



# Wellness Newsletter

Augusta Technical College

## World AIDS Day Is December 1st

According to UNAIDS estimates, there are now 33.2 million people living with HIV, including 2.5 million children. During 2007 some 2.5 million people became newly infected with the virus. Around half of all people who become infected with HIV do so before they are 25 and are killed by AIDS before they are 35.

Around 95% of people with HIV/AIDS live in developing nations. But HIV today is a threat to men, women and children on all continents around the world.

Started on 1st December 1988, World

AIDS Day is not just about raising money, but also about increasing awareness, fighting prejudice and improving education. World AIDS Day is important in reminding people that HIV has not gone away, and that there are many things still to be done.



To learn how you can help in the fight against HIV/AIDS check out this website:

<http://www.avert.org/worldaid.htm>

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### National Health Observances

- *National Aplastic Anemia and MDS Awareness Week (1st—7th)*
- *National Drunk & Drugged Driving Prevention Month*
- *National Hand-washing Awareness Week (2nd-8th)*
- *Safe Toys & Gifts Month*
- *World AIDS Day (1st)*

## Toy Safety Tips for the Holiday

As the holiday season approaches, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) urges gift-givers to keep safety in mind when choosing toys for young children. The CPSC estimates that more than 120,000 children are treated in hospital emergency rooms for toy-related injuries each year.

"Toys are an important part of holiday gift-giving, and CPSC is on the job 365 days a year to make sure toys are as safe as possible," said CPSC chairman Ann Brown. "CPSC's goal is to prevent deaths and injuries; unfortunately, each year some children are hurt by toys. By always reading labels and being safety conscious, parents and caregivers can help prevent toy-related injuries."



three to six years old if the toys pose a choking hazard to children under age three. These labels tell consumers two critical things: that a toy is not safe for younger children and why it is not safe. Before CPSC issued these labeling requirements, it was more difficult for consumers to know that certain toys they bought for older children could be a danger to younger kids. CPSC has the most stringent toy-safety standards in the world, and toys on store shelves are safer because of the day-to-day compliance work by

CPSC requires labels to be on all toys marketed for children from

CPSC.

### Choosing Appropriate Toys

Parents and gift-givers can help prevent toy-related injuries and deaths by always reading labels and being safety conscious. The following tips will help you choose appropriate toys this holiday season -- and all year round:

- \* Select toys to suit the age, abilities, skills, and interest level of the intended child. Toys too advanced may pose safety hazards to younger children.
- \* For infants, toddlers, and all children who still mouth objects, avoid toys with small parts which could pose a fatal choking hazard.

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- \* For all children under age eight, avoid toys that have sharp edges and points.
- \* Do not purchase electric toys with heating elements for children under age eight.
- \* Be a label reader. Look for labels that give age recommendations and use that information as a guide.
- \* Look for sturdy construction, such

as tightly secured eyes, noses, and other potential small parts.

- \* Check instructions for clarity. They should be clear to you, and when appropriate, to the child.
- \* Discard plastic wrappings on toys immediately, which can cause suffocation, before they become deadly playthings.

By using common sense and these

safety suggestions, holiday shoppers can make informed decisions when purchasing toys for children.

<http://fun.familyeducation.com/>

Checkout this Website to learn more about Toy Recalls:

<http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/prere/category/toy.html>

## Cold & Flu Prevention Checklist

With the Flu Season here it is important for you to follow some simple guidelines to keep from being sidelined by illness:

### **Get Vaccinated**

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the single best way to avoid getting the flu is to get a vaccination. Senior citizens and children under 5 are most strongly urged to get a flu shot, but it's a good idea for anyone.

### **Stay Home If You're Sick**

We want to teach our kids the importance of working hard, but it's just good sense to stay home from work or school when you're sick, to prevent the spread of cold and flu germs.

### **Keep Your Hands Clean**

You never know what germs you might be picking up in the course of the day. It's a good idea to wash your hands frequently, especially before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing, sneezing, or using the bathroom. Use warm water and soap, and make sure you lather up

for 20 seconds!

### **Cover Your Nose and Mouth When Coughing or Sneezing**

Avoid spreading cold and flu germs to others by coughing or sneezing into a tissue. If none is available, don't cough or sneeze into your hands! Instead, turn your head away from nearby people and, if necessary, aim for your shoulder.

