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English / Tamil Monthly Edition

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DIWALI SPECIAL - 2024

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Celebrate a Safe diwali

Diwali is a festival that has an amazing quality of not just brightening our lives but make it more interesting with the festivities associated with it. However, a little precaution could add more sparkle to Diwali, and even a bit of callousness could lead to fatal consequences. Every year, the festival sees a considerable number of burn emergency, trauma and respiratory emergencies. Thanks to our carelessness, we end up spoiling the festive spirit hurting ourselves in various ways. Expert say that emergencies are uncertain and can happen to anyone and any point of time, hence it is also equally important that while

enjoying the festival proper care is taken. Emergencies during Diwali occur mainly because of unsafe bursting of crackers and not taking proper precaution while lightening lamps. While, excessive eating of sweets and unhygienic foods leads to acute abdomen or food poisoning. Also too much of dust and smoke of crackers leads to respiratory problem, so precautions are necessary, say experts.

Precautions :

Burst crackers in open spaces and keeping a safe distance Do not light oil lamps and crackers at home Ensure fire extinguishers are in working condition Do not keep stock of crackers near fire Staircase and refuge area should be kept free to escape while in emergency Do not overload an electric socket, just in order to have a brighter Diwali Approach roads should be kept free for passage of fire brigade vehicles Don't use powder or ghee or any other home remedies on burnt body surface, this always creates a chance of infection. In case of any emergency, rush to the nearest hospital.

DEEPAVALI LEGIYAM WITH EASY AVAILABLE INGREDIENTS



This deepavali marundhu mainly helps in digestion as we eat lot of oily food on that day.
INGREDIENTS: (YEILDS 1 AND ½ CUP APPROX.)

- Soak coriander seeds, cumin seeds, omam, black pepper in warm water for 3 hours.
- After 3 hours , grind this into a fine smooth paste. Use the water we soaked for grinding.
- Add dry ginger powder to this. If using sukku, then soak a small piece and grind it

together. Measure the paste in a measuring cup. It yielded 1 cup of paste for me.

- For 1 cup the measurement of jaggery is 3/4 th cup.
- Melt the jaggery in a pan by adding 1/4 cup of water. When it dissolves filter it to get rid of the impurities.
- Boil it for 2 minutes.
- Add the ground paste to this and mix well.
- Saute it in a low flame for 15 minutes till it reaches halwa consistency. Add ghee in small intervals
- When it is completely cool, store it in a clean dry box and keep it in the refrigerator.
- Always use clean dry spoon to take it .
- If you feel it is little less sweet, mix it up with a spoon of honey

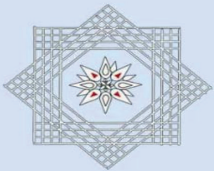
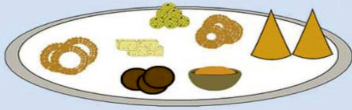
CORIANDER SEEDS DHANIA	2 AND ½ TBLSP
OMAM AJWAIN	2 AND ½ TBLSP
JEERAGAM CUMIN SEEDS	2 TBLSP
BLACK PEPPER	2 TBLSP
DRY GINGER POWDER SUKKU	1/4 TSP
JAGGERY	3/4 CUP
GHEE	3-4 TBLSP
SESAME OIL	1-2 TSP(OPTIONAL)

HAPPY DIWALI

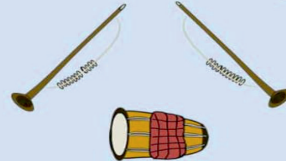


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DIWALI LAKSHMI PUJA

Diwali is the festival of Laxmi, the Goddess of prosperity and wealth. It is believed that Goddess Laxmi visit everyone during Diwali and brings peace and prosperity to all. On the night of Diwali "Lakshmi-Puja" is performed in the evenings. A traditional Puja is performed after sunset in all the homes. Five pieces of ghee diyas (lamps) are lit in front of the deities, naivedya of traditional sweets is offered to the Goddess and devotional songs are sung in praise of Goddess Laxmi. After Deepawali Puja people light diyas (lamps) in their homes to usher in light and clear the darkness from the world.

Step By Step Diwali Puja:

First clean the Puja room and then Bathe each Deity (Lakshmi & Ganesh) first with water, then with panchamitra/or rose water, followed by water once more

Now put Deepak (Lamp) in front of the Deities - As the tiny diyas of clay are lighted to drive away the shadows of evil spirits

Make a Panchamitra with 5 ingredients of milk, curd, ghee (clarified butter), sugar & Honey.

Place Few mithais, snacks & fruits as a prashad.

Make offerings of flowers, Abir (red colour), Sindoor (vermillion) and Haldi (turmeric). Light the Agarbatti (incense sticks) and lamps filled with Ghee.

Now make offerings of Fruit, Sweet dishes (mithai), Salty snacks (Mathis, Ghathia, Namakpare) and offer Dakshina (token money), which could be given to the poor. In the end offer paan (betel leaves), cloves. Now pray to the deities to seek their blessings.

Ganesh Pooja : Ganesh Puja is a must for deepavali Puja. (Lord Ganesha is to be worshipped in all pujas before any other God or Goddess.) (Ganesh Aarti is sung)

Laxmi Pooja : Place Lotus and other flowers at her feet as an offering. A silver coin is placed in front of the Goddess during the puja. Now perform Aarti with flowers in hand (Lakshmi Aarti is sung).

After Deepawali Puja have the Prasad and go out to burst Diwali Crackers

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In the South, Diwali festival often commemorates the conquering of the Asura Naraka, a powerful king who imprisoned tens of thousands of inhabitants. It was Krishna who finally subdued Naraka and freed the prisoners. Diwali Festival in the south is celebrated in the Tamil month of aipasi (thula month) 'naraka chaturdasi' thithi, preceding amavasai. The preparations begin the day before, when the oven is cleaned, smeared with lime, four or five kumkum dots are applied, and then it is filled with water for the next day's oil bath. The house is washed and decorated with kolam (rangoli) patterns with kavi (red oxide). In the pooja room, betel leaves, betel nuts, plaintain fruits, flowers, sandal paste, kumkum, gingelly oil, turmeric powder, scented powder are kept. Crackers and new dresses are placed in a plate after smearing a little kumkum or sandal paste. Deepavali celebrations begins early in the morning. The eldest family member applies sesame oil on the heads of all the family members. Then, it's off for a bath, beginning with the youngest in the family. They emerge with new clothes and a look of anticipation at the thought of bursting crackers, which symbolizes the killing of the demon king Narakasur. Lehiyam: But before that comes Lehiyam, the bitter concoction, to cleanse the system of its festive over-eating! Then to the crackers. Savouries: A puja is performed for the family deities in the morning. Breakfast consists of Savouries, and Varieties of sweet and, of course, idli or dosa . Wish fulfilment: Some communities believe that when Narakasur was to be killed, Lord Krishna asked him his last wish. Narakasura replied that he wanted to enjoy the last day of his life in a grand manner and Diwali was celebrated. That was the beginning and the practice continued. In the evening, lamps are lighted and crackers are burst. As most of the cracker manufacturing units are in Tamil Nadu, there is no dearth of fireworks.

Thalai Deepavali

During Thalai Deepavali, the newly weds go to the bride's parental home for Celebration. Taking blessings from the elders, they burst the first crackers of the day. Usually a vast range of crackers is bought, with costs running into thousands of rupees. The Diwali Celebrations include a visit to the temple, gifts of clothes and jewelry, gorging on sweets and receiving blessings of elders. The groom's parents, brothers and sisters come down to join in the celebrations.



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