

A Publication of the Prices and Consumer Affairs Division

CONSUMER IMPACT

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**Shopping
Safety**
Page 6



**Food Safety
Tips**
Page 18

HAVE A MERRY & SAFE CHRISTMAS



Banking Safely during the Christmas Holiday Season Pg 7

CONSUMER IMPACT

CONTENT

- 3 Minister's Message
- 4 An Important Message To You The Consumer
- 5 Budget & Spend Wisely
- 6 Holiday Shopping Safety
- 7 Tips for Banking Safely During The Christmas Holiday Season
- 8 Enjoy the Reduced ABST
- 9 Read Hire Purchase Agreements Carefully
- 10 Purchase Furniture & Appliance Wisely
- 12 Customer Relations High on Consumers' Wish List
- 13 Safety Tips for Buying Toys
- 14 Christmas Lights Safety Tips
- 15 Christmas Cleaning
- 17 Food Handlers Must Have Valid Food Handlers' ID
- 18 Holiday Season Food Safety Tips
- 19 Christmas Table
- 21 Christmas Puzzles & Games



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Minister's Message

The Prices and Consumer Affairs Division continues to play its role in consumer protection and education. These newsletters aim to provide primary stakeholders with information to make wise choices within our budgetary means and provide access to the most up-to-date information on products and services available in the domestic market.

As we focus on safety, I make a profound appeal for consumers to be cautious and put their safety first this Christmas shopping season. Be mindful of your surroundings and the things you are displaying in public especially large sums of cash and other valuables. Be sure to stay alert when shopping to keep yourself and your loved ones safe.

During the Christmas season, there are usually many sale signs, and it is a great idea to look for bargains. As the minister responsible for protecting and safeguarding consumer rights in Antigua and Barbuda, I remind consumers that even in Christmas sales, The Sale of Goods Act still applies, and goods should be of merchantable quality, fit for their purpose and as described. Consumers, however, must ensure they get value for their money.

This year, for four days, consumers will once again enjoy a 10% reduction in the Antigua and Barbuda Sales Tax. This allows consumers to realize greater savings, especially on big-ticket items. Our officers at the Division will continue to monitor prices to ensure fair trading and lessen the likelihood of price gouging.

I encourage the staff to continue to cultivate a culture of quality service and excellence in serving the people of our twin island nation. Your hard work is commendable.

May you have a merry and safe Christmas, and a happy and prosperous New Year.

Hon. E. P. Chet Greene
Minister of Foreign Affairs, Agriculture, Trade and Barbuda Affairs



AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE TO YOU THE CONSUMER

**CONSUMER LEGISLATION CAN ONLY BE EFFECTIVE IF BACKED BY
CONSUMER AWARENESS. SHOP WITH CARE, CAUTION AND CONTROL**

REFUSE TO BUY MERCHANDISE OF POOR QUALITY

Examine the product before purchasing. That goes for cars, clothing, services, fruit, vegetables and everything else. This helps to avoid the problem of seeking redress.



DON'T BUY ON IMPULSE

First, think. Take time and don't buy what you want as impulse buying is a costly practice. Use a shopping list for needs and reduce costs. Set limits for major purchases. Always remember a better deal is in the making. Compare and contrast. By comparison of similar merchandise, you will always be the winner.



ENTERTAINMENT IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR INFORMATION

Don't get stuck with a brand-name product whose appealing TV advertisement left you undoubtedly impressed. It is better to rely on proven facts. Put your trust in products of proven quality and reliability. Support the merchant who stands by his product.



DON'T RELY ON VERBAL PROMISES

Make sure the promises match product performance. Get it in writing. Don't fall for sales talk, tell the salesperson to put his/her signature to it.

READ CONTRACTS CAREFULLY BEFORE SIGNING

To avoid being misled read and understand sales contracts before signing them. If in doubt, don't sign. Review contracts with someone capable of giving accurate interpretation.

CREDIT BUYING COSTS MONEY

Credit isn't free; never was and never will be. Credit buying costs money as interest payments do. So find out how much "Free credit" costs. You have a right to know, exercise your right.

DON'T BE FOOLED INTO PARTING WITH YOUR MONEY

A fool and his money are soon parted. That 16th-century saying is still valid today. Money is often hard to earn. Don't spend unwisely, saving cents makes sense.

READ LABELS CAREFULLY

Labels are signposts to content, size, weight, and price. They exist to inform the buyer but don't always impart full product information. Read the label first, then use common sense and judgement.



KEEP HAZARDOUS PRODUCTS AWAY FROM CHILDREN

They could get hurt or even die if you don't keep poisonous substances out of reach. Lock the medicine cabinet. Safeguard light sockets. Put dangerous objects away. Save the children.

