



Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



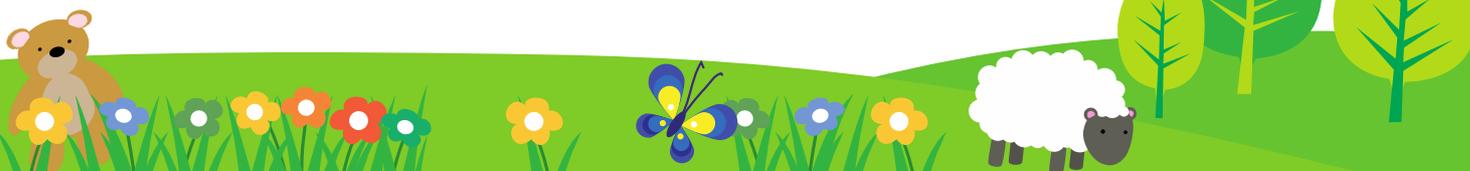
Winter Safety Tips:

Winter is an exciting time for children and adults alike. It brings the joy of festivities but at the same time comes cold weather, ice and snow. Here are some tips and general information to be safe and healthy this winter:

1. **Christmas** is a such a time that extended family and friends come to visit/stay. Parents should be vigilant about the associated risks with this:
 - Lock up any medication boxes and keep loose medicines out of reach for children.
 - Plastics from gifts should be disposed of immediately as they can cause suffocation.
 - Avoid small toys as gifts for young children as these can be potential choking hazards.
 - Be extremely vigilant of small children consuming toxic batteries from gifts.
 - If a child gate is usually in place make sure this remains in place, or furthermore make necessary amendments.
 - Be aware of the dangers of washing or dishwasher tablets- they look like jellies but can cause nasty burns and side effects if swallowed.

Keeping with Suffolk's Safer Sleeping messages, ensure babies have appropriate sleeping arrangements. Instinct may be to keep babies as warm as possible, but overheating is a risk factor of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). [Click here](#) for more information.

2. **Flu Vaccine!** Pregnant women in any stage of pregnancy are strongly advised to have the flu vaccine which is available at your GP or Pharmacy.
3. **Hand washing!** Keep you and your children safe from both the flu and vomiting bug by ensuring regular washing of hands for around 10-15 seconds.
4. **Alcohol and Smoking.** Be vigilant when consuming and exposing young children to alcoholic environments. Smoking in public places is banned, but it is essential that indoor smoking in household environments is also avoided to prevent second hand exposure.
5. **Winter Road Safety.** Young drivers especially are at a higher risk of injury to both themselves, as well as passengers in the winter. Young/new drivers should stay focused whilst driving and when appropriate give preference to using taxi's or other modes of transport. Visit www.suffolkroadsafe.net for information and resources about road safety.
6. **Exam time is coming up!** January exams coming. Parents should support children as much as possible due to the associated stress and mental health concern issues such as anxiety and depression. For more information or advice [click here](#).



Asthma Kills!

As the winter months arrive, the triggers for Asthma attacks for children especially, are at an all year high. Asthma does not mean just coughing and wheezing there are instances where Asthma can in fact kill. It's so important for children and adults to be aware of the main triggers of Asthma such as colds and flu, allergens (dust, pollen), smoking, stress and anxiety and poor control/management. For more information on the triggers for Asthma [click here](#).

Parents should be aware of risk factors and work on ways to effectively manage their child's asthma. The main way to proactively manage this is to keep a personal log and action plan; this will contain step by step advice, as well as a track of medication, dosages, and times. For information on downloading a plan and starting the process please [click here](#). Finally make sure you have enough medication to last over the Christmas period.

Scalding and Burns

Scalding and Burns can severely affect children and babies by causing major damage to their delicate skin. When possible try to keep children away from the kitchen. Saucepans, kettle cords, hot plates and hair straighteners can be extremely dangerous if not kept out of reach. Furthermore, keep lit candles and match boxes in safe areas and for young babies, always make sure to check the temperature of baths first with inside of your wrist. Remember good first aid can make a huge difference to recovery and severity of scarring! For more information on preventing scalds and burns [click here](#).

Unused Medication

There are instances when having that overflowing box of medications in the cupboard can prove to be fatal to children. Clearing unused or expired medications (either over the counter or prescription) is good practice for us all on a regular basis. Return them to your chemist, who will then dispose as necessary.

Car Seats for Children

The winter months have arrived and caution must be taken whilst travelling with young children. It is essential that your child, if under the age of 12, or under 135cm tall is in a car seat that is completely securely fitted. Many older cars do not have seat belts to sufficiently secure car seats, and it is the guardian's responsibility to ensure that their vehicle has the up to date safety interiors.

Aerosol Abuse

Sniffing aerosols and solvent abuse is a growing issue of concern amongst young people. There are such high levels of chemicals in solvents that inhaling these can cause dizziness, hallucinations, nausea and very easily cause death. Parents should be cautious by where possible keeping cleaning fluids and aerosols out of reach of children, and further keeping a note of any unusual behaviour. For more information or advice on solvent abuse [click here](#).

Message from the Panel: Stay Safe and Healthy this Winter!

Lastly, we hope you enjoy the chilly but festive season of Christmas and New Year! For more information on healthy lifestyle choices why not visit www.healthysuffolk.org.uk for a kick-start?

