



Westfield Regional Health Department

Your Health Matters

December

2025

Monthly Newsletter

Proudly serving Chatham Borough, Fanwood, Garwood, Madison, Mountainside, New Providence, Roselle Park, Summit, and Westfield



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1 December is National Safe Toys and Gifts Month

December is designated as National Safe Toys and Gifts Month, focusing on promoting toy safety and preventing injuries among children during the holiday season.

It serves as a reminder for parents, caregivers, and gift-givers to choose age-appropriate and safe toys for children. It is important to select toys that meet safety standards that are suitable for a child's developmental age. Since many accidents involving children and toys can lead to serious injuries, including eye injuries and choking hazards, this initiative is particularly crucial during the holiday season when gift-giving is prevalent.

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December Is...
**NATIONAL SAFE TOYS
AND GIFTS MONTH**



Sharing the Gift of Safety and Joy:
Join us in Spreading the Word!

Safety Guidelines

1. Check Age Labels: Follow the manufacturer's recommendations.
2. Avoid Small Parts: These could pose choking hazards for young children.
3. Inspect for Hazards: Examine for sharp edges or loose parts.
4. Research and Reviews: Read reviews and ask for recommendations from other parents.
5. Consider the Child's Interests

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World AIDS Day: Dec. 1

This year's World AIDS Day theme is "Overcoming disruption, transforming the AIDS response". After decades of progress, the HIV response now finds itself at a pivotal moment. Life-saving services are being disrupted, leaving many communities facing increased risks and vulnerabilities. Still, hope persists in the determination, resilience, and innovation of the communities committed to ending AIDS.

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National Impaired Driving Prevention Month

December is a season of celebration—but it's also a time to reflect on the choices we make behind the wheel. That's why every year, the U.S. observes National Impaired Driving Prevention Month throughout December. Impaired driving—whether caused by alcohol, drugs, or distractions—is 100% preventable. By raising awareness, encouraging smart decisions, and promoting safer roads, we can help save lives this holiday season and beyond.

Impaired driving means operating a vehicle while your ability to do so is compromised. This can include:

- Alcohol impairment
- Drug impairment (marijuana/cannabis, illegal, prescription, or over-the-counter drugs)
- Fatigue
- Distracted driving (texting, eating, adjusting GPS)

Even a small amount of alcohol or one missed night of sleep can affect reaction time, judgment, and coordination—putting everyone on the road at risk.

- Every day, 37 people die in the U.S. due to drunk-driving crashes—that's one life every 39 minutes.
- December sees a sharp increase in impaired driving incidents due to holiday gatherings.
- In 2022, 13,524 people were killed in drunk-driving crashes.
- Drugs other than alcohol (both legal and illegal) are involved in about 16% of motor vehicle crashes.

These numbers aren't just statistics—they represent real families affected by one preventable decision.

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National Influenza Vaccination Week: December 1-5

It's not too late to get vaccinated! Even when flu vaccination does not prevent infection completely, it can help protect against serious flu-related complications, including hospitalization and death.

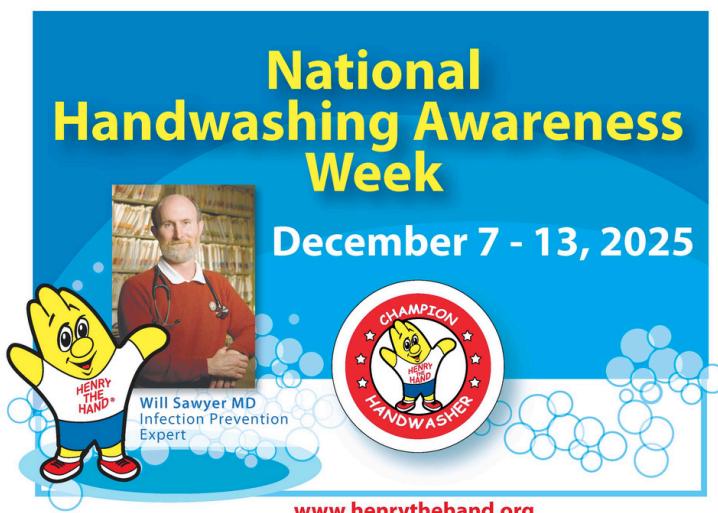
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National Handwashing Awareness Week

Imagine how great it would be if you or your family were never sick again from a respiratory infection like COVID, the flu or common cold!

Practice the 4 Principles of Hand Awareness:

1. WASH your hands when they are dirty and BEFORE eating.
2. DO NOT cough into your hands.
3. DO NOT sneeze into your hands.
4. Above all, DO NOT put your fingers into your eyes, nose, or mouth.

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Holiday Drinks That Won't Wreck Your Morning

What if you could toast to the season and support your health without spending the next morning glued to your couch, regretting everything? Gen Z and millennials have basically said "no thanks" to traditional drinking culture. Americans choosing non-alcoholic beverages have jumped from 6% to 13% in just a few years. The mocktail revolution is here to stay, driven by people who want to prioritize their health and wellbeing during the holidays.

The Math Actually Makes Sense

A typical holiday cocktail? Easily 300+ calories, sometimes more depending on what's used to mix. Meanwhile, a well-made mocktail or glass of dealcoholized wine clocks in around 20-60 calories. The difference adds up fast.

Beyond calorie count, there's real nutritious value here—antioxidants from fresh fruits, vitamin C from citrus, anti-inflammatory compounds from spices. You're giving your body something beneficial instead of empty calories.

Interesting facts: The mocktail scene has grown up. We're talking botanical ingredients—rosemary, lavender, basil—that create legitimately complex flavors. Spicy honey combinations, kombucha bases that do something for your gut health.

On the dealcoholized wine side, I was skeptical too, but some of these low-ABV sparklers and full-bodied reds don't taste like disappointment anymore. The crisp whites especially have nailed the citrus notes.

Start 2026 strong with my favorite DIY mocktails recipes:

Cranberry Sparkler Fizz: Mix 1/4 cup cranberry juice, 1 oz orange juice, 1/2 oz lime juice, and 1 tsp maple syrup. Shake, strain over ice, top with sparkling water. Garnish with cranberries and rosemary.

Warm Spiced Apple Mulled Mocktail: Simmer 2 cups apple cider with a cinnamon stick, 3 cloves, 2 star anise, an orange slice, and 1 tsp maple syrup for 10 minutes. Strain into mugs, grate fresh nutmeg on top.

Both run 60-80 calories and actually taste good.

Cheers to 2026!

Written by Raksha Shah, MA, RDN (www.wisebitenutrition.com) on behalf of the Mayors Wellness Campaign Advisory Committee of the Chathams