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Our Christmas Day stories

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On Christmas Day, when most of us long to be snuggled up in our homes with our loved ones, some Winnipeggers venture out into the cold winter -- often making it a little warmer for those around them.

Dr. Lesley McIntosh celebrated Christmas at the Misericordia Health Centre, a tradition almost 10 years in the making.

The urgent care doctor works almost every Christmas because she doesn't have children. She is happy to give other staff the chance to spend time with family.

She came in for her 8 a.m. Christmas Day shift preparing for the worst. To her surprise, only a few dozen patients strolled through the door and most of them saw one of the two doctors and five nurses right away.

"This year because people are being seen pretty fast, they are in a really good mood compared to normal," McIntosh said. "Even when they have to wait on Christmas, I find most people are quite appreciative that health services are available."

Perhaps the good mood was from the chocolate handed out to patients as they came into urgent care.

Normally, staff are so busy they hardly have time to eat lunch. But on Christmas Day, staff enjoyed a potluck feast -- garlic sausages, egg rolls, fried rice and salad, among other things.

Staff may have had a break on Christmas, but Boxing Day is expected to be quite hectic, McIntosh said.

"Patients eat too much or drink too much or play with toys that break," she said. "They come in with various injuries from new presents, such as snowboards."
