

## Celebrate Holidays Safely

Holiday parties and gatherings are enjoyable and exciting, but the most important decision you will make during the evening is whether to drink or not drink. December is



the most dangerous time of the year for alcohol-related traffic accidents and fatalities. **If you do choose to drink alcohol this holiday season, remember these tips:**

- ◆ Select a designated driver before you take your first drink.
- ◆ Set a limit, such as

two drinks spread out during the evening, and stick to it.

- ◆ Sip your drink slowly. Take a one-hour break between drinks and instead select juice or water during this time.
- ◆ Nibble on healthy snacks and avoid having an empty stomach.
- ◆ Stay busy. Participate in activities, such as games and dancing, so that you're not tempted to drink.
- ◆ Say no to drinking alcohol. Seek nonalcoholic drink choices. Plan ahead of time what you'll do to avoid drinking when you're tempted.

For more information, visit the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism at [www.niaaa.nih.gov](http://www.niaaa.nih.gov).

## Don't Play with Kid's Safety

When you're looking for that perfect gift for those special kids in your life, remember to think safety. According to Prevent Blindness America, thousands of children are injured by the toys they're given during the holidays. **Here are several tips from Prevent Blindness America on how to select toys that are safe for kids:**

- Select toys that don't shoot or have parts that fly off.
- Choose toys that are durable and don't have sharp edges or points.
- Buy toys that have the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) logo.
- Avoid giving small children toys that have small parts.
- Always read the instructions for toys and make sure the toy is appropriate for a child's age.
- Keep toys that are designed for older kids away from younger ones.
- Repair or throw away broken or damaged toys.
- Use caution with headset radios or music players as they can damage hearing if played too loud.



Source: Prevent Blindness American, [www.preventblindness.com](http://www.preventblindness.com)

## Avoid a Holiday Tragedy: Make Smart Safety Choices

**E**ach year, we hear of home fires occurring during the holiday season. Sometimes lives are lost. Sometimes an entire home is lost to flames. Holiday fires aren't inevitable. **Use this advice to keep them from happening:**

- ▲ Install working smoke detectors just outside the kitchen, near every bedroom, and on every level of your home. Test your smoke detectors regularly.
- ▲ Place a chemical fire extinguisher near the kitchen range and make sure everyone knows how to operate it.
- ▲ Degrease the top of the stove, the oven, the broiler, and the range hood. Grease can ignite and cause a fire.
- ▲ When preparing a big dinner, make sure only one high-wattage appliance is plugged into an outlet or a circuit. If you have the microwave, coffee pot, electric fry pan, and toaster running at the same time, you could be in danger.



▲ If it's very cold and you decide to use an electric heater, be sure it's not positioned near anything flammable including curtains and decorations. Unplug it when you go to bed.

▲ Don't overload circuits with lighted decorations. Plug decorations into a power strip that will shut off if overloaded and has a surge protector.

▲ When opening gifts, handle wrappings with care. Never allow combustible wrappings to pile up near a heat source. Make sure no one is smoking near such flammables.

▲ Be smart with candles. Put them out when you won't be nearby to monitor them. Don't place a candle inside a bookshelf.

▲ Never burn gift wrappings or a natural Christmas tree in your fireplace. It could cause a flash fire or a chimney fire.