

# The Health Connection

# NEWSLETTER



## Childproofing for the Holidays: Keeping Little Ones Safe in a Season Full of Wonder

**By: Ashlee McMillan- HANDS Family  
Support Worker**

The holidays bring magic, joy, and a bit of chaos. Twinkling lights, glittering ornaments, and family gatherings fill homes with excitement. But for families with babies, toddlers, or curious young children, the season can also bring

hidden hazards. Careful childproofing helps keep the holidays merry and safe. From trees to candles, here's how to protect little ones without losing the spirit of the season.

### **1. The Tree: Beautiful, Bright, and Full of Hazards**

The Christmas tree is a holiday highlight — but to a child, it looks like a playground. Use a sturdy stand and anchor artificial trees for stability.

Keep real trees well-watered to prevent fires. Place fragile ornaments high and soft ones low. Skip tinsel — it's tempting and dangerous if swallowed.

Tuck cords away, check for frayed wires, and unplug lights when leaving or sleeping.

*continued on page 2*



**Greenup County Health Department**  
*Public Health = Public Wealth*

### **In This Edition:**

#### Making Every Meal (& Every Dollar) Count

With the government shutdown affecting SNAP benefits this November, many families are feeling extra pressure at the grocery store.

#### November's Healthy Warrior

In August 2025, Bobby Helms, Jr. presented with an A1C level of 12. Through determination and consistent lifestyle modifications, he successfully lowered his A1C to 9.3 within just a few weeks.

#### Lead Awareness And Prevention

You might think lead poisoning is a thing of the past—but for thousands of families, it's still hiding in the walls, water, and dust of everyday life.

# Childproofing for the Holidays continued...

## 2. Electrical Safety: Bright Lights, Big Dangers

Extra cords and decorations mean extra temptation. Use outlet covers and hide cords where possible. Choose battery-powered décor when you can.

Check that toy batteries are secure. Button batteries are especially hazardous — keep them out of reach.

## 3. Decorations: Pretty, But Potentially Perilous

Many decorations look like toys but aren't safe. Snow globes can contain antifreeze, and small ornaments pose choking hazards.

Avoid beads, confetti, and potpourri in play areas. Ribbons and bows can strangle or suffocate. Use flameless LED candles for a cozy, safe glow.

## 4. The Kitchen: A Hub of Holiday Hazards

The kitchen is busy — and risky. Create a “kid-free zone” around the stove, turn pot handles inward, and use back burners.

Lock up knives and cleaning products. Avoid tablecloths kids can tug. Keep nuts, popcorn, and hard candies out of reach — common choking hazards.

## 5. Gift Safety: Joy Without the Risk

Choose age-appropriate toys and check for small parts or magnets. If older kids get toys with tiny pieces, set up a separate play area.

Remove sharp packaging before wrapping, and toss ribbons and paper after gifts are opened.

## 6. Plants, Fireplaces & Visitors

Poinsettias, mistletoe, and holly can be toxic. Keep plants out of reach or use artificial ones.

Use a fireplace screen and keep heaters three feet from anything flammable. Never leave fires or heaters unattended.

Guests bring bags and medications — give them a place to store items safely. Check guest rooms for cords or small objects.

## 7. Routines, Rest & Emergencies

Children thrive on routine. Skipped naps and late nights lead to crankiness and accidents. Keep meal and sleep schedules steady.

Post important numbers — pediatrician, urgent care, and Poison Control (1-800-222-1222). Make sure caregivers know where to find first-aid supplies. If traveling, pack outlet covers and baby gates.

## Final Thoughts

Childproofing doesn't mean losing the fun — just adding a little care. You don't need perfection, only a safe space where joy can thrive.

With a few precautions and plenty of love, your holidays can stay magical, merry, and accident-free.



# Having a Healthy Thanksgiving



## Herb-Roasted Turkey

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Line a large roasting pan with foil. Set a rack inside the roasting pan and coat it with cooking spray. Set aside.
2. In a small bowl, combine the butter with 2 tsp. each of the sage, thyme, and rosemary, plus salt and pepper. Reserve the remaining 1 tsp. of each of the herbs.
3. In a small saucepan, combine the chicken broth and wine, and bring to a gentle boil. Add the reserved herbs and lower to a simmer.
4. With your hands, separate the turkey breast skin from the breast meat, creating a pocket without removing the skin. Rub the butter herb mixture all over the breast meat. Place the skin back down on the breast.
5. Set the turkey on the prepared rack in the pan. (You can also add veggies like peeled carrots, peeled parsnips, onions, or small potatoes to the pan; they will cook along with the turkey.) Roast the turkey for about 1 hour, 20 minutes to 1 hour, 40 minutes until the internal temperature reaches 170 degrees F and the juices run clear. Baste every 15–20 minutes with the mixture of chicken broth and white wine.
6. Remove the turkey from the oven, cover loosely with foil, and let stand for 15 minutes before slicing. Discard the skin and serve.