MAKE A SHOPPING LIST AND STICK TO IT

Restrain yourself from making unnecessary purchases.





Photo: www.blackenterprise.com

Budget & Spend Wisely

While it's fun and exciting to shop for Christmas, it can also be incredibly stressful. It's easy to get caught up in the spirit of giving and after Christmas realize that you have spent a little too much.

That's where your budget can help. By organizing your money, you'll know exactly how much you can spend on food and drinks, clothing, curtains, appliances and gifts for everyone on your list. Budgeting is a way of ensuring that your expenditure is in keeping with your level of income. Careful budgeting should prevent you from spending more than you can afford, thus avoiding indebtedness.

Begin your Christmas budget by taking note of your net income - the amount remaining after deductions of social security, medical benefits and education levy. This should be done on a weekly, fortnightly or monthly basis, depending on

when you get paid.

Next, make a list of the essential items for which payment is made such as the mortgage/rent, insurance premiums, utility bills, loans, nursery and school fees, household goods, transportation costs, and anything else depending on your family's circumstances. It is also important to make provision for emergencies and savings. After, allocate a specific amount for Christmas shopping.

Remember to track your spending. A budget doesn't help if you don't stick to it. This will help to remove the anxiety of "Can I afford to buy this?" or "Can I afford to go there?" The last thing you need during the most wonderful time of the year is more stress.

Having a budget can make your Christmas shopping more enjoyable because you know how much you can spend. No guessing. No stressing!

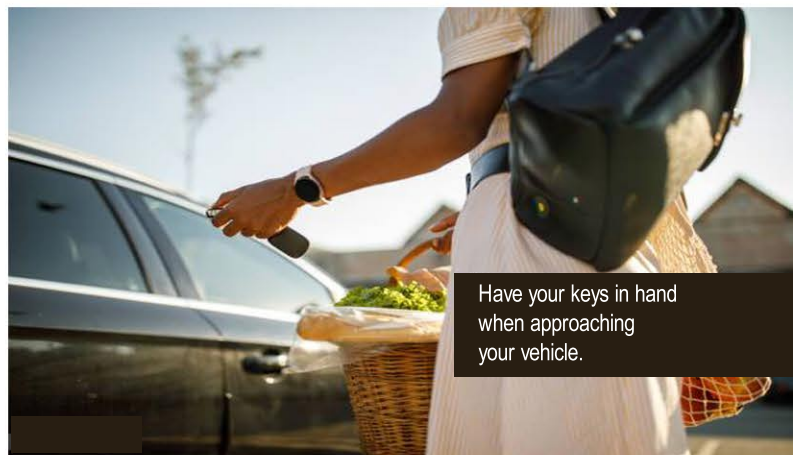


Photo: <https://twitter.com/NapervillePD>

During the busy Christmas shopping season, persons with criminal intent may also be shopping. Be sure to stay alert to keep yourself and your loved ones safe.

Here are some holiday shopping safety tips to help keep you safe.

- Be mindful of your surroundings and the things you are carrying. Don't overload yourself with packages or become distracted by your cell phone.
- Carry your purse/handbag close to your body or your wallet in your front pocket.
- Carry only the cash or debit/credit cards you will need on a particular day. Don't display large amounts of cash.
- Park in a safe location.
- Check that your vehicle is locked/secured before walking off.
- For night shopping, park in well-lit areas close



- Have your keys in hand when approaching your vehicle. Check the back seat before getting in.
- Do not leave packages visible in your car windows. Lock them in the trunk or take them directly home.

10 Tips for Banking Safely during the Christmas Holiday Season



Photo: <https://www.pexels.com/photo/anonymous-guy-with-plastic-card-making-online-payment-using-smartphone-on-street-6353659/>

- Monitor your accounts regularly for any unauthorized transactions during the holiday season and set up automatic alerts on your debit and credit cards where available.
- Reduce cash purchases and instead use a dedicated and secure payment method such as credit cards.
- Be discreet when entering PINS at ATMs and DO NOT share your passwords or PINS with anyone not even your loved ones.
- Use secure, unique passwords for online banking and change them periodically.
- Enable two-factor authentication for an extra layer of security on your banking accounts.
- Avoid accessing your bank accounts on public WI-FI to prevent potential security breaches.
- Be cautious of phishing emails or messages posing as your bank.



CHRISTMAS BUDGET Challenge Affording Motherhood		
Holiday Expenses	Budget	Actual

- Make a budget and stick to it. Christmas is not the season to overspend.
- Review the effective interest rate in all loan agreements before signing the document.
- Remember the true reason for the season and have a Safe and Merry Christmas to you and yours!!

