

AIM

Alpha Internal Medicine

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Enjoy your holidays! Yes, it's a choice...

Make spending quality time with
family and friends a priority this season.

Have a flexible plan and pace yourself...

DECIDE to ENJOY

the people and activities you truly love and let go
of traditions that no longer work well for you.

Kissing Under the Mistletoe!



Hanging mistletoe is a popular America tradition that began around 1880 when it was originally believed that kissing under the mistletoe increased the possibility of marriage in the coming year. However, traditions involving mistletoe date back to ancient times.

Long considered a symbol of love, peace and goodwill, mistletoe is one of the most magical, mysterious and sacred plants of European folklore. It was widely used centuries before Christ as a religious symbol in pagan rituals. Mistletoe was so sacred to the Druids of Britain that if two enemies met beneath a tree on which mistletoe was growing, they would stop their battle and claim a temporary truce.

American mistletoe is an evergreen shrub that is native to the United States. It can primarily be found growing in the tops of hardwood trees in the eastern U.S. from New Jersey to Florida and west to Texas and Illinois. It is hardy to zone 6 and is found in the southern most counties in Illinois. There are other species of mistletoe in western North America that are parasites on conifers. Most mistletoe sold during the holiday season is harvested in Oklahoma and Texas.

Please note: **Mistletoe is toxic and should not be ingested. While severity of toxicity may vary, keep mistletoe out of reach of children and pets.**

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. — Isaiah 9:6

Attention Chronic Pain Sufferers!

Plan meals wisely during the holiday season and all year...

If you have chronic pain, then the holiday season can present special challenges. One way you can cope better is to pay special attention to your diet and make food decisions that will lessen your inflammation. Symptoms that include pain, swelling, heat and redness of an affected organ are tied to inflammation, the natural way the body's immune system responds to attack, infection or injury.



The links between diet, inflammatory processes and diseases are the topics of much research.

In general, anti-inflammatory diets suggest:

- eat plenty of fruits and vegetables
- eat a good source of n-3 fatty acids, such as fish or fish oil supplements and walnuts
- whole grains such as brown rice and bulgur wheat
- eat lean protein sources such as chicken, cut back on red meat and full fat dairy foods
- minimize saturated fat and trans fat
- avoid refined and processed foods
- consume alcohol in moderation only
- add a variety of spices, especially ginger and curry.

- Lisa Stillman, MPH, RD, LD

Merry Christmas! Here's hoping...
your hearts and stockings are full this season!

