

Wash Your Hands... Keep Yourself Safe!

WASH YOUR HANDS
Don't get sick.



The first week of December is National Hand Washing Awareness Week and, by now, we

might all consider ourselves seasoned hand washing experts due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, but there are still some important facts to remember about the importance of washing your hands.

- 80% of communicable diseases can be transferred by touch (person-to-person contact).
- Washing your hands a few times a day can reduce diarrhea rates by 40%.
- Touching your face with dirty hands spreads sicknesses pneumonia, a cold, and the flu.
- Pneumonia is the number one cause of childhood death, and is preventable by regular hand washing.
- The two most important times to wash your hands are before and after preparing food, and after going to the bathroom.
- Less than 75% of women and less than 50% of men wash their hands after using the bathroom
- When you flush a toilet with the seat up, a mist containing bacteria is spread over about 6 square meters. Even worse... Sinks in public bathrooms are 90% covered in this bacteria.
- The ideal amount of time to wash your hands is 30 seconds, but 15 is recommended at the very least.
- Most bacteria on our hands is under our fingernails, so when you're washing, be sure to scrub underneath them.
- Damp hands are 1,000 times more likely to spread bacteria than dry hands, yet only 20% of people dry their hands after they wash them.
- Reusable cloth towels have millions of bacteria in their fibers. Using disposable paper towels is the cleanest way to dry your hands.
- Studies show that people who wash their hands have 24% less sick days because of respiratory illness, and 51% fewer sick days due to a sick stomach.

Hand hygiene is an important part of the U.S. response to the international emergence of COVID-19. Practicing hand hygiene, which includes the use of alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) or handwashing, is a simple yet effective way to prevent the spread of pathogens and infections in healthcare settings.



Patient Connect

CareSouth Carolina, serving your local area since 1980.

DECEMBER 2020

CDC Recommendation for Christmas & Holiday Gatherings

While we all want to have a Merry and bright holiday, cases for the novel COVID-19 virus are resurging across the U.S. and that means in-person gatherings- such as annual Christmas parties- can present an inherent risk of spreading the virus. The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) has released its list of recommendations for upcoming holiday gatherings.

The CDC recommends only having in-person gatherings with people who live in your own household and has released a list of precautions and things to remember for those who are still planning small in-person gatherings with people who don't live with them:

- Try to plan the event in an area with low infection rates
- Possibly move the event outdoors instead of spreading germs inside
- Try to keep the length of the gathering to a shorter amount of time
- Limit the number of people getting together
- Think about keeping it to people who live close to each other
- Make sure all attendees wear a mask and try to stay 6 feet apart
- Wear a mask, wash your hands, etc.
- Ask attendees to stay out of public as much as possible for 14 days prior to the event

Do NOT attend an in-person holiday celebration with anyone who has been exposed to COVID-19, or is showing any symptoms.

For an entire list of the CDC's recommendations for Holiday season gatherings, please visit their website.

CareSouth Carolina & Care Innovations Recognized World Aids Day

World AIDS day is an event hosted every year on December 1st to unite and raise awareness of HIV/AIDS in our nation. This occasion served as a memorial for those who have lost their fight to this pandemic caused by HIV/AIDS.

There are approximately 1.2 million people living with HIV in the U.S. and about 14 percent of them don't know it.

Though Worlds Aids Day has passed, let's continue to remember the importance of HIV awareness pertaining to testing, prevalence and prevention this month and as we step into a new year.



MEDICAL LOCATIONS:

Hartsville • Society Hill • Bennettsville • Bishopville • Cheraw • Chesterfield • Dillon • Lake View • Latta • McColl

PHARMACY LOCATIONS:

Hartsville • Society Hill • Bennettsville • Bishopville • Cheraw • Latta • McColl

To make an appointment, please call 866.498.0399.

www.caresouth-carolina.com

follow us:



2020 Holiday Stres Prove to be “Beyond the Norm”

For most of us, it has been over 9 months since we first heard of COVID-19. Throughout the spring and summer, we learned how to protect ourselves and one another from this virus, while doing our best to manage our routine life stressors. In the fall, it became all too clear that we would also have to learn how to manage the additional stresses of COVID-19 through the December and January holiday season.

