



## Holiday Decorating Safety



Each year, hospital emergency rooms treat about 12,800 people for falls, cuts, shocks, and burns due to incidents involving faulty holiday lights, dried-out Christmas trees and other holiday decorations, according to the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC).

Christmas trees are involved in about 300 fires annually, resulting in an average of 10 deaths, 40 injuries and about \$7 million in property damage and loss, the CPSC says.

To keep this holiday season a merry one, follow these decorating safety tips:

### DECORATIONS & LIGHTS

- Use only lights tested for safety by a nationally recognized Testing Laboratory, such as UL or ETL/ITSNA.
- If using an extension cord, make sure it's rated for the intended use (indoor versus outdoor, for example).
- 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.
- When using lights outdoors, check labels to be sure they have been certified for outdoor use and plug them in only ground-fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) protected receptacles. To hold lights in place, string them through hooks or insulated staples, not nails or tacks. Never pull or tug lights to remove them.
- Turn off all holiday lights when you go to bed or leave the house. The lights could short out and start a fire.

### THAT'S NOT SANTA ON THE ROOF

- Check the roof before starting the actual work. Make sure the areas you will be working is safe to walk on. For icy or slippery areas, rock salt can be liberally strewn around to make for a more slip-proof surface.
- Choose the right kind of weather.
- Plan ahead. Place things strategically beforehand in the spots where you want to put them up. This will eliminate a lot of unnecessary walking around.
- Don't go at it alone, your helper can pass things and hold the ladder. It looks funny in the movies but in real life, around Christmas time there are many ladder related accidents reported to emergency rooms nation wide. Otherwise secure the ladder to the roof and make sure it is sturdy.
- Make sure all the bulbs and necessary components are screwed in tightly and everything is secure.



## Holiday Eating Without Overeating



If you've tried to follow popular low carbohydrate diets, you're already well acquainted with carbohydrate cravings. Add a few holidays that just aren't the same without traditional carbohydrate-rich foods, and you may feel like you're doomed. And that's not a feeling you want at this wonderful time of the year. So how do we make it through the holidays without caving in to cravings? Try these tips:

**Give yourself permission to eat carbohydrates.** It's sort of a basic fact of human nature – if we think we can't have something, we want it even more. If we can have it when we want it, it loses some of its appeal. What's more, carbohydrates are critical for well-being! Even though today's popular diets tell us we need to cut out carbs, it's really not a good idea. Instead, learn how to eat them in a way that supports our health and well-being.

**Eat mindfully.** Stay in touch with how you feel and how the food tastes as you eat it. That way, you'll better know when you've had enough. The food will lose some of its taste appeal, and if you go too far beyond that point when it doesn't taste as good, you'll likely begin to feel like you've, well, gone too far.

**Eat regularly.** There's no substitute for regular, balanced meals. They're the foundation for eating well. They give your body the support it needs to be able to tell us when we've had enough of different types of foods. That includes holiday carb-packed foods. It's also common sense if you come to an eating event really hungry, you'll eat more than if you're just pleasantly hungry.

**Move regularly.** Ditto for its effect on your ability to eat well. Your body is meant to move. If it doesn't, it doesn't work quite as well – and that affects all its functions, even how it 'talks' to you about the foods it wants.