



Focus on Health

Crazy about Cranberries?



When you think about the holiday season, one fruit stands out—the red, plump cranberry. Each year, more than 110,000 metric tons of cranberries are produced in the United States. Most of the U.S. cranberry crop is grown in Massachusetts, Wisconsin, New Jersey, Oregon and Washington.

Cranberries have long been valued for their ability to help prevent urinary tract infections in women. Studies suggest that cranberries may also promote gastrointestinal and oral health, prevent the formation of kidney stones, lower LDL and raise HDL, aid in the recovery from stroke, and even help prevent cancer. Cranberries can be enjoyed in pancakes and waffles, muffins and bread, pies and crisps, as fruit juice and in smoothies, as sauce to garnish meat and sandwiches, in holiday stuffings or salads.



Holiday Pet Safety!

When preparing your home for the holidays, keep the safety of your pet in mind. Keep plants such as poinsettias, lilies, mistletoe and holly out of your pet's reach as they can cause serious illness or even death when ingested. Vacuum up pine

needles regularly. Make sure breakable ornaments are higher up and securely attached to your tree. Ribbon or tinsel can get wrapped around your pet's tongue or stuck in their digestive tract. New toys and batteries are attractive to pets; keep them out of harm's way. Keep extension cords hidden from your pet as they can cause electric shock when chewed on. Stick with pet food and don't leave holiday meals unattended. Advise visitors not to feed your pet "people" food. Especially chocolate could result in severe digestive issues, seizures or cardiac arrest. Never leave burning candles unattended!

Red Wine May Be Good For Your Heart

Red wine is said to have health benefits when consumed in moderation. Wine, however, eats away at tooth enamel and can stain teeth. To keep your smile beautiful, don't swish the wine around your mouth. Finish up with a glass of water to cleanse your mouth. Use a whitening toothpaste or mouth-wash to reduce staining.



But Not For Your Teeth

December is Safe Toys and Gifts Month



According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, hospital emergency rooms treated an estimated 256,700 toy-related injuries in 2013; 72% were to children under the age of 15. Additionally, in 2007 alone, toymakers recalled over 19 million toys worldwide because of safety concerns. Prevent Blindness America has declared December as Safe Toys and Gifts Awareness Month.

Below are some safe toy guidelines for all ages:

- Be diligent about choosing toys according to age, skill level, and developmental appropriateness.
- Avoid toys 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.
- Do **NOT** give toys with small parts to young children (including magnets and "button" batteries which can cause serious injury or death if ingested).
- Use a small parts tester to determine whether the toy produces a choking hazard for children under the age of 3. Or, if the piece can fit inside a toilet paper roll, it is too small.
- Make sure crayons and markers are labeled "nontoxic".
- Avoid electrical toys with heating elements for children under age 8.
- Avoid toys with strings, straps or cords longer than 7 inches that may pose a risk for strangulation to young children.
- Sports equipment should always be accompanied by protective gear like helmets and pads.

For more information, visit www.cpsc.gov/safety-education/safety-guides/toys