

In the coming days is the Chanukah Religious Festival, where Jewish People celebrate eight days from Saturday 8th December 2012. Our professional team of Volunteers, will be giving out to Patient at Hospitals and Care Homes though out the festival, Chanukah Packs that have the Religious Essentials that's required through the Chanukah.



Volunteers on their rounds