Enjoy the Reduced ABST

The popular Antigua and Barbuda Sales Tax (ABST) reduction will return this Christmas season, according to the Inland Revenue Department.

Consumers will enjoy a reduction in the ABST from Friday December 15, 2023 12:00 a.m. to Sunday December 17, 2023 11:59 p.m. and again from Friday December 22, 2023 12:00 a.m. to 11:59 p.m. The reduction will apply to all types of goods that are subjected to the ABST sold during the period, but not to services.

Consumers are reminded that participation in the ABST reduction days is voluntary, meaning a store can choose whether to participate or not.



Photo: Fabwoman.ng

Consumers hoping to purchase items for Christmas usually anticipate this discount period. The possibility of being able to shave a few dollars off purchase prices can be a big attraction at this time. However, it is the consumer's responsibility to check goods properly to ensure he/she is getting value for money. Also, ensure you keep your receipt. This will be needed in the event you have to return an item to the place of purchase.

The Following goods do not attract the Antigua and Barbuda Sales Tax (ABST)

Chicken – fresh, chilled or frozen

Fish – fresh, dried, salted, whether or not (in brine or smoked). Red herring and mackerel are smoked.

Milk – cream and condensed, including powdered milk

Butter – fresh and salted
Eggs – fresh

Vegetables – fresh or chilled

Fruit – fresh

Rice

Flour – wheat or meslin, durum or other

Maize (corn) meal

Cereal grains – rolled etc., including but not limited to oats, barley and wheat

Refined edible oil (including but not limited to olive oil, palm oil, corn oil, sunflower seed oil, canola oil and soya-bean oil)

Margarine

Imitation lard (shortening)

Preparation for infant use for retail sale

Sardines (canned)

Cane and beet sugar

Bread (not including other baked products such as bun)

Active yeast

Ordinary water (not containing added sweetening or flavouring)

Table salt for retail sale

Medicines in retail quantities including but not limited to Penicillin, Insulin, Aspirins, Paracetamol, cough preparations but not including vitamins)

Pharmaceutical goods (including but not limited to sterile catgut, blood grouping reagents, first aid kits and dental cements)

Sanitary towels and tampons

Napkins and napkin liners (diapers) for babies and adults

Books or printed matter (including but not limited to encyclopaedias, dictionaries, text books, novels, bibles but excluding periodicals, magazines, drawing and colouring books, exercise books)

Bed pads (for adults)

Insecticides



Read Hire Purchase Agreements Carefully



During the Christmas season, there is a noted increase in the purchasing of household items on hire purchase agreements.

Many consumers find it hard to resist the no deposit deals and take comfort in the thought of making no payments until a future date.

There are several things to consider before signing onto a hire purchase agreement, such as the length of the agreement, the interest rate, and any early repayment fees. Consumers should also ensure they can afford the monthly payments, as missing payments can result in repossession of the item. Under The Hire Purchase Act 1987, a trader cannot repossess goods on hire once the hirer has paid more than seventy percent of the cost. The goods do not become the property of the hirer (consumer) until he/she has paid in full. The trader may take the hirer to court for the unpaid amount under the agreement.

Before you sign the agreement ensure:

- The item is a need and not a want;
- You can afford to make the monthly payments;
- If you are signing the agreement for someone else, beware of the risks involved.
- Read the entire contract including the fine print; know what you are agreeing to.
- Know the total purchase price of the item.
- Know the monthly payments to be made.
- Know the date the final payment is due.
- Know the interest rate to be charged on the outstanding balance.

- Know the penalties that will be applied if the consumer misses a payment.
- Know the consequences of breaking the agreement.

Advantages

- Provide consumers the opportunity to purchase expensive items that they may not be able to afford outright.
- Generally, it is more flexible than other methods of financing such as loans, as the monthly payments can be tailored to suit the buyer's budget.

Disadvantages

- Should the consumer miss a payment or break the agreement, he/she may lose the item they purchased.
- Hire purchase agreements can be expensive, as the consumer usually pays more than the value of the item due to interest and other charges.
- Hire purchase agreements can be inflexible, as the consumer is often bound to the agreement for a set period.

Benefits

- Cost can be spread over time.
- The consumer becomes the owner of the item at the end of the agreement.
- It protects both the trader and the hirer (consumer) by establishing the terms of the agreement.
- It can help the consumer budget for the purchase
- It can be used to finance expensive purchases that cannot be made outright.



<https://www.kittles.com/blog/2021/06/13/six-things-to-consider-when-buying-furniture>

The Christmas season is the peak period for purchasing furniture and appliances. It is therefore critical to choose carefully the type of merchandise you need.

Traders are also aware of the potential for increased sales volume at this time and consequently intensify their advertisements. The consumer will be bombarded with information and/or misinformation.

