

## Having a Safe Holiday Season

The holidays are always a fun and exciting time of year; however, they are also a very busy time of year with a list of activities that may only be done one time a year. This can make the holidays a very dangerous time of year as well. It is estimated that more than 7,000 people a year require treatment for some type of injury during the holidays, and another 17,000 people are treated for fall-related injuries. So, to help prevent some of those injuries, here are some helpful reminders to assist you in having a safe and happy holiday season.

While hanging decorations, don't over-reach. And try to prevent hunching over while wrapping those presents. Sit or stand tall, and if you notice yourself doing these things, correct your posture by doing some shoulder rolls. When using a ladder, make sure you follow all the safety precautions listed on the ladder, and have someone helping you, especially if you are doing a great deal of lifting while on the ladder.

We also have a tendency to do more walking during the holidays while out trying to find that perfect gift. On average, we spend an extra 30 minutes a day walking. So remember to wear comfortable, proper fitting shoes while strolling around the mall. You should be able to wiggle your toes while wearing your shoes. And make sure you have plenty of arch support and cushioning. Ladies, this obviously excludes your high heels, but you also want to avoid shoes that are narrow.

Lastly, we can do a great deal of lifting and carrying during the holidays. Follow these easy steps to prevent back injuries:

1. Make sure your path is clear. Move those strings of lights and boxes out of your way before carrying something to prevent tripping over these obstacles.
2. Keep your feet shoulder width apart when lifting.
3. Bend your knees, keep your back straight, and tighten your stomach muscles. Don't let your back do the lifting. Use your legs, which are much stronger.
4. Hold objects close to your body. The further away, the easier it is to injure yourself.
5. If something feels too heavy or you feel a strain, get help. It is better to get help than be unable to enjoy your holidays because of an injury.

We hope these few tips will help you have a safe and happy holiday season.

Merry Christmas!!

How To Lift from [orthopedics.about.com](http://orthopedics.about.com) National Library of Medicine. [www.nlm.nih.gov](http://www.nlm.nih.gov) Mayo Clinic. [www.Mayoclinic.org](http://www.Mayoclinic.org) [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

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