

# OREGON POISON CENTER

[www.oregonpoison.org](http://www.oregonpoison.org)



## HOLIDAY HAZARDS

*The holiday season brings with it many new sources for poisonings. The Oregon Poison Center would like to bring some of these to your attention. Prevent accidental poisonings and keep your family safe.*

### **HOLIDAY PLANTS**

Holly, mistletoe and Christmas greens (Balsam, Juniper, Cedar, Pine and Fir) are festive decorations for your home that may be harmful if swallowed. Be sure to keep them up high and out of reach of small children. Wrap mistletoe in netting before hanging it as a decoration.

### **HOLIDAY ORNAMENTS**

Bulbs, lights, tinsel, "snow" and tree preservatives may often cause injury as well as contain poisonous chemicals. Keep a close watch on the children when they are near holiday decorations like a Christmas tree!

### **PERSONAL PRODUCTS**

Perfume, cologne and aftershave, while often lovely gifts for adults, are enticing to children as well. Their sweet fragrance and pretty packaging may attract children. If children swallow them, they can cause serious illness. It is not safe to leave these gifts opened and on display under the Christmas tree.

### **ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES**

Alcoholic drinks can cause serious illness and even death in children. Be sure that all alcohol containing holiday drinks (eggnog, Christmas sherry) are not within reach of children. Almost-empty glasses and punch bowls should be emptied as soon as your guests leave to avoid poisoning a child.

### **THE HOLIDAY TURKEY**

- ❖ Thaw meat in the refrigerator, allowing one to three days for complete thawing. If time is not allowed, immerse the bird in watertight wrapper in cold water; continue adding ice to avoid turkey reaching room temperature.
- ❖ Wash hands thoroughly before dressing the bird to minimize your chance of contamination from bacteria on hands.
- ❖ Stuff turkey just prior to roasting. Remember to remove liver and gizzards.
- ❖ The oven is usually set at 325°F.
- ❖ The safest method to determine when the turkey is cooked is to place a meat thermometer inside the thigh muscle (or the thickest part of breast). It should read 180-185°F for normal turkey. For stuffed turkey, place thermometer in the stuffing. The thermometer here should register at 165°F.
- ❖ After cooking, remove the stuffing. Do not allow the stuffing to cool inside the turkey.
- ❖ Refrigerate the turkey, gravy and stuffing after your meal. Room temperature is not sufficient.

*The Oregon Poison Center wants to remind you that accidental poisonings often occur when the normal household routine is upset, as it usually is during the holidays. Take a few minutes to poison-proof your child's environment and prevent accidental poisonings.*

**OREGON HEALTH & SCIENCE UNIVERSITY**

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