To avoid making expensive purchasing mistakes, here are some guidelines:

WHEN BUYING Furniture

Check the wood. The wood used is an indication of quality and influences the price you can expect to pay.

Examine the finish. An even, rich, and deep paint or stain finish should not be used to camouflage flaws.

Check the cushions. Neat, well-defined corners or curves, securely attached details and buttons and unobstructed seams.

WHEN BUYING Appliances

Analyze your needs. Who will be using the appliance; how often will it be used, where in the home would it be placed? Consider the size, capacity and style.

Consider the electrical requirements. What voltage do you require?

Make sure you know who is responsible for Servicing and repairs. Don't forget to ask about a warranty.



<https://www.abt.com/Kitchen/c/2276.html>

'Tis The Season For Returns

Photo: <https://www.google.com/search?q=unhappy+woman+opening+gift&tb->

In the days following Christmas consumer complaints usually increase as individuals seek to return goods purchased or gifts received during the festive season.

Read on for the essential information on holiday returns, from the store's policies to your responsibilities.

KNOW THE STORE'S POLICY.

Ask about returning items and the time allotted for returns. This is especially important if you are purchasing a gift.



NOTE: The Sale of Goods Act stipulates that goods must be of satisfactory quality, fit for the purpose for which they were bought and they conform to the description applied to them. Consumers have the right to complain and be duly compensated when goods are defective and flaws were NOT pointed out before the purchase.

CHOOSE WISELY:

Check the size, colour, style and other particulars before making the purchase. Also, take some time to shop around and compare prices. You are NOT entitled to a refund or exchange simply because you changed your mind, the recipient of the gift does not like the colour, the item does not appropriately meet your need or you found the item at a cheaper price.



KEEP THE RECEIPT:

A receipt is your proof of purchase that will be needed in the event you have to return an item to the place of purchase.



Be Careful When Purchasing From Seasonal Vendors

Seasonal Street Vendors have already begun decking the sidewalks of the town. These seasonal vendors offer easy access to a wide range of goods in public spaces. They sell everything from clothing, crafts and electronics to household items and toys.

When making purchases from seasonal street vendors, consumers should examine the items carefully to ensure the quality is right and he is getting good value for his money. Check that the item is free from defects. Should the consumer have a problem with the item, he may have a difficult time locating the vendor to seek redress, since the vendor may have already wrapped up sales for the season. It would be a good idea to ask the vendor for his/her contact details.

Customer Relations High on Consumers' Wish List



Photo: <https://republicsmetoolkit.com/providing-superior-customer-service/>

Each year, thousands of trader and consumer transactions are successfully undertaken. However, with a small percentage of transactions, problems arise.

Good customer relations are vital to every business. Many large organizations already have a system for handling complaints, however, many small businesses do not.

A polite and careful investigation of a complaint is the quickest way to resolve it. You do not admit fault by taking a consumer's complaint seriously.

CONSUMERS USUALLY COMPLAIN ABOUT:

- faulty goods;
- incorrect professional advice;
- inability to supply spare parts or to fix faults;
- charges which differ from advertised, quoted or agreed prices;
- failure to contact the consumer if there is a change in the situation, i.e. repairs cost more or parts are delayed.

HOW TO DEAL WITH COMPLAINTS:

Step 1:

Listen to the consumer's full complaint. Assure the consumer you are giving the inquiry your attention.

If you are unable to deal with the complaint, refer the consumer to your manager, or another staff member.

Step 2: Make sure you clarify all facts of the situation and obtain all copies of documentation. Make a written record of the complaint.

Step 3: Always stay calm and in control – arguing will only aggravate the situation. If a consumer doesn't understand your explanation, remain patient.

Step 4: Admit fault and rectify the complaint, if appropriate. **DON'T ... Try to cover up a mistake.**

POINTS TO REMEMBER

Refunds

Be aware that consumers, in certain circumstances, have a legal right to refund of the purchase price of the goods, such as, a defect not detected at the time of sale.

Guarantees/Warranties

These normally allow you, as a condition of sale, to repair, replace or exchange goods which have problems evident within a specified time.

Acceptable Signs

A sign should not mislead consumers about their rights. 'No Refund' signs can be meaningless, and advice should be sought.

Let consumers know they must choose the size or colour of goods carefully. If you are responsible for a consumer's final choice, you can be asked for a refund, if the consumer is dissatisfied. Otherwise, it is the consumer's responsibility and you can use a sign such as:

"Please choose carefully. We do not normally give refunds just because you change your mind".

Safety tips for buying toys

Here are some tips that can be followed when purchasing toys for children.

