

Ask A Nurse Newsletter

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What is the "Ask a Nurse" Program?

The ASK A NURSE program is staffed by University of Delaware nursing faculty and graduate and undergraduate nursing students.

Our mission is to provide health and wellness education and programs to children and families.

Reach us at askanurse@udel.edu



December is National Hand washing Month

YOU DEE says...

1. WASH your hands when they are dirty and BEFORE eating.
2. DO NOT cough into your hands.
3. DO NOT sneeze into your hands.
4. Above all, DO NOT put your fingers into your eyes, nose, or mouth
5. Sing the Happy Birthday Song twice while washing your hands. That's enough time to get them really clean!



HOW TO OVERCOME HOLIDAY STRESS

Stress is a normal part of life. However, too much stress can make you feel bad and make it easier for you to get ill. Stress can take on many different forms. Common symptoms of stress include headache, problems sleeping, difficulty concentrating, short-temper, upset stomach, and dissatisfaction with job/life, depression, and anxiety.

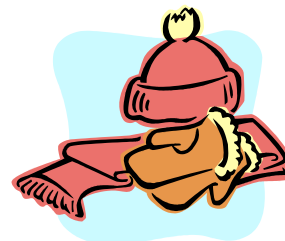
Holidays can be a time of increased stress. Very often people feel overwhelmed with having too many things to do and not enough time or help. To overcome the stress of the holidays, learn ways to help handle your stress. Here are a few things you can do to help reduce the effects of stress on your life.

- Exercise for 20 to 30 minutes at least 3 times per week
- Look at what is upsetting you. Can you change or pass up these things?
- Learn to relax. Listen to music, watch movies, read a book, take walks
- Get enough sleep
- Eat 3 to 6 small, balanced meals each day
- Decrease your caffeine and alcohol intake
- Use positive thinking and humor
- Get professional help if you continue to have problems with excess stress

For more information about stress, visit the following Internet sites.

<http://www.4woman.gov/faq/stress.htm>

<http://www.stress.org/>



Smart Snacking Is Great For the Whole Family!

Snack Tips

- Plan snacks as a part of the day's food plan.
- When shopping, let children help pick out fruits, vegetables, and cheeses for snacks. They will be more interested in eating these foods if they have been involved in selecting them.
- Set aside a "snack spot" in the refrigerator and cupboard; keep it stocked with nutritious ready-to-eat snacks.
- Offer snacks at regular times, such as midmorning and midafternoon. Don't let children nibble constantly during the day.
- Avoid high sugar, fatty and salty snacks, such as candy and soda.

Snacks are a good way to introduce new foods. Include a game or activity to learn about the new food and let the child help prepare it.

Ideas for quick healthy snacks:

- ✓ Whole fruits, sliced
- ✓ Berries
- ✓ Raw, cut-up vegetables
- ✓ String cheese
- ✓ Frozen yogurt
- ✓ Graham crackers
- ✓ $\frac{1}{2}$ a bagel with peanut butter

Easy to prepare snacks:

- ✓ Fruit juice pops:
*Freeze fruit juice in small paper cups or ice cube trays.
- ✓ Crunchy banana:
*Peel bananas. Roll them in peanut butter or yogurt then in dry crushed cereal. Freeze for 2 hours.
- ✓ "Ants" on a log
*Fill celery sticks with peanut butter, top with raisins.



Exercise and Physical Activity during the winter months

Holiday gatherings, cold temperatures, and shorter days often mean less time for exercise and physical activity. The American Academy of Pediatrics state that children and adolescents who are physically active are more likely to have stronger bones, increased muscle strength, less body fat, better sleeping patterns, less chronic disease, reduced depression, less stress, and higher self-esteem.

BE PHYSICAL DAILY!

Some Possible Physical activities:

- Taking the stairs instead of the elevator
- Dancing to music for 15 minutes indoors
- Parking your car far away from the shopping malls or grocery store
- Taking a 15 minute walk inside shopping malls before you start shopping
- Taking an extra 15 minute walk around the museum before or after your visit

Don't forget about Toy Safety this Holiday Season

8 Toy Safety Tips:

1. 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.
2. For infants, toddlers, and all children who still mouth objects, avoid toys with small parts, which could pose a fatal choking hazard.
3. Look for sturdy construction, such as tightly secured eyes, noses, and other potential small parts.
4. For all children under age 8, avoid toys that have sharp edges and points.
5. Do not purchase electric toys with heating elements for children under age 8.
6. Be a label reader. Look for labels that give age recommendations and use that information as a guide.
7. Check instructions for clarity. They should be clear to you, and when appropriate, to the child.
8. Immediately discard plastic wrappings on toys, which can cause suffocation, before they become deadly playthings.