

Socializing Safely This Season: National Impaired Driving Prevention Month


**Don't drive if you're
tipsy, buzzed, or
Blitzen.**

December can be a deadly month. Alcohol-impaired driving crashes—which range from being under the influence of substances to distracted driving to speeding—increase throughout December as more people travel. SAMHSA's 2020 National Survey on Drug Use and Health showed over 26 million people ages 16 or older drove under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs during the past year. There are no shortcuts to "sobering up" and preparing to drive; a person's coordination and reaction time are slowed long before they actually show signs of intoxication. Coffee is not a cure-all. And even slowing or stopping drinking an hour or more before planning to drive does not mean the alcohol has "worn off." This holiday season, each of us has the power to prevent a tragedy and ensure that those we know and care about get to and from their celebrations. We should be mindful that many in our communities could be experiencing the holiday blues. If you or someone you love needs mental health support and services, we encourage you to call SAMHSA's National Helpline at 1-800-662-HELP.



MERRY TEX-MAS



Texas is weaved together by the many cultures and customs that have imprinted themselves on the land over time. Generations have passed on traditions; the earliest German settlers to arrive in Texas brought with them not only their possessions — baggage and belongings — but their culture — customs, traditions, and songs. Christmas, of course, has become more commercialized but, the cultural roots of the holiday celebrated by German immigrants in Texas, run deep. The custom of Santa Claus' history began with St. Nicholas, the patron saint of children, students, teachers, and merchants. Germany introduced der Weihnachtsmann (Father Christmas), the idea for which spread across the Atlantic, morphing into the familiar Kris Kringle. Caroling groups, beginning in 1850, like the Gesangverein Germania (German Singing Society) in New Braunfels became very popular. A common occurrence at Christmas is to hear "Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht" ("Silent Night, Holy Night") sung to the familiar melody of this well-known song. This carol was composed in Austria in 1818 by Franz Xaver Gruber and Joseph Mohr, and it was honored in 2011 by UNESCO as an "intangible cultural heritage." From Christmas trees to singing songs, gift-giving, and the simple act of taking time to gather with our loved ones, some of today's holiday celebrations trace their way back to early German immigrants in Texas.

They left a lasting mark on their adopted homeland. To read more, go to:

<https://medium.com/save-texas-history/prost-early-german-christmas-celebrations-in-texas-7bd474d40b5d>

VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE INFO. WWW.BELLCOUNTYHEALTH.ORG



DECEMBER IS WORLDWIDE FOOD SERVICE SAFETY MONTH

IN 1994, THE NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION DESIGNATED A MONTH TO RECOGNIZE STANDARDS IN THE FOOD SERVICE INDUSTRY AND THEIR IMPACT ON HEALTH AND WELL-BEING.

THE USDA NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (NIFA) SUPPORTS EFFORTS NATIONWIDE THAT OFFER FOOD SAFETY CERTIFICATION THROUGH THE SERVSAFE PROGRAM.

SERVSAFE IS A NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED FOOD SAFETY CERTIFICATION, AND MANY STATES REQUIRE AT LEAST ONE PERSON TO BE CERTIFIED IN EACH LICENSED COMMERCIAL OPERATION. THE SERVSAFE FOOD SAFETY TRAINING PROGRAM IS A LEADER IN PROVIDING CURRENT AND COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS TO THE RESTAURANT INDUSTRY.

THE BASICS:

- WASH HANDS.
- DON'T LET YOUR SERVERS WORK WHEN THEY ARE SICK.
- FOOD SHOULD BE TIME AND TEMPERATURE CONTROLLED
- COOKING EQUIPMENT SHOULD BE CLEANED AND SANITIZED
- FOOD MUST BE STORED IN WAYS TO THAT PREVENT CROSS-CONTAMINATION