### Ingredients

unsalted butter (softened)	5 tsp
fresh minced sage (divided)	3 tsp
fresh minced thyme (divided)	3 tsp
fresh rosemary (minced, divided)	3 tsp
low sodium chicken broth (low-fat, reduced-sodium)	1 1/2 cup
white wine (dry)	1 cup
turkey breast (skin on)	5 lbs
kosher salt	1/8 tsp
black pepper	1/8 tsp

Calories: 230 | Carbs: 2g

Check [here](#) for more holiday recipes!

## November Employee Anniversaries



**Brenda Barney-Howe**  
**13 Years**

**Leslie Boardman**  
**5 Years**



**Cassandra Hamilton**  
**4 Years**

# Making Every Meal (& Every Dollar) Count

**By: Andrea Collins MS, RDN, LD**

With the government shutdown affecting SNAP benefits this November, many families are feeling extra pressure at the grocery store. The Greenup County Health Department wants to share a few simple ways to stretch your food dollars while keeping your family healthy and full.

## 1. Plan before you shop.

A few minutes of planning can save you money and stress. Look at what you already have in your pantry and freezer before making your grocery list. Plan meals that use up what's on hand. For example, if you already have rice, plan for stir-fry or beans and rice one night. Check store flyers for weekly deals and choose fruits and vegetables that are in season. They taste better and usually cost less!

## 2. Stock up on low-cost staples.

Pantry and freezer staples can make meal prep easier and help you avoid extra trips to the store. Keep items like:

- Canned beans, tomatoes, and vegetables
- Brown rice, pasta, and oatmeal
- Frozen and/or canned fruits and vegetables (just as nutritious as fresh!)
- Peanut butter, eggs, and canned tuna for protein

When looking at canned and frozen foods, it is important to remember that these foods contain added sodium (salt) to help the foods stay fresh longer. You can look for low sodium frozen and canned options if you want to watch your salt intake! These foods are affordable, filling, and can be mixed in many ways to make different meals.

## 3. Keep a grocery list — and stick to it.

Write down what you need before you shop



and check your kitchen first so you don't buy duplicates. Sticking to your list helps you avoid impulse buys and keeps your budget on track.

## 4. Waste less, save more.

Try cooking a little extra and freezing leftovers for busy nights. Soups, stews, and casseroles freeze well and can stretch your food further. If produce is starting to go bad, use it in smoothies, stir-fry, or soups before it spoils.

## Every dollar counts, but every healthy choice does too.

With a little planning and creativity, it's possible to eat well on a budget even when times are tough. Together, we can keep Greenup County healthy, one meal at a time. You can also check out [www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org) and [www.myplate.gov](http://www.myplate.gov) for more nutrition information, tips, and recipes for the whole family!

# November's Healthy Warrior

**By: Jamee Helms, LPN**

In August 2025, Bobby Helms, Jr. presented with an A1C level of 12. Through determination and consistent lifestyle modifications, he successfully lowered his A1C to 9.3 within just a few weeks.

Working closely with his healthcare provider and dietitian, Bobby made significant dietary changes and remained compliant with his prescribed medications. He eliminated added sugars, replacing sweets such as chocolate with fresh fruits and vegetables. In addition, he incorporated



Bobby & Jamee Helms

regular physical activity into his routine by walking at least 30 minutes each day and has since achieved an impressive weight loss of approximately 8 pounds.

Bobby's progress is a testament to his commitment, discipline, and dedication to improving his overall health and effectively managing his diabetes.



## DRIVE THRU FLU CLINIC

NO APPOINTMENT NEEDED - JUST DRIVE UP & PROTECT YOURSELF THIS FLU SEASON!



October & November  
• Tuesdays - 1:00-3:00 PM  
• Fridays - 9:30-11:30 AM



Bring Your Insurance Card!

DON'T LET THE FLU HITCH A RIDE THIS SEASON, GET YOUR FLU SHOT TODAY!

[Book Now](#)

 **GCHD**  
Greenup County Health Department  
*Public Health = Public Wealth*

NO APPT  
NEEDED



# Lead Awareness And Prevention

**By: Cassie Mace, RN,  
Reportable Disease Nurse**

Many people think lead poisoning is a problem from long ago — but for many families, it's still a hidden danger in homes, water, and dust.