READ WARNINGS AND INSTRUCTIONS

Pay attention to the labels on toys before purchasing. Labels have information about age restrictions based on risks such as choking hazards. Always follow the age recommendations.



AVOID TOYS WITH SMALL OR DETACHABLE PARTS

Stay away from small or detachable parts, such as button eyes that your child can put in his/her ears, nose or mouth. They can be a choking hazard.



LOOK OUT FOR STRANGULATION HAZARDS

strings, ribbons, or cords can pose risks to young children.



CHECK THE QUALITY OF THE TOY

Choose sturdy toys that don't have loose, moving parts that can easily come off.

CHECK THE SECURITY OF THE BATTERIES

Ensure the batteries in the toy are safely behind a screwed-down cover.



CONSIDER SPECIAL NEEDS

Children with special needs might be more vulnerable, so keep this in mind while shopping.



CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

SAFETY TIPS

Photo: <https://www.frederickmutual.com/protect-assets/christmas-lights-safety-tips>

'Tis the season of giving, 'tis the season of spending but above all 'tis the season to practice safety. While we string up Christmas lights and adorn our trees in bright colours, we must also remain vigilant of those added hazards during the festive season.

From homes to businesses, the streets to our hearts, the warm glow of festive lights brings joy to the young and old alike. However, beneath the dazzling brilliance lies a potential fire hazard that can turn celebrations into emergencies if proper safety measures are neglected.

Christmas lights though colorful and wonderful, can be a major fire risk in and outside your home if they are not hung and used correctly. With proper safety practices, you can reduce this risk and continue to be in a very merry holiday spirit.

While the charm of colorful lights adds to the festive ambience, it's essential to acknowledge the responsibility that comes with decorating our homes. Incorrectly hung or used Christmas lights can pose a significant fire risk both inside and outside our residences. To keep the holiday spirit alive without compromising safety, adhering to proper safety practices is paramount.

Christmas Light Safety Tips:

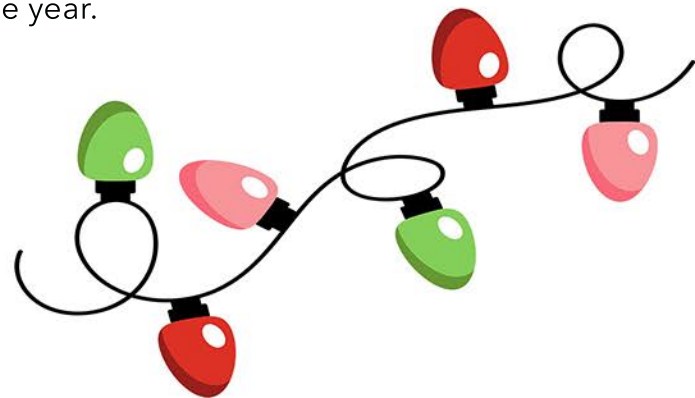
- Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections and outlets.
- Do not use light sets with frayed wiring or loose sockets and plugs.
- Check the voltage of your light set before plugging it into a power source.

By Anderson L. Tuitt

S.T.E.P.S
Safety Through Education Prevention and Strategy
www.safetysteps.org

- Replace any missing or broken bulbs in the light set before using.
- Use light sets according to the manufacturer's recommendations. Indoor lights should only be used inside and outdoor lights should only be used outside.
- Purchase LED Christmas lights. They use less energy, save you money and are much cooler than traditional lights.
- Check your lights often to ensure that they are not warm to the touch. Overheated wires and bulbs can start a fire.
- Do not leave your lights up for too long. Many lights are not intended for long-term use.
- Turn off all Christmas lights before going to bed or when leaving your home.

By following these safety tips, you can safeguard your home, loved ones, and the festive spirit from the threat of fire hazards associated with Christmas lights. Let this holiday season be a time of joy, warmth, and safety as we come together to celebrate the most wonderful time of the year.



Christmas cleaning

<https://pikwizard.com/photo/african-american-female-wear->

Preparing to welcome family and friends during the festive season means paying extra attention to the home. From the kitchen to the dining room, windows and doors, appliances and objects we touch the most, to all the corners and crevices that are often forgotten. Oh yes, it's cleaning time!

When using household cleaning products, it pays to be extra careful because they contain chemicals that are harmful to the human system. Keep such products out of the reach of children. It is useful to know your product safety symbols – you may save a life.

Hidden danger lurks where least expected therefore, consumers are advised to read labels carefully and to look for symbols that indicate whether products are POISONOUS, CORROSIVE, EXPLOSIVE or FLAMMABLE.

Each symbol tells its own story. If you are familiar with them, accidents can be avoided. So, take time out to read the labels on household cleansing products.

