



**Reeves County**  
Hospital District

**Press Release**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Health and Safety Are Especially Important This Holiday Season**

*RCHD offers tips for navigating the holidays during a pandemic.*

PECOS, Texas (Nov. 23, 2020) – The holiday season is in full swing, and everyone is getting ready for several busy and festive weeks. As families begin making celebration plans, Reeves County Hospital is reminding the community that COVID-19 still poses a serious threat, and that group gatherings could make things worse.

“Although it is especially important to keep health and safety in mind this year, we can still enjoy a fun holiday season,” said Brandi Eakin, MPAS, PA-C, Family Practice at Pecos Valley Rural Health Clinic, a service of Reeves County Hospital District. “Taking a few steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19 will be key to ensuring that everyone stays safe and healthy this year.”

Health officials have warned that cases of COVID-19 are expected to continue to remain high throughout the holidays and into the New Year. According to Texas Health and Human Services, more than 1 million Texans have been infected by COVID-19, which has led to the deaths of more than 19,000 people in the state.

Health officials have warned that rising numbers of cases could strain hospitals across the state and that the holiday season could be an especially dangerous time for those at high risk of severe illness.

### **Limit the risk of your celebration**

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, celebrating virtually or with members of your own household poses the lowest risk for spreading COVID-19.

Those who choose to host a gathering with loved ones who do not live in the same household are urged to keep their gathering small. Factors that can impact risk include the size of the event, how far apart attendees are spaced, the duration of the gathering and whether those attending traveled recently.

Safety measures such as wearing masks, social distancing and gathering outside can help mitigate the risk.



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Everyone is urged to continue practicing social distancing, washing hands frequently and wearing masks when in public.

“Wearing a mask has been proven to help prevent the spread of COVID-19,” Eakin said. “Although they may be a little inconvenient, wearing one can help us slow this dangerous disease and save lives in our community.”

### **Don’t delay getting your flu shot**

Health officials are warning that a flu season during a pandemic could be an especially dangerous mix. Since the flu and COVID-19 can have similar symptoms, many more people are expected to need COVID-19 tests this holiday season, which could delay results. Additionally, health officials have warned that it is possible to be sick with both COVID-19 and the flu at the same time.

Although there is not yet a vaccine for COVID-19, the annual flu shot is available at the Pecos Valley Rural Health Clinic. Each year, vaccines are updated to better match circulating viruses and improve their overall effectiveness in protecting individuals from the viruses that research suggests will be the most common.

### **Don’t lose sight of your health goals**

According to the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), the average American gains about a pound during the holidays. With all the stress that many are experiencing this year, it will be easier than ever to lose track of your wellness goals.

According to Eakin, increased physical activity is one way to combat weight gain and to alleviate stress. Along with increased physical activity, eating habits play a big role in overall health and wellness.

“Although we need to be vigilant about our health and safety this year, it is also important to take a break and de-stress,” Eakin said. “Despite the challenges that this year has brought, we have many things to be thankful for. Focusing on family and taking steps to protect your health will ensure a happy and healthy holiday season.”



To learn more about healthcare services or to schedule an appointment at the Pecos Valley Rural Health Clinic, call 432-447-0565. More information can be found at [www.reevescountyhospital.com](http://www.reevescountyhospital.com).

**About Reeves County Hospital District**

Reeves County Hospital District (RCHD) provides healthcare services for people in Reeves County and neighboring communities in West Texas. Founded in 1954, RCHD, a Level IV Trauma Center, offers a wide variety of medical services, including emergency care, diagnostic radiology, physical therapy, general surgery, a clinical laboratory and more. RCHD also operates American Home Health and Hospice and the Pecos Valley Rural Health Clinic, which offers family care, immunizations, and other medical services. For more information, please visit [www.reevescountyhospital.com](http://www.reevescountyhospital.com).

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