LABEL EVERYTHING. THERE IS NO REASON NOT TO LABEL EVERYTHING. LABEL ANY FOOD AT THE BUFFET WITH THE NAME OF THE FOOD AS WELL AS ANY ALLERGENS. LABEL ANYTHING THAT MAY CONTAIN GLUTEN AND OTHER SIGNIFICANT SOURCES OF INTOLERANCES. LABEL ANYTHING THAT WILL HELP THOSE WITH RELIANCE ON RELIGIOUS OR LIFESTYLE DIETARY RESTRICTIONS, SUCH AS KOSHER, HALAL, VEGETARIAN, AND VEGAN. AND PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANTLY, LABEL ANYTHING THAT MAY CONTAIN ONE OR MORE OF THE BIG EIGHT ALLERGENS RECOGNIZED BY U.S. LAW - **MILK, EGGS, FISH, CRUSTACEAN SHELLFISH, TREE NUTS, PEANUTS, WHEAT, SOY**

KEEP ON YOUR FEET

Preventing Older Adult Falls

EVERY SECOND OF EVERY DAY, AN OLDER ADULT (AGE 65+) SUFFERS A FALL IN THE U.S., MAKING FALLS THE LEADING CAUSE OF INJURY AND INJURY DEATH IN THIS AGE GROUP. ONE OUT OF FOUR OLDER ADULTS WILL FALL EACH YEAR IN THE UNITED STATES, MAKING FALLS A PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERN, PARTICULARLY AMONG THE AGING POPULATION.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO STAY INDEPENDENT:

- TALK OPENLY WITH YOUR DOCTOR ABOUT FALL RISKS AND PREVENTION.
- TELL YOUR DOCTOR RIGHT AWAY IF YOU HAVE FALLEN, IF YOU'RE AFRAID YOU MIGHT FALL, OR IF YOU FEEL UNSTEADY.
- REVIEW ALL OF YOUR MEDICINES WITH YOUR DOCTOR OR PHARMACIST TO DISCUSS ANY SIDE EFFECTS LIKE FEELING DIZZY OR SLEEPY.
- DO EXERCISES THAT MAKE YOUR LEGS STRONGER AND IMPROVE YOUR BALANCE.
- GET RID OF TRIP HAZARDS. KEEP FLOORS CLUTTER FREE.
- ADD GRAB BARS IN THE BATHROOM.
- HAVE HANDRAILS AND LIGHTS INSTALLED ON ALL STAIRCASES.

FOR MORE INFORMATION,
VISIT: [HTTPS://WWW.CDC.GOV/INJURY/FEATURES/OLDER-ADULT-FALLS/INDEX.HTML](https://www.cdc.gov/injury/features/older-adult-falls/index.html)



WHAT?

WORLD AIDS DAY IS A GLOBAL MOVEMENT TO UNITE PEOPLE IN THE FIGHT AGAINST HIV AND AIDS. THIS DAY IS OBSERVED ON DECEMBER 1ST EVERY YEAR.

WHO?

SINCE 1988, COMMUNITIES HAVE STOOD TOGETHER ON WORLD AIDS DAY TO SHOW STRENGTH AND SOLIDARITY AGAINST HIV STIGMA AND TO REMEMBER LIVES LOST.

WHEN?

IT WAS FIRST DEvised IN 1991, WHEN TWELVE ARTISTS MET TO DISCUSS A NEW PROJECT FOR VISUAL AIDS, A NEW YORK HIV-AWARENESS ARTS ORGANISATION.

WHY?

GLOBALLY, ALMOST 38 MILLION PEOPLE LIVE WITH THE VIRUS. MORE THAN 35 MILLION PEOPLE HAVE DIED OF HIV OR AIDS RELATED ILLNESSES OVER THE PAST 40 YEARS, MAKING IT ONE OF THE MOST DESTRUCTIVE PANDEMICS IN HISTORY. THE RED RIBBON IS THE UNIVERSAL SYMBOL OF AWARENESS AND SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV.

HOW?

THE ONLY WAY TO KNOW FOR SURE IF YOU HAVE HIV IS TO GET TESTED. TESTING IS RELATIVELY SIMPLE. YOU CAN ASK YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER FOR AN HIV TEST. MANY MEDICAL CLINICS, SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROGRAMS, COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS, AND HOSPITALS OFFER THEM TOO. IF YOU TEST POSITIVE, YOU CAN BE CONNECTED TO HIV CARE TO START TREATMENT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. IF YOU TEST NEGATIVE, YOU HAVE THE INFORMATION YOU NEED TO TAKE STEPS TO PREVENT GETTING HIV IN THE FUTURE.

