



Parent Connection



HENRY FORD DEPARTMENT OF PEDIATRICS

November 17, 2020

We know life may be challenging right now and we want you to know your Henry Ford pediatrician is still here for you. Below we have collected articles and resources we think you might find helpful. Information in our newsletters is yours to use when it is helpful to you and yours to disregard when it is not. We hope you and your family are staying safe during this pandemic.

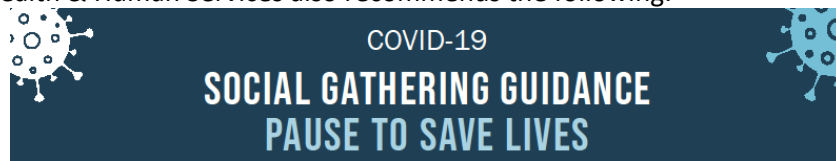
Kid-Friendly Thanksgiving Recipes

The holidays may look different for a lot of families this year. With some people avoiding large groups, it may be sad to think about our typical traditions being broken. For our safety and to reduce the spread of COVID-19, it may be best to create new traditions and fun activities to do at home with our in-house loved ones. Preparing meals together can be one of those traditions. Here are [some recipes](#) that kids can help with. Hopefully both little ones and adults will find joy in preparing fun meals and creating new memories together.

CDC & MDHHS Guidelines for Celebrating Thanksgiving

Traditional Thanksgiving gatherings with family and friends are fun but can increase the chances of getting or spreading COVID-19 or the flu. The safest way to celebrate Thanksgiving this year is to celebrate with people in your household. We know not gathering with your extended family is a sacrifice. However, keeping your family safe is one of the most loving things you can do.

If you do plan to attend a gathering, the CDC recommends you bring your own food, drinks, plates, cups, and utensils; wear a mask, and safely store your mask while eating and drinking; avoid going in and out of the areas where food is being prepared or handled, such as in the kitchen; and use single-use options, like salad dressing and condiment packets. The complete CDC recommendations are [here](#). The Michigan Department of Health & Human Services also recommends the following:



Socializing with family or friends may feel safe, but it is risky – especially with COVID everywhere in Michigan today. It's best to only get together outside. If you must gather indoors, you may only see one other household at a time.

To reduce risk, follow these guidelines:

Pick only one other household to see over the next three weeks. Even better, form a consistent [social pod](#).

Choose a household that is also being careful. If anyone in either group feels sick, postpone the gathering.

Limit duration indoors. The longer the visit, the greater the risk.

Follow these rules as much as possible:



Wear a mask – only take it off when you eat or drink, then put it back on.



Stay six feet apart.



Keep voices down and avoid shouting or cheering.



Do not share utensils.

After a gathering, monitor yourself for symptoms of COVID-19. If anyone in the group feels sick, get tested.

For more information about social gatherings, visit Michigan.gov/Coronavirus. Questions or concerns can be emailed to COVID19@michigan.gov.



Avoiding Tension at Thanksgiving

Tension and conflict are often as much side dishes at Thanksgiving as mashed potatoes and mac and cheese. This year, if you are still choosing to attend a gathering, they may be even more prevalent. Whether you and some family members are on opposite sides regarding the recent election, wearing masks, or [whether the family should even get together this year](#), the environment is ripe for tension and arguments. [Avoiding Thanksgiving drama](#) is easier said than done, but it is possible.

A good place to start is to remember that [kindness is contagious](#). Start the get-together off by being as kind as possible to everyone and remembering why you are all together. Sure, your cousin may be someone you would rather not speak to. But, remembering you are there because you both love your grandma can help remind you to be kind to each other. Put a new twist on the activity of going around the table and saying what you are thankful for by hanging some paper on the wall and having people write down throughout the day what they are thankful for. You could also put out a gratitude jar and people can put messages of gratitude in it throughout the day. Then you can read the responses as a group. Or, assign each person a different guest to create and share a list of five things about that person they like.

There are [steps you can take to limit discord at Thanksgiving](#). It can also help to set some Thanksgiving ground rules. You can ask the host to do this or your family can do it together as a group. Take five minutes to make a list of topics that are off-limits. You can hold people accountable with a light-hearted word everyone yells if an off-limits topic comes up. Or you can make people throw a dollar in a jar if they slip-up and then use the money to buy a family game for next time. If some guests persist, don't be afraid to calmly enforce boundaries. Informing a guest that if they cannot stick to the ground rules, they will have to leave, isn't rude. It's protective for you and your family. Leaving if you are uncomfortable is also okay. You deserve a peaceful holiday.

Thanksgiving Food Safety

Food safety guidelines are always important. If you are going to try your hand at cooking a traditional Thanksgiving dinner, use [these tips](#) to keep everyone safe and healthy. If you run into problems, Butterball has a [Turkey Talk Line](#) to help troubleshoot or just lend a supportive ear. For planning and making sure your day goes smoothly, check out this [Thanksgiving for Beginners](#) guide. It was written pre-pandemic so adjust for safety as you see fit.

Family Game Night Ideas

The holidays and winter months are approaching. Now is the time to start getting creative with our indoor play time. Family game nights are a great way to spend time with everyone, while also getting to know each other better. When planning family game night, consider [age appropriate board games](#), [games for movement](#), and also [fun snacks](#). It might also be a great idea to give the kids a chance to choose the games or activities to ensure that they feel included in the decisions. Game nights are not only fun, but they can also increase communication skills in a safe and structured format. It also gives the adults a chance to be a kid again. The most important thing is to enjoy yourself!

Screen-free Thanksgiving

If this year has brought an increase in screen time, whether it be virtual learning, zoom meetings, or many other virtual encounters, Thanksgiving may be a great time to step away from the screen. There are many fun things that do not involve screen time. Games can be a fun way to get the entire family involved. [Thanksgiving themed games](#) are even better! Coloring can be a great screen-free stress reliever. [Color-by-number sheets](#) can be a fun coloring option. Playdough can also be a creative way to keep kids of all ages busy. This quick and easy [playdough recipe](#) can be made with ingredients that may already be in your kitchen.

Protecting Against RSV

Usually, the holidays are a time when we may be around many different people or groups. Respiratory Syncytial Virus, [or RSV](#), is a common virus that can easily spread around the holiday season. RSV is most common in infants and small children. Transmission can occur through contact with an infected person, exposure to toys contaminated with the virus, or being with other children who may have the virus (such as at a childcare facility). Signs and symptoms of RSV include a cough and runny nose, low grade fever, sore throat, and headache. There are many [ways to prevent](#) and protect against RSV including, frequent hand washing, avoiding contact with those suffering from a cold or fever and washing toys regularly.



Has your child's behavior changed?

Have you noticed any changes in your child's behavior or emotions since the pandemic started? If you have any concerns or questions, please call (313) 451-0720. This is a Google Voice phone number that will call our Henry Ford coordinator who can help to connect you with a behavioral therapist for children.

Are there other topics you are interested in and would like to learn more about?

If yes, please e-mail us at ParentConnection@hfhs.org or to unsubscribe.