

# Holiday decor can be hazardous

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(HealthDay)—Christmas lights, ornaments and other festive decorations are beautiful to look at, but parents need to remember that little ones are drawn to those shiny, glittering objects too, and those decorations may

not always be safe to touch.

That's the advice from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), which recommends that homes with small children shouldn't be filled with sharp or breakable [decorations](#).

Young children could also swallow or inhale small or removable pieces from larger decorations. Any ornaments or decorations that look like food or candy could also pose a risk to small children who can't tell the difference and are tempted to eat them, the AAP said in a news release.

Also, be careful about poisonous plants. Mistletoe berries, Jerusalem cherry and holly berry adorn many homes during the holidays but many of these plants are toxic and could pose a threat to children. Be sure to keep these greens and berries out of children's reach.

The APP recommends taking some other steps to ensure a safe and healthy holiday season:

- **Trimming the tree.** Always choose non-flammable or flame-resistant decorations. Anyone using tinsel or artificial icicles should make sure to choose products that are made of plastic or non-lead metals.
- **Be careful with candles.** Never light candles that are on or near a Christmas tree or other greenery. Be sure that all candleholders are non-flammable. It's also important to place candles in safe places where they can't be knocked over.
- **Protect your skin and eyes.** Spun glass "angel hair" can irritate the eyes and skin. Be sure to wear gloves while using this material. Artificial snow sprays can also irritate the lungs. When using this spray, be sure to follow the directions on the container carefully.
- **Collect ribbons and wrappings right away.** Pieces of torn

wrapping paper, bags, ribbons and bows should be gathered up and removed from the tree or fireplace area as soon as gifts are opened. This "debris" can cause a fire or pose a choking or suffocation hazard for [small children](#).

**More information:** Consumer Reports provides more information on [holiday decorating safety](#).

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