World AIDS Day

HIV (HUMAN IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS) IS A VIRUS THAT ATTACKS CELLS THAT HELP THE BODY FIGHT INFECTION, MAKING A PERSON MORE VULNERABLE TO OTHER INFECTIONS AND DISEASES. IT IS SPREAD BY CONTACT WITH CERTAIN BODILY FLUIDS OF A PERSON WITH HIV, MOST COMMONLY DURING UNPROTECTED SEX (SEX WITHOUT A CONDOM OR HIV MEDICINE TO PREVENT OR TREAT HIV), OR THROUGH SHARING INJECTION DRUG EQUIPMENT.

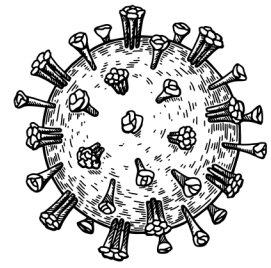
THE HUMAN BODY CAN'T GET RID OF HIV AND NO EFFECTIVE HIV CURE EXISTS.

EFFECTIVE TREATMENT WITH HIV MEDICINE (CALLED ANTIRETROVIRAL THERAPY OR ART) IS AVAILABLE. IF TAKEN AS PRESCRIBED, HIV MEDICINE CAN REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF HIV IN THE BLOOD (ALSO CALLED THE VIRAL LOAD) TO A VERY LOW LEVEL - THIS IS CALLED VIRAL SUPPRESSION. PEOPLE WITH HIV WHO TAKE HIV MEDICINE AS PRESCRIBED AND GET AND KEEP AN UNDETECTABLE VIRAL LOAD CAN LIVE LONG AND HEALTHY LIVES AND WILL NOT TRANSMIT HIV TO THEIR HIV-NEGATIVE PARTNERS THROUGH SEX.

IF LEFT UNTREATED, HIV CAN LEAD TO THE DISEASE AIDS (ACQUIRED IMMUNODEFICIENCY SYNDROME).



National Handwashing Awareness Week



DECEMBER 5-11, 2023

ACCORDING TO THE CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (CDC), HANDWASHING IS ONE OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE METHODS TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF GERMS. PROPER HAND HYGIENE ADHERENCE IS CRITICAL IN HEALTH CARE SETTINGS AND IS ONE OF THE SIMPLEST AND MOST COST-EFFECTIVE ELEMENTS OF INFECTION PREVENTION BUT REMAINS UNACCEPTABLY LOW.

REINFORCE WASHING HANDS WITH SOAP AND WATER FOR AT LEAST 20 SECONDS AND THAT TECHNIQUE MATTERS. ALWAYS USE THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF PRODUCT TO CLEAN YOUR HANDS, AND USE FRICTION TO HELP LIFT DIRT AND MICROBES FROM THE SKIN.

GERMS CAN GET INTO THE BODY THROUGH OUR EYES, NOSE, AND MOUTH AND MAKE US SICK. HANDWASHING WITH SOAP REMOVES GERMS FROM HANDS AND HELPS PREVENT SICKNESS. HANDWASHING CAN PREVENT 1 IN 3 DIARRHEA-RELATED SICKNESSES AND 1 IN 5 RESPIRATORY INFECTIONS, SUCH AS A COLD OR THE FLU.

WHAT IS THE RIGHT WAY TO WASH YOUR HANDS? 1. WET YOUR HANDS WITH CLEAN RUNNING WATER (WARM OR COLD) AND APPLY SOAP. 2. LATHER YOUR HANDS BY RUBBING THEM TOGETHER WITH THE SOAP. 3. SCRUB ALL SURFACES OF YOUR HANDS, INCLUDING THE PALMS, BACKS, FINGERS, BETWEEN YOUR FINGERS, AND UNDER YOUR NAILS. KEEP SCRUBBING FOR AT LEAST 20 SECONDS. NEED A TIMER? HUM THE "HAPPY BIRTHDAY" SONG TWICE. 4. RINSE YOUR HANDS UNDER CLEAN, RUNNING WATER. 5. DRY YOUR HANDS USING A CLEAN TOWEL OR AIR DRY THEM.