### **Don't Touch Your Eyes, Nose, or Mouth**

Germs that might otherwise languish on your hands can easily infiltrate your system when you rub your face. Try to keep your hands away from your face as much as you reasonably can.

### **Get Plenty of Rest**

Your body works overtime to hunt and destroy harmful germs when you're resting or relaxed, but high stress levels leave you susceptible to invasion. Get some rest and give your white blood cells the time they need to do their job.

### **Avoid Unnecessary Close Contact**

It's an unfortunate fact that a person can spread flu germs a full day before exhibiting symptoms, and then up to five days after that. Steer clear of those with flu-like symptoms - they'll understand. And if you're sick, avoid close contact with others.

### **Eat Plenty of Fruits and Vegetables**

Eating right is always important, but particularly during cold and flu season. The vitamins and minerals found in fruits and vegetables can buttress your body's immune system against invaders.

### **Get Fresh Air and Exercise**

It's a myth that low temperatures cause cold and flu. In fact, the culprit is increased, prolonged contact with greater numbers of people. Going outside for a walk means you'll get exercise and get away from potential germ-bearers.

Information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention was used in compiling this checklist.

<http://life.familyeducation.com/>

## Black Bean Dip from Healthy Choice ®

- 1 can (15 oz each) Ranch Style® Black Beans, drained, rinsed
- 1 can (14.5 oz each) Hunt's® Petite Diced Tomatoes, drained
- 1 large green bell pepper, chopped (1 large pepper = about 1 cup)
- 2 green onions, sliced (2 onions = about 1/2 cup)
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

- 2 Serrano peppers, seeded, chopped
- 1 jalapeno pepper, seeded, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- Baked tortilla chips, optional

Combine beans, tomatoes, bell peppers, onions, cilantro, lemon juice, Serrano peppers, jalapeno peppers, garlic, cumin and salt in medium bowl. Cover. Refrigerate at least 4 hours to allow flavors to blend, stirring occasionally. Serve with the tortilla chips, if desired.

## Holiday Stress-Busters: Advice for Parents

The Holidays are right around the corner—are you having fun yet? If you are, Ann Vernon would be surprised. As a counseling professor at the University of Northern Iowa with her own private practice, Vernon hears from a lot of exhausted parents this time of year. She says, “Most are striving for the Currier and Ives Christmas of their childhood, but in reality they’re dreading the holidays.”

How can you beat back the dread and have the family holiday of your dreams? “Start by lowering your expectations,” advises Vernon. “Be more realistic about what you can do. This usually involves changing the tradition—it can be equally as good, but it has to be unique to your family.”

The following tips can help:

### 1. Reassess and Prioritize

Holiday stress sets in when you try to do it all. “Stress is an emotional reaction to circumstances that you feel are out of control,” says Vernon. “To cope, take some time out, rethink what’s stressing you out, and look for alternatives.” Vernon also advises changing your demands to preferences: Tell yourself, “If I have time, I’ll do this and that. If not, I’ll only do that.”

### 2. Delegate!

Does the house need cleaning or decorating? Let each family member be responsible for a room. Or Vernon suggests, create a “job jar.” Everybody takes a turn choosing what is his or her job will be. Jobs can be color-coded according to age. “When you delegate, you have to make your expectations clear to your kids, and you may have to lower your standards a little bit,” says Vernon.

### 3. Don't Give in to the "Gimmies"

“I want, I want!” This familiar phrase can wear parents down over the holidays, but giving in to your child’s every request can cause financial distress. Psychologist Dorothy Cantor says, “It’s okay to tell your child that a gift is too expensive. Tell him that even Santa Claus has limited funds.”

Another way to fight the commercialism of the holidays is to beef up on the traditions that don’t cost any extra money. Vernon says, “Bake cookies, go caroling, give to needy families, or volunteer. Explain to your kids that there are a lot of families who don’t have as much as they do.” To get kids into the spirit of giving, ask them to pick a few of their old toys to donate to the less fortunate.

### 4. Be Realistic About Relatives

When the in-laws visit this season, have realistic expectations for the short term. “Don’t try to solve past issues with family members over the holidays,” warns Vernon. “It’s not the time to bring up every little irritation. Use discretion.” And if going to a certain relative’s house every year causes a lot of holiday stress, decide if you really need to do it. Maybe you can go every other year instead.