## What Is Lead and Why Is It Dangerous?

Lead is a type of metal that can harm health. It's found naturally, but it was also used in paint and plumbing in the past. Even though it's no longer used in new homes, older houses may still have lead in the walls, windows, or pipes.

Lead can build up in the body over time. Even small amounts can hurt children's learning, behavior, and growth. There is **no safe amount of lead** in the body.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) watches children's blood lead levels. Lead levels can be tested, but the best plan is **prevention** before lead enters the body.

## Why Children Are Most at Risk?

Children's bodies absorb lead more easily than adults. Babies and toddlers explore by touching and putting things in their mouths, which makes them more likely to swallow lead dust.

The most common source of lead in the U.S. is **old paint**. Homes built before 1978 may still have it on walls, windows, or trim. As paint peels or chips, it creates dust that can land on floors, furniture, and toys.

Renovating old homes can also release lead dust. Contractors working in older homes must be **EPA-certified** and follow lead-safe work rules. This includes sealing work areas, cleaning well, and keeping children and pets away until the work is finished.



## Other Sources of Lead

Lead can also be found in:

- **Old pipes and plumbing**, which may leach lead into drinking water. *(Check with your local water company about filters or flushing your tap.)*
- **Imported pottery, dishware, or ceramics.**
- **Some traditional cosmetics, spices, or remedies.** *(Always check the source of imported goods and choose safe options.)*

## Testing and Health Support

Doctors and health departments can test children for lead, especially in older homes. If a child has high lead levels, public health staff help find the source and provide guidance to reduce or remove it.

## Healthy Eating Helps

Good nutrition can help the body absorb less lead. Foods high in **iron, calcium, and vitamin C** are especially helpful. Include:

- Milk, cheese, and yogurt
- Leafy greens and vegetables
- Lean meats, beans, and eggs
- Fruits, especially oranges, strawberries, and citrus

*continued on page 7*

# Lead Awareness And Prevention continued

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## Lead and Housing Inequality

Older homes are often in lower-income neighborhoods, where families may not have the money to make repairs. These areas may also have higher lead exposure rates. Some cities now require **lead safety inspections** for rental homes and offer training for maintenance staff to spot hazards early.

## Easy Steps to Protect Your Family

You can take simple actions today to reduce risk:

- Look for **peeling or chipping paint**, especially around windows and doors.
- **Clean floors and surfaces** with a damp cloth or mop. Avoid dry sweeping.
- **Wash children's hands and toys** often, especially before meals and naps.

- Hire **EPA-certified lead-safe contractors** for home projects.
- Renters: ask your landlord about lead safety and request written proof.
- Ask your **doctor** if your child should have a blood lead test.

## Working Together for Safer Homes

Lead poisoning is preventable. Awareness and action can make a big difference. Families, healthcare providers, landlords, and communities all play a role in keeping children safe.

By working together, we can make homes and neighborhoods healthier. With vigilance, education, and shared responsibility, children grow up stronger, smarter, and healthier.

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# Check Out the Latest Food Scores!

Our environmentalists have been hard at work making sure the county is safe. Click to see the scores in Greenup County!

[Click Here](#)



# Your Health, Your Way: the Greenup County Health App



**By: Paul Hunt, Public Information Officer**

Staying informed about your health and community resources has never been easier. The Greenup County Health Department is proud of our official app, a powerful tool designed to keep you connected, informed, and empowered.

## Why Our App Matters

Health information is most effective when it's timely and accessible. With our app, you'll have everything you need to make informed decisions for yourself and your family, all in one place.

## Key Features

### 1. Timely Health Notifications

Receive instant alerts about important health updates, seasonal advisories, boil water advisories and emergency notifications. Whether it's flu prevention tips or urgent public health warnings, you'll always be in the loop.

### 2. Restaurant Inspection Scores

Wondering about food safety in your favorite local spots? Our app provides quick access to

inspection scores, so you can dine with confidence.

### 3. Easy Access to Health Programs

Explore all the programs and services offered by the Greenup County Health Department. From immunization clinics and family health services to wellness initiatives, everything is just a tap away.

## Benefits for You

- **Stay Informed:** Get accurate, real-time health information.
- **Make Safer Choices:** Check inspection scores before you eat out.
- **Save Time:** Access programs and resources without searching multiple websites.

## How to Get Started

Download the Greenup County Health App today from your preferred app store. Enable notifications to ensure you never miss an important update. Your health and safety are just a click away.

## Download our app today!

Search: Greenup Health Department, KY



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TO DOWNLOAD!



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