CORROSIVE

Be extremely careful when using any product with this symbol on it.



- Keep it away from your eyes.
- The type of product bearing this symbol can eat through anything, even your skin.
- Store in a safe place, preferably in a cupboard used specifically for household cleansing products or other chemicals used around the house. Keep cupboard locked if possible.

EXPLOSIVE

Any product bearing this symbol should be kept away from **ANY HEAT SOURCE**.



- HEAT causes the chemical in the product to explode.
- EXPLOSIONS are extremely dangerous, as they can cause serious bodily harm or even death.
- This symbol is a warning to users of the product to be extremely careful when using and storing the product.

KEEP AWAY FROM HEAT SOURCES.



<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/women/life/black-men-are-better-than-white-guys-at-sharing-household-chores/>

FLAMMABLE

This symbol signifies that if heat is applied anywhere in the vicinity of this product a fire can be started. The flames on the symbol indicate FIRE.



- DO NOT light matches or cigarette lighters in the vicinity of this product.
- KEEP this product AWAY from lighted lamps, candles or stoves.

Here are some examples of products that bear this symbol – gasoline, lighter fluids, turpentine and thinners for paints.



Store such products in a well-ventilated area, away from any heat source.

Keep such products locked up when not in use. Fires can be fatal.

POISON

You should not eat or drink anything with this symbol on it.



- This symbol can be seen on cleansing products.
- It signifies that the product is poisonous. If a product with this symbol on it is swallowed, the result will be serious illness or even death.
- Store in a safe place, out of the reach of children.
- If someone is poisoned, keep the container with you when you go for help so that the doctor will know what caused the injury.
- Keep the telephone numbers and addresses of your doctor, the hospital and the fire department near your telephone.
- Make sure everyone in the house knows where to find these numbers and addresses.

Eat and Drink wisely



The Christmas season is upon us once again and we can hardly wait to sink our teeth into that ham and turkey, fruitcake and other goodies. But with all the apparent overeating, over-drinking, mixing a wide variety of foods and drinks and the stress of eating on the run, we can wreak havoc on our stomach.

Overeating overburdens the digestive tract and clogs the entire system with impurities or poisons of one kind or another. Digestion and elimination slow down and functional activity of the whole body becomes distorted. The result can be a sour or upset stomach, heartburn, or even ulcers and other stomach disorders.

It is therefore extremely important to watch what you eat and drink this holiday season. Also important is the need to eat and drink in moderation, since most of the Christmas goodies are loaded with calories. If you suffer from any chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension and obesity you should watch your intake of:

MEAT AND MEAT PRODUCTS: eating too much high protein foods such as ham, turkey, chicken etc., puts a strain on the liver and kidneys. Additionally, too much animal fat produces clogged arteries, the major cause of heart attack.

SALT: excess use leads to water retention and high blood pressure. It also inhibits digestion.

CANDY, SOFT DRINKS, CAKE ETC: contribute to tooth decay and obesity and can trigger a diabetic crisis.

CONDIMENTS: excess use can irritate the stomach, intestinal tract and kidneys.

SPICY OR GREASY FOODS: trigger sour stomach and can result in anything from annoying heartburn to painful ulcers.

ALCOHOL: over-indulgence is inimical to the entire digestive system and can contribute to high blood pressure, heart and liver diseases, injuries and deaths due to accidents. Additionally, alcohol has a lot of calories and it stimulates the appetite (leading to over-eating).



Central Board of Health Street Vendors Checklist



Tel: 268 462-2936 (Office of the Chief Health Inspector) / 268 562-9300 (Complaints Officer)

Fax: 268 460 5992



chi_cbheh@yahoo.com



Central Board of Healthh Antigua & Barbuda

ALL FOOD HANDLERS MUST HAVE A VALID FOOD HANDLER'S ID & OPERATE IN A SANITARY ENVIRONMENT.

- *Hair Restraint
- *Clean Clothing
- *No sleeveless top or short pants/ skirt
- *Short clean fingernails
- *No fingernail polish
- *No false fingernail
- *No Jewellrey
- *Closed toe shoes ONLY!!!
- *Handwashing devices/ buckets
- *Single use paper towel
- *Liquid Hand Soap

- *Absence of diarrhea and sore throat
- *No boils, open wounds on skin & hands. No Jaundice, excessive sneezing or coughing.
- *Cleared with medical certificate to return to work.
- *Separate containers per serving utensils
- *Calibrated Thermometers
- *Separate cooler for holding of service & storage ice

- *Functioning hot holding devices
- *Functioning cold holding devices
- * Food transported in functional hot/cold holding devices, in a clean vehicle.
- *Adequate Potable water in cleaned covered containers
- *Garbage receptacle lined & covered.
- *Available sanitary toilet facility.

