

The Noble County Health Monitor

A monthly publication sponsored by the Noble County Health Department

Handwashing Awareness

With flu season in full swing, we may find ourselves stocking up on antibacterial wipes, tissues, cold medicine, and vitamins so we are prepared to fight any sickness that comes our way. Even with all those items, we cannot forget our most effective line of defense...handwashing. According to the Centers for Disease Control, washing your hands can reduce your risk of respiratory infections by 21% and gastrointestinal infections by 40%. To effectively wash your hands, you should:

1. Wet your hands with clean, running water
2. Apply enough soap to cover all surfaces of your hands and wrists
3. Lather and rub your hands together briskly. Scrub all surfaces of your hands, including fingertips, fingernails, and wrists
4. Scrub for at least 20 seconds
5. Rinse your hands and wrists under clean, running water
6. Dry your hands and wrists with a clean paper towel or let them air-dry
7. Use a paper towel to turn off the faucet



December 2024

December 7–
Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day

December 21–
Winter Begins

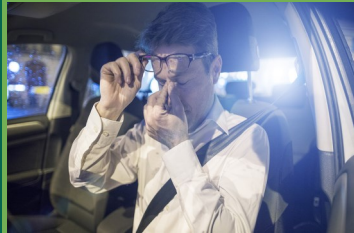
December 25–
Christmas Day

"EVERY ENDING HAS A NEW BEGINNING, AND WITH EVERY NEW BEGINNING, THERE ARE ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES".

Impaired Driving

Weekends and holidays can be dangerous times on our roadways. Two of the most celebrated days of the year, Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve, also are among the deadliest. That's why December has been recognized as National Impaired Driving Prevention Month. Taking personal responsibility for a safe ride saves lives.

Alcohol is Only One Cause of Impaired Driving



Drugs, including opioids, marijuana and some over-the-counter medicines, can impair driving by causing drowsiness, altering visual functions and affecting mental judgment and motor skills. Other factors, such as fatigue and stress, also can impair your ability to drive. Drivers should avoid driving while impaired by any of these factors, just as they would if they consumed alcohol. To learn more about the many causes of impairment, visit nsc.org/impairment.

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The American Red Cross Bloodmobile will be at the Noble County Community Center on Wednesday, January 15, 2025 from 11 am to 4pm. Please consider donating.

For more health information contact:
NOBLE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
740-732-4958
www.noblecohd.org

Get your flu shot!
NCHD is offering the Flu and Pneumonia shots Monday 7am-6pm and Tuesday-Friday 7am-4pm. No appointment necessary. If you have any questions please call 732-4958.

December is National Safe Toys and Gifts Month

When it comes to toys and gifts, it is key to consider the safety and age range of the toys. Noble County Health Department encourages everyone to consider if the toys they give suits the age and individual skills and abilities of the child who will receive it, especially for infants and children under age three. Please consider the following guidelines for choosing safe toys for all ages:

- Inspect all toys before purchasing. Avoid those that shoot or include parts that fly off. The toy should have no sharp edges or points and should be sturdy enough to withstand impact without breaking, being crushed, or being pulled apart easily.
- When purchasing toys for children with special needs try to: Choose toys that may appeal to different senses such as sound, movement, and texture; consider interactive toys to allow the child to play with others; and think about the size of the toy and the position a child would need to be in to play with it.
- Inspect the toys your child has received. Check them for age and skill level before allowing them to be played with.
- Look for labels that verify the toys have passed a safety inspection – “ATSM” means the toy has met the American Society for Testing and Materials standards.
- Gifts of sports equipment should always be given with protective gear.
- Keep kids safe from lead in toys by: Educating yourself about lead exposure from toys, symptoms of lead poisoning, and what kinds of toys have been recalled; being aware that old toys may be more likely to contain lead in the paint; and calling your doctor if you suspect your child has been exposed to lead.
- Do NOT give toys with small parts (including magnets and “button” batteries) to young children as they tend to put things in their mouths, increasing the risk of choking. If the piece can fit inside a toilet paper roll, it is not appropriate for kids under age three.
- Do NOT give toys with ropes and cords or heating elements.
- Do NOT give crayons and markers unless they are labeled “nontoxic”.



