

# Avoid holiday hazards around home

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Emergency visits to the hospital go up significantly this time of year, and many of them can be avoided. Dr. Michael Boniface, a Mayo Clinic emergency medicine physician, says some injuries are very specific and from activities people don't do regularly.

People on ladders stringing holiday lights—it's a common site these days. And so are trips to the emergency room, says Dr. Boniface.

"Falls from heights of greater than 3-5 feet, depending on how you land, can result in hip fractures, [internal bleeding](#) and [head injuries](#) and concussion."

Dr. Boniface says, because daily routines change during the holidays, safety sometimes can be a challenge, especially with children.

"Children have a tendency to put things in their mouths, chew on them, eat them. This can be electrical extension cords going to your Christmas tree."

This can be small, little ornaments or decorations that they could lodge up their nose or aspirate into their lungs.

Dr. Boniface says if you put up a live Christmas tree in your home, make sure you keep it well-watered. "The drier it gets, the more prone it is to igniting and causing a fire."

"And, always be careful when lighting candles."

If you keep out open flames and candles, be aware that children and animals may knock those over, so keep them out of reach of where they may encounter them.

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