**N.B Absolutely no smoking while handling food! Have your badge displayed at all times when vending!
Vendors who do not adhere to the requirements of C.B.H will not be allowed to vend!**



S Holiday Season Food Safety **Tips**



- 01** Wash your hands under running water with liquid soap before & after touching raw meat & eggs.
- 02** Use a Calibrated Thermometer to ensure that food have been cooked to their safe minimum internal temperature.
- 03** Make sure your refrigerator is set at or below 41°F & the freezer at or below 0°F.
- 04** Dough & batter made with flour & eggs can contain harmful bacteria such as Salmonella and Ecoli. DO NOT let children taste raw batter & dough.
- 05** Thaw your Ham, Turkey & chicken at safe temperature to prevent harmful bacteria from growing rapidly.
- 06** Avoid overcrowding your fridge & freezer. This can cause rapid food spoilage. A free flow of cold air is required to keep food stored at their correct temperature.



For more information, call the Chief Health
Inspector's Office at 462 2936.

Christmas Table



Orange and Maple Roasted Butternut

INGREDIENTS

1 butternut squash (about 2 1/2 pounds), peeled, halved, seeded and thinly sliced
2 tablespoons olive oil
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
2 tablespoons pure maple syrup
Zest and juice of 1 orange
2 tablespoons chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

DIRECTIONS

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Toss the squash with the oil and a generous pinch each of salt and pepper in a large bowl. Tile the squash slices in a 9-by-13-inch baking dish, overlapping the pieces. Stir the maple syrup, orange zest and juice together in a small bowl and pour over the squash.

Cover with foil and bake 30 minutes. Uncover and continue to bake until the squash is tender and the top begins to brown, 30 to 40 minutes more. Scatter the parsley over the top. come off.



Broccoli and Cauliflower Gratin Mac 'n' Cheese

INGREDIENTS

Salt
1 small head or bundle broccoli, trimmed into florets
1 small head cauliflower or half a large head, trimmed and cut into florets
1 pound whole-wheat macaroni or penne or other short cut pasta
2 cups sour cream or reduced-fat sour cream
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
1/3 cup finely chopped chives
2 cloves garlic, peeled and grated or crushed into paste
A few drops hot sauce
Freshly ground black pepper
2 1/2 cups grated extra-sharp Cheddar

DIRECTIONS

Bring a large pot of water to a boil over medium heat. Salt the water and add the broccoli and cauliflower florets. Boil the vegetables for 5 minutes, then remove them with a spider or a strainer and drain. Add the pasta to the water and undercook by about 2 minutes, drain.

Meanwhile, combine the sour cream in a large bowl along with the mustard, chives, garlic, hot sauce and salt and pepper, to taste. Add the pasta and cauliflower and 2/3 of the cheese. Stir to combine, then transfer it to a casserole or baking dish and cover with the remaining cheese. Cool and chill for a make-ahead meal.

To heat and eat, put the casserole on baking sheet and bake it in the middle of a preheated 375 degree F oven until deeply golden and bubbly, about 40 to 45 minutes.



Glazed Brussels Sprouts and Potatoes

INGREDIENTS

Kosher salt
2 pounds baby red-skinned potatoes
2 red onions, cut into 1-inch wedges
2 pounds small Brussels sprouts, trimmed, tough outer leaves removed
1 stick unsalted butter
1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme
1 tablespoon white wine vinegar
1 tablespoon honey
Freshly ground pepper
1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley

DIRECTIONS

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the potatoes and cook until tender, about 15 minutes, adding the red onions during the last 4 minutes of cooking. Remove with a slotted spoon; blot dry with paper towels.

Prepare a large bowl of ice water. Return the pot of water to a boil; add the Brussels sprouts and cook until tender, 6 to 7 minutes. Drain and immediately transfer to the ice water. Stir a few times until cooled, then drain the Brussels sprouts; blot dry with paper towels. (The vegetables can be prepared to this point up to 2 hours ahead; cover and refrigerate.)

Melt the butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the thyme, vinegar and honey and bring to a simmer. Add the vegetables and toss until glazed and heated through, about 3 minutes, adding a few tablespoons of water if necessary. Season with salt and pepper and toss with the parsley.



Beet-Orange Salad

DIRECTIONS

Boil 1 pound beets in salted water until tender, 30 to 40 minutes. Drain, then peel and slice into wedges. Toss in a serving bowl with 1/4 cup olive oil, 2 tablespoons sherry vinegar, 2 tablespoons chopped chives or scallions, and salt and pepper. Add 1 bunch arugula and 2 segmented blood oranges and toss.