National Wreaths Across America Day

National Wreaths Across America Day is December 14th this year and is the culmination of a yearlong mission to Remember the fallen, Honor those who serve and teach the next generation the value of freedom. This mission is in part carried out each December with the placement of sponsored veterans' wreaths on the headstones of those who have served our country. By coordinating wreath-laying ceremonies at Arlington National Cemetery and at more than 3,100 other participating locations around the country, Wreaths Across America strives to remember our fallen heroes. The day honors those who serve. And it teaches our children about the sacrifices made by veterans and their families to preserve our freedoms. Remember. Honor. Teach.



HOW TO OBSERVE WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA DAY

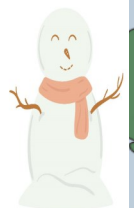
All across the country, volunteers come together to lay wreaths on the gravesites of the military. You can help by volunteering, too. Bring your children, no matter their age. It's an excellent opportunity to teach them about the sacrifices our military and their families make and show respect for our military. You can also donate to make sure every fallen hero is honored. Many volunteers start by laying wreaths for their family members but find they continue to help each year. The meaning of a somber commitment of honoring service members with a wreath grows every year. Volunteer or donate by visiting wreathsassamerica.org.

HOLIDAY CLOSURES

The Noble County Health Department
will be closed

December 25, 2024 &
January 1, 2025

We will be open the rest of December with
normal business hours.



Holiday Stress

If you find that you are feeling a little more stressed than usual right now, you're definitely not alone. The American Psychological Association reports that nearly nine in 10 (89%) Americans are experiencing stress or feeling overwhelmed during the holiday season. When stress gets the best of us, we may turn to less healthy means of coping. Here are some ways to make the season less stressful and more fun.



1. Don't over schedule yourself

Remember that you don't have to do it all. Figure out what you really enjoy versus what you feel you're supposed to do. Do your best to limit or avoid those activities that are less enjoyable.

2. Simplify travel and limit car time

Try to get direct flights or at least minimize the number of stops along the way. Many people complain about spending too much time in the car during the holiday season driving from one gathering to the next. If possible, limit your driving to one or two events that you want to attend. It's part of setting healthy boundaries and keeping a reasonable schedule.

3. Manage gift giving

Do your best to make a budget and stay within the spending limits that you have set. Even a small gift lets people know you cherish them. Consider making gifts, instead of buying. Thoughtful handmade gifts and homemade goodies are appreciated.

4. Be responsible about food and alcohol consumption

Moderation is key, especially with holiday treats and alcohol. Try to stay within your usual guidelines for healthy eating and responsible drinking. Remember to drink plenty of water to stay hydrated.

5. Enjoy family on your terms

While it can be enjoyable to see family during the holidays, some people find extended family time to be stressful. If necessary, take a break from the gathering. Go for a walk. Call someone you enjoy talking to. Take some alone time if you need it.

6. Respect differences

Do your best to find and focus on common ground. If your efforts to maintain harmony are not as effective as you would like in limiting conflict, setting a clear boundary and/or taking a break from the interaction can be effective ways to reduce negativity.

7. Take time for yourself

Consider giving yourself the gift of time during the holidays. Take a break from the rushing around, the shopping, the cooking, and the cleaning. Set aside time to read a good book, watch your favorite movie, or take a nap.

8. Honor the losses of the year

Be sure to make space for your grief. You can find a way to include the memory of your loved one into your holiday traditions.

9. Don't forget routine maintenance

Get plenty of sleep. Eat regularly. Exercise. Get a massage. Meditate. Don't forget to breathe.

10. Reach out if you need help

If you're experiencing severe emotional, mental or psychological struggles, talk to your primary care provider. Therapy, counseling, and medication are all useful tools to help manage mental health challenges.

If you are experiencing a mental health crisis, call or text 988 or explore the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.

Have an upcoming event?

If you would like it in the monthly health monitor please contact Samantha Hesson at 740-732-4958 or Samantha.Hesson@noblecohd.org.

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