

The Allergy & Asthma Clinic

www.TheAllergyClinic.com

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The Holidays Are Upon Us!

As the number of COVID vaccinations have increased in our community, many of us have been able to spend much needed time with our loved ones and the upcoming holiday season is sure to bring welcomed festive reunions and gatherings. With that said, let us help you keep your allergy symptoms under the best possible control during this holiday season. Here are a few things to keep in mind:

Before we get to “decking the halls” of your home with holiday cheer, make sure that you are doing everything possible in your home to reduce your exposure to allergens.

- Make sure that the heavy rains we had a couple of weeks ago did not result in any damage to your home. Check for any sources of water intrusion and repair it as quickly as possible to prevent mold formation. Also run a fan to improve air circulation.
- Check the tracks on your window sills to make sure that water has not collected in the tracks wells. Spray the area with diluted bleach to help prevent the growth of mold.
- Replace the filters in the heating system with washable, electrostatic filters.
- Wear a mask when getting decorations out of storage and if possible, quickly rinse them to get rid of dust or mold.

Let's Deck the Halls!

Decorating your home for the holidays can help lift us out from our pandemic fatigue. However, for the allergy patient, taking certain steps can help to prevent your symptoms from flaring.

According to the American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology, allergies to “fresh” Christmas trees are fairly uncommon. However, fresh Christmas trees are often laden with pollen, dust and mold, depending on how they were stored and transported. If you do decide to bring in a fresh Christmas tree into your home, make sure to hose it off outside with water. Try to dry off the tree as best as possible and shake the tree to get rid of any further debris. Do the same with other live greenery, including wreaths and mistletoe. If you have a water reservoir for the tree, make sure that you replace the water frequently, as standing water can promote the growth of mold. Remember that mold spores can multiply quickly, so this may be a factor to consider when deciding how long you should have the tree up.

For some, using scented candles and air fresheners can add to the ambience of the holidays, but for those with allergies and asthma, they can potentially cause symptoms to flare. From an allergy and asthma point of view, it would be best to avoid scented candles and air fresheners and instead, use pre-lit candles. Burning logs in the fireplace can also aggravate allergy and asthma symptoms because small particles from the fire can get into your eyes, nose and chest, resulting in ocular irritation, runny nose, nasal congestion, cough and even shortness of breath and wheezing. Wood smoke can also contain several toxic substances such as benzene, formaldehyde, acrolein and methane.

The holidays can be a very stressful time and when you are not feeling well, they can be overwhelming. This year, let's remember to keep it simple so that we can enjoy our long awaited celebrations with our families and friends. Make sure that your allergies and asthma are under the best possible control by keeping up with your allergy treatment plan.

In observance of the Holidays, the office will be closed on Friday, December 24 and Friday December 31. We wish you and your family the best of the holiday season.