Chicken with wine & mushrooms

INGREDIENTS

4 skinless chicken breasts
1 tbsp plain flour, seasoned
150ml chicken stock (use 1/2 a cube)
250g pack chestnut mushroom, halved
few thyme sprigs, leaves only
150ml red wine
1 tbsp mild olive oil or vegetable oil

DIRECTIONS

Toss the chicken in the flour, then tap off the excess. Mix 1 tsp of the excess flour with a little stock and set aside. Heat the oil in a frying pan, then add the chicken, mushrooms and thyme. Cook over a medium-high heat for about 5 mins, turning the chicken breasts over once until golden.

STEP 2

Lift the chicken out, then set aside. Pour in the wine and the remaining stock and boil for 5 mins or until reduced by half. Add the flour and stock mix, stirring until the sauce thickens a little. Put the chicken back into the pan, along with any juices from the plate, then simmer for 5 mins or until cooked through and the sauce is glossy. Serve with mash.



CHRISTMAS CROSSWORD PUZZLE

USE THE CLUES TO COMPLETE THE CROSSWORD PUZZLE.



Across

1. One of Santa's Reindeer
3. Santa's Helpers
5. December 25th is _____.
7. Christmas Drink
10. The name of a popular snowman.

Down

2. Christmas Month
4. He hates Christmas!
6. You hang them by the chimney.
8. On Christmas morning we unwrap our _____.
9. _____ to the world!



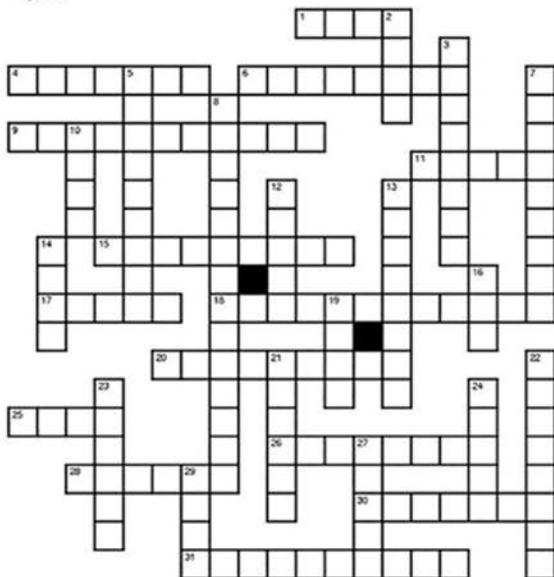
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Christmas Crossword



Merry Christmas!

Down

2. Something people decorate.
3. What people give each other.
5. Where Santa's workshop is located.
7. A striped Christmas treat.
8. Drink and food left for Santa.
10. Something people send to each other to say 'Merry Christmas'.
12. The presents are usually _____ the tree.
13. The month of Christmas.

14. Look at a present before you should.
16. The color of Santa's suit.
19. A common decoration for the top of the tree.
21. A famous snowman.
22. The place where Santa makes toys.
23. Santa's car?
24. A common decoration for the top of the tree.
27. A Christmas song.
29. What Santa gives to good girls and boys.



CHRISTMAS WORD SEARCH



O P R I N L I G G Q Q R G L U N H Z E F
C H Z Q E J A O R E I N D E E R I R L Q
M B M O L S Z T V W U P O B N D T T V V
N H N J O L L Y N U Y E N M I H C C E U
X P M E N P P S F I A B G K A C L Y V H S Z
D L A E H X C E L B S F P G C E T Q E G
Z O M N T H E D A Y S G N I T E E R G M
S D Z I R V T Q P S G S B W C C P W V Q
P U I Z O V A J A E O R U A C F S O G S
G R E H N X R L B P Y N N N H R S O I L
B N Z C S T B H J O M D P I M O A B V M
Y M I S T L E T O E Y R D E E S M C I U
G O C N O R L D K C O Q O N R T T W N B
W K Y Q C Z E J A G O V T D R Y S D G Q
L O R T K L C N I C G P N R Y L I N X S
J N X J I R E F B A V A P J E H R D C Z
X L W O N H T A E R V V I I L E H A Y E
W L R D G Z G Y L D J C G N X E C M B O
M Y A D I L O H L S U H J A W N Z A M J
I X P D B T V H S K M W S E L D N A C U

BELLS
CANDLES
CANDY CANE
CARDS
CELEBRATE
CHIMNEY
CHRISTMAS
RUDOLPH
SANTA
SEASON
SLEIGH
STOCKING
TREE
WREATH
ELVES
FROSTY
GIFT
GIVING
GREETINGS
HOLIDAY
JOLLY
JOY
MERRY
MISTLETOE
NOEL
NORTH POLE
REINDEER