PERSONAL HYGIENE BEGINS AND ENDS WITH OUR HANDS.



DEC 4 - 8

National Influenza Vaccination Week

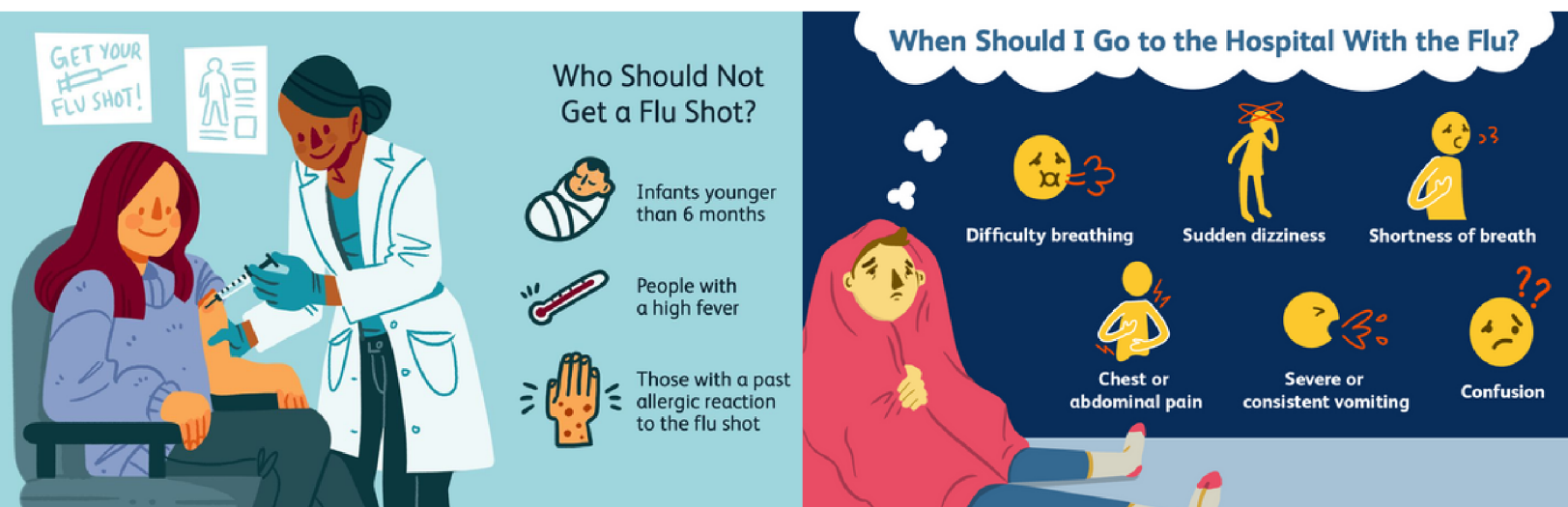
THE FLU VACCINE CAN TAKE FLU FROM WILD TO MILD

AS WINTER APPROACHES, IT IS IMPORTANT TO BE AWARE OF FLU SEASON. FLU VIRUSES TYPICALLY SPREAD IN FALL AND WINTER, WITH ACTIVITY PEAKING BETWEEN DECEMBER AND FEBRUARY. THIS UPCOMING WEEK IS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO ENCOURAGE PARENTS TO GET CHILDREN 6 MONTHS AND OLDER VACCINATED.

THE FLU CAN CAUSE MILD TO SEVERE ILLNESS BUT CAN ALSO CAUSE COMPLICATIONS, SOME OF WHICH CAN BE LIFE-THREATENING.

GETTING THE FLU VACCINE IS THE MOST IMPORTANT STEP TO PROTECT AGAINST THE FLU, ESPECIALLY FOR:

- PREGNANT WOMEN AND THEIR DEVELOPING BABIES
- CHILDREN YOUNGER THAN 5 YEARS OF AGE
- RACIAL AND ETHNIC MINORITY GROUPS





MAINTAINING MENTAL HEALTH

during the holidays

BELL COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICT WISHES EVERYONE A HAPPY HOLIDAY! THIS CAN BE A TIME FOR JOY AND CONNECTING WITH FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES, THERE ARE WAYS TO NAVIGATE THE SEASON'S EMOTIONAL CHALLENGES AND TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR WELL-BEING.

