

November 29, 2018

## DOH-COLLIER HIGHLIGHTS TIPS FOR A SAFE AND HEALTHY HOLIDAY SEASON

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**Naples, Fla.** — November 30<sup>th</sup> marks the end of hurricane season and beginning of the holiday season. The Florida Department of Health in Collier County (DOH-Collier) wants to remind residents and visitors to remain safe and healthy this holiday season by following these holiday health and safety tips:

**Food Safety** – Refreshing your knowledge on food safety is important to ensure you, your family, and your guests are kept safe from food poisoning. There are four simple steps to food safety – clean, separate, cook, and chill. Clean your hands before and after handling food, using the restroom, changing diapers, or handling pets. Wash your dishes, utensils, cutting boards and counter tops after preparing each food item, especially raw meat, poultry, eggs, or seafood. Fruits and vegetables should be washed thoroughly before eating or chopping. Use a separate cutting board for meats and produce and never place cooked food on a plate that had raw meat on it. A food thermometer can ensure food is cooked to a safe temperature that kills bacteria. Beef, lamb, pork, veal, and roasts should be cooked to at least 145° F and poultry to at least 165° F. Baking holiday cookies is a popular holiday tradition, but raw dough and batter made with flour or eggs can contain bacteria including E. coli and Salmonella. Never taste raw dough or batter of any kind.

**Stay Flu Free** – DOH-Collier urges residents to get the flu vaccine now. There are still weeks of flu activity to come. It is not too late to get the flu vaccine. The flu vaccine is safe, and recommended for everyone six months and older, including pregnant women. Stay home from work and keep children home from school or daycare when sick to help prevent spreading illness to others.

**Falls and Injury Prevention** –The U.S Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) estimated that in 2016, there were 14,700 holiday decorating related ER-treated injuries with an average of 240 per day during the holiday season of November and December. To prevent falls and injuries, DOH-Collier recommends working as a team when stringing lights and decorations. If you are using a ladder, have someone support the base to prevent any mishaps.

**Stay Warm Safely** - Heat your home safely. If you plan to use a wood stove, fireplace, or space heater, be extremely careful. Never leave flames and fires unattended and keep them away from children and pets. Do not use generators, grills, or other gas or charcoal burning devices inside your home or garage as it increases the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning. Carbon monoxide is odorless and cannot be seen, so installing a carbon monoxide detector is a sure way to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.

**Watch Children** – If you are having small guests for the holidays, double check your home for items that should not be within their reach including choking hazards, household items,

electronics, toys, and drinks. Also keep in mind any gifts you give to children are age appropriate and are not in a current recall.

**Eat Healthy, Stay Active** – It can be difficult during the holiday season to eat healthy, but with balance and moderation, you can still enjoy your favorite holiday foods without compromising your health. Practice portion control with foods high in calories, sugar and salt and try emphasizing vegetables, fruits and whole grains in your diet. Physical activity has shown to have both short-term and long-term health benefits including improved cognition and reduced risk in chronic disease.

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