### 5. Flexibility Can Buy You Time

How can you get anything done when the little ones are home on vacation and you only have a few days off? University of Indiana education professor Janette Shaw suggests parents take turns looking after kids with neighbors or colleagues. And Vernon recommends hiring a babysitter to take the kids to the movies or to play with them for a few hours while you’re working around the house.

### 6. Set Limits for College Kids

A college student home for the holidays can wreak havoc on family routines. For months now, your teen has been on his own and doing things very differently. The disruption could be your son staying out too late catching up with his high school friends. Or perhaps your daughter is now accustomed to sleeping with the radio blaring. Whatever the case, you’ll need to set some ground rules in advance. “Everyone’s going to have to compromise during the visit,” says Vernon. “So it’s important that parents and kids be respectful of each other.”

Above all else, Vernon says parents should take it easy on themselves over the holidays: “This time of year, people are so concerned by what others might say about them if they don’t do everything perfectly.” Ask yourself what imperfection *really* means. Surprise! You’re human — like everyone else.

### Five Signs You Need to Bust Some Holiday Stress

- You’re irritable.
- You’re losing sleep.
- You’re losing or gaining weight (this can be hard to tell around the holidays — it could just be all the good food).
- You feel tense — with muscle aches or headaches.
- You feel overwhelmed.



## Holiday Fire-Safety Tips

As the holidays approach, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is urging people to look for and eliminate potential dangers from holiday lights and decorations that could lead to fires and injuries.

Each year, hospital emergency rooms treat about 8,100 people for injuries, such as falls, cuts, and shocks related to holiday lights, decorations, and Christmas trees. In addition, Christmas trees are involved in more than 400 fires annually, resulting in 30 deaths, 90 injuries, and an average of more than \$17 million in property loss and damage. Have a safe and happy holiday season by following these safety tips.

### Trees

- When purchasing an artificial tree, look for the label "Fire Resistant." Although this label does not mean the tree won't catch fire, it does indicate the tree will resist burning and should extinguish quickly.
- When purchasing a live tree, check for freshness. A fresh tree is green; needles are hard to pull from branches and when bent between your fingers, needles do not break. The trunk butt of a fresh tree is sticky with resin, and when tapped on the ground, the tree should not lose many needles.
- When setting up a tree at home, place it away from fireplaces and radiators. Because heated rooms dry live trees out rapidly, be sure to keep the stand filled with water. Place the tree out of the way of traffic and do not block doorways.

### Lights

- Indoors or outside, use only lights that have been tested for safety by a recognized testing laboratory, which indicates conformance with safety standards.
- Check each set of lights, new or old, for broken or cracked sockets, frayed or bare wires, or loose connections, and throw out damaged sets.
- Use no more than three standard-size sets of lights per single extension cord.
- Never use electric lights on a metallic tree. The tree can become charged with electricity from faulty lights, and a person touching a branch could be electrocuted.
- Fasten outdoor lights securely to trees, house walls, or other firm supports to protect the lights from wind damage. Use only insulated staples, not nails or tacks, to hold strings in place. Or, run strings of lights through hooks (available at hardware stores).
- Turn off all lights when you go to bed or leave the house. The lights could short out and start a fire.
- For added electric-shock protection, plug outdoor electric lights and decorations into circuits protected by ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs). Portable out-

door GFCIs can be purchased where electrical supplies are sold. GFCIs can be installed permanently to household circuits by a qualified electrician.

### Decorations

- Use only non-combustible or flame-resistant materials to trim a tree. Choose tinsel or artificial icicles of plastic or nonleaded metals. Leaded materials are hazardous if ingested by children.
- Never use lighted candles on a tree or near other evergreens. Always use non-flammable holders, and place candles where they will not be knocked down.
- In homes with small children, take special care to avoid decorations that are sharp or breakable, keep trimmings with small removable parts out of the reach of children to avoid the child swallowing or inhaling small pieces, and avoid trimmings that resemble candy or food that may tempt a child to eat them.
- Wear gloves to avoid eye and skin irritation while decorating with spun glass "angel hair." Follow container directions carefully to avoid lung irritation while decorating with artificial snow sprays.

### Fireplaces

- Use care with "fire salts," which produce colored flames when thrown on wood fires. They contain heavy metals that can cause intense gastrointestinal irritation and vomiting if eaten. Keep them away from children.
- Do not burn wrapping papers in the fireplace. A flash fire may result as wrappings ignite suddenly and burn intensely.

For more holiday safety tips:

<http://fun.familyeducation.com/>