WE ENCOURAGE ALL TO CHECK IN WITH YOURSELF REGULARLY. IT IS A WAY TO MONITOR YOUR EMOTIONAL STATE AND SEE HOW YOU ARE DOING. YOU CAN THINK OF IT AS A STRESS, ANXIETY OR MOOD SCALE. WHEN YOU ARE AT A CERTAIN LEVEL – WHATEVER YOU DECIDE – YOU TAKE A BREAK. DO SOMETHING YOU ENJOY AND FIND RELAXING. MAYBE LISTEN TO MUSIC, GO EXERCISE, PRACTICE DEEP BREATHING, OR DO WHATEVER ACTIVITY OR HOBBY THEY ENJOY. THE IDEA IS TO DEVELOP SELF-AWARENESS SO PEOPLE CAN ENGAGE IN SELF-CARE BEFORE REACHING AN EMOTIONAL BREAKING (OR BOILING) POINT.

MANY FAMILIES HAVE THAT ONE MEMBER WHO CAN TURN A PLEASANT CONVERSATION INTO A FAMILY FEUD. IF YOU SEE THINGS ARE STARTING TO TAKE A TURN FOR THE WORSE, TRY NOT TO LET IT ESCALATE. THERE IS NO SHAME IN REMOVING YOURSELF FROM THE SITUATION. GET UP AND LEAVE THE ROOM OR STEP OUTSIDE UNTIL EVERYONE COOLS DOWN.

HOLIDAY SPENDING CAN EASILY LEAVE PEOPLE IN DEBT, CONTRIBUTING TO STRESS THAT MAY LAST WELL INTO THE NEW YEAR. THIS YEAR'S INFLATION IS ONLY ADDING TO THE FINANCIAL BURDEN. TRY TO AVOID OVERSPENDING AND FOCUS ON CELEBRATING TOGETHER AND SHOWING AFFECTION BY BEING PRESENT, ENGAGING, AND SUPPORTING EACH OTHER.

If you or someone you know
needs support now,
call or text 988
or
chat 988lifeline.org



**HELP IS AVAILABLE BY DIALING OR TEXTING 988
IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW IS EXPERIENCING A
MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS, HELP CAN BE REACHED 24
HOURS A DAY, SEVEN DAYS A WEEK, BY DIALING OR
TEXTING 988 FROM A CELLPHONE.**



Environmental Health Office
4236 Lowes Dr. Temple, TX 76502
Monday–Thursday 8:00am–5:00pm
Friday 8:00am – 11:30pm
Phone: 254–532–9800

Killeen Clinic
309 North 2nd St Killeen, TX 76541
Monday– Thursday 7:00am – 4:30pm
Friday 7:00am – 11:00am
Phone: 254–532–9800

Immunizations Office
1605 North Main Street Belton TX 76513
Monday– Thursday 7:00am – 4:30pm
Friday 7:00am – 11:00am
Phone: 254–532–9800

Temple Clinic
820 North 31st Street Temple, TX 76504
Monday– Thursday 7:00am – 4:30pm
Friday 7:00am – 11:00am
Phone: 254–532–9800

Temple WIC
201 N 8th St. Temple TX 76501
Monday– Thursday 7:00am – 5:30pm
Phone: 254–532–9800

Killeen WIC
116 E Avenue D, Killeen, TX 76551
Monday– Thursday 7:00am – 5:30pm
Phone: 254–532–9800

Fort Cavazos WIC
36000 Shoemaker Lane Fort Cavazos,
TX 76544
Monday– Thursday 7:00am – 4:30pm
Friday 8:00am – 12:00pm
Phone: 254–532–9800

Copperas Cove WIC
213 W Avenue D, Copperas Cove, TX
76522
Monday– Thursday 7:00am – 5:30pm
Phone: 254–532–9800

BCPH Admin Office
4236 Lowes Dr. Temple, TX 76502
Monday– Thursday 7:00am – 5:30pm
Phone: 254–532–9800

Community Health Division
4236 Lowes Dr. Temple, TX 76502
Monday– Thursday 7:00am – 5:30pm
Phone: 254–532–9800