It is very understandable to feel increased anxiety, stress and sadness when holiday traditions of family gatherings and travel are upended. We are all seeking to identify new ways to stay connected to those we cherish. Add to this the stress of home schooling, work related stressors and a pandemic that seems to have no end, and we may find ourselves asking, “Is it possible to have a happy and healthy holiday season?”



It will take some effort, but here are some tips to help us make the most of the upcoming holidays and winter months and guide us on our path to health:

It helps to mentally prepare ourselves for the holidays by managing our expectations. If travel and time spent in preparation for holiday gatherings must be adjusted, this extra time could be put to use to engage your creative spirit or to rest and catch up on sleep, or to enjoy a walk outdoors. Stress can be eased by both seeking and by providing comfort to others. By now, we know how to stay connected to friends and family via phone or face time. Focus this holiday season on self-care. Prepare your favorite foods, stay hydrated, read and relax your stress away. Taking care of yourself is not “selfish” – it is vital to living a healthy life.

When feelings of being overwhelmed begin to take over, step back from what you are doing and reflect on what you are feeling and perhaps why. Sometimes the stress lines are blurred. Is the feeling related to COVID, the holidays or something else? Sort through the emotions by taking time to reflect and introspect. Talk it over with a friend or counselor, or journal about it. Understanding the source of the emotional distress helps us to develop the coping skills needed to manage our emotions.

Find a quiet place and deep breathe for relaxation. It is human nature to hold our breath at moments of extreme anxiety. Increasing the oxygen to the brain by deep breathing helps us to get through an anxious moment or to prevent a panic attack.

As you reflect on the source of the stress, ask yourself if you can solve the stressor at this time. If you cannot, then write it down and begin to prioritize those things that can be solved now versus the things that must wait. Don't beat yourself up over things you cannot control.

Make it a point this 2020 holiday season to practice gratitude and kindness – everyone we meet is dealing with something we know nothing about. Be kind to others and to yourself. If you encounter a difficult person, know that the reason for their behavior is that they are suffering and this will ease your frustration with them. We can't control how others act this holiday season, but we can choose our response.

Stay mindful of the needs of our fellow humans who are grieving the loss of a loved one this holiday season, as well as the extreme stress being endured by our front line workers and health care workers, of those with limited financial resources, of those coping with illness and substance use. A small effort to reach out to support others, can go a long way to help ease their distress, and may provide a mutual need for support.



By: Liz Kershner, MSW, LISW, ACSW
Director of Behavioral Health
CareSouth Carolina

The 2020 holiday season poses unique challenges and stressors, there is no doubt. Please know that the clinical counselors at CareSouth Carolina are happy to talk things through with you. It may take only 20 minutes to gain some clarity on coping skills – or it may take an hour to process a major life disruption. Our goal is for our CareSouth Carolina family and friends to have a happy and healthy holiday season. Just as you will be reaching out to those in need, reach out to us if you have a need.

A Few Tips to Enjoy Your Holiday Meals WITHOUT Overdoing it

Even if just you and your household will be celebrating in-person together this Holiday season, you'll likely still have some of your favorite dishes along the way.

As you enjoy some of those delectable dishes, it's important to remember the importance of not overdoing it and looking for ways to remain healthy during this season.

Here are a few tips:

- Use the U.S. Department of Agriculture's MyPlate dietary guidelines as your guide to healthy eating.
- Survey your options & keep your eyes on portions
- Limit your liquid calories.
- Plan ahead to prevent overeating.
- Pop in gum or mint after you're done eating, which can help curb sweet tooth



There's nothing wrong with enjoying some Holiday treats this month and don't get down on yourself if you overstep those calorie goals on occasion, but some of these steps can help to prevent that and keep you on track for meeting those health goals.