year is full of activities. Family, work obligations and the holidays can keep you running constantly, without the time to consider other important things – such as whether you have taken advantage of all of the healthcare and dental benefits covered by your health plan.

1. Have an Annual Wellness Visit

Getting a physical each year is one of the most important things you can do for your health. An annual well visit makes it easier for your doctor to spot problems earlier when they are easier to treat. AvMed Members pay \$0 copay for an annual preventive visit every 12 months.

2. Check Your Prescriptions

If you do see your doctor, have him or her review your medications to make sure they are safe and right for you. If side effects have been a problem for you, talk to your doctor about ways to minimize or avoid the side effects altogether. Make sure you take all medications as directed by your doctor.

3. Get Your Screenings

Preventive health screenings can save your life. By getting the screenings you need, your doctor is more likely to identify health issues earlier when they are easier to treat. Check with your doctor to see which screenings are right for you.

4. Watch Your Diet

Even though there will be a lot of tempting treats available, indulge in moderation, stick to your healthy diet in between holiday celebrations to minimize the damage to your health and weight control plan.

5. Stay Active

Regular exercise is one of the keys to staying healthy and can help improve your strength, stamina, energy, and mood. It also helps you to maintain a healthy weight. Join a health club that offers instructor-led fitness class (such as aerobics, Pilates, Tai Chi, or yoga), nutritional counseling sessions, wellness programs and more. AvMed can help with our fitness center discount program, Active&Fit Direct™ (AFD). To access AFD, log into your **AvMed.org** account, select Services & Programs and then click Wellness Programs.

6. Get your Flu Shot

It's still not too late to get a flu shot! Incidence of flu do rise during the holidays when stress is high, people are traveling and taking care of yourself is not always front and center in your mind. The flu season usually peaks in January and February, so protect yourself during the holidays and well into the New Year. People most at risk for complications of the flu are young children, pregnant women, adults 65 years and older and anyone with chronic health conditions. National Influenza Vaccination Week (NIWW) is December 2-8. For more information go to <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/resource-center/nivw/index.htm>.

Wash Your Hands Often to Stay Healthy

You can help yourself and others stay healthy by washing your hands often, especially during these key times when you are likely to get and spread germs:

- **Before, during,** and after preparing food
- **Before** eating food
- **Before** and **after** caring for someone who is sick
- **Before** and **after** treating a cut or wound
- **After** blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- **After** using the bathroom
- **After** changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the bathroom
- **After** touching an animal, animal feed, or animal waste
- **After** touching garbage.

Follow Five Steps to Wash Your Hands the Right Way

Washing your hands is easy, and it's one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of germs. Clean hands can stop germs from spreading from one person to another and throughout an entire community—from your home and workplace to childcare facilities and hospitals.

Follow these five steps every time.

- **Wet** your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
- **Lather** your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
- **Scrub** your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice.
- **Rinse** your hands well under clean, running water.
- **Dry** your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.



Why? Read the science behind the recommendations.

Use Hand Sanitizer Only When You Can't Use Soap and Water.

Washing hands with soap and water is the best way to get rid of germs in most situations. You can use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available. You can tell if the sanitizer contains at least 60% alcohol by looking at the product label.

Remember these key facts about alcohol-based hand sanitizers.

- Sanitizers can quickly reduce the number of germs on hands in some situations.
 - Sanitizers **do not** get rid of all types of germs.
 - Hand sanitizers may not be as effective when hands are visibly dirty or greasy.
 - Hand sanitizers might not remove harmful chemicals from hands like pesticides and heavy metals.
- Be cautious when using hand sanitizers around children. Swallowing alcohol-based hand sanitizers can cause alcohol poisoning if more than a couple mouthfuls is swallowed.

How to Use Hand Sanitizer

- Apply the gel to the palm of one hand (read the label to learn the correct amount).
- Rub your hands together.
- Rub the gel over all surfaces of your hands and fingers until your hands are dry.

For more information on handwashing, please visit CDC's Handwashing website. You can also call 1-800-CDC-INFO or contact CDC-INFO for answers to specific questions.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/features/handwashing/index.html>

On behalf of all of us at AvMed, best wishes for Peace & Joy this Holiday Season. We hope the New Year brings you happiness, good health and prosperity; and we wish you and your family the very best in 2019!

Happy Holidays

DECEMBER EVENTS

Date	Time	Event	Location	Description
Sunday 12/2/18	7:00 am	Reindeer Run Half Marathon 13.1M, 5K run kids run	Main Beach Park, Corner of Atlantic Ave. and S. Fletcher Ave. Fernandina Beach	This race will surely get you in the Christmas spirit! All the events start and end at Main Beach Park located on what we like to think of as our paradise... Amelia Island, Florida. The 5K and kids runs will run through the north part of Main Beach neighborhoods, where you will be welcomed by cheering neighbors and Christmas carolers throughout the route! http://www.ameliarunners.com/reindeer-run
Saturday 12/15/18	7:00 am	Ameris Bank Jacksonville Marathon	The Bolles School 7400 San Jose Blvd. Jacksonville, FL 32217	Ameris Bank is proud to carry on the tradition of the Jacksonville Marathon, the oldest marathon in Jacksonville, Florida. In its 36th year, this race celebrates the beauty of Jacksonville while providing a course that provides shade and flat planes. Whether you're an experienced competitor, or a first-timer, we invite you to experience Jacksonville through the eyes of the Ameris Bank Jacksonville Marathon. Runners can qualify for the Boston Marathon for the next two years if spaces are still available https://www.amerisbank.com/jacksonville-marathon/
Sunday 12/16/18	7:30 am	2018 Miami Jingle Bell Jog 5K	Miami Museum Park, 1075 Biscayne Blvd., Miami, FL 33132	The Miami Jingle Bell Jog 5K is an annual running event that champions all things associated with the festive winter holidays... Jingle Bells, Santa, Mistletoe, Egg Nog, Reindeer, Elves! Most events give out a shirt with your entry; not this event! All participants will receive a Santa Suit costume! You will also receive a pair of Jingle Bells to tie to your running shoes! The sights and sounds of running Santa's will take over Museum Park in Miami! All finishers will be treated with a Holiday themed medal! http://jinglebelljog.net/miami/ http://jinglebelljog.net/miami/

A Wellness Newsletter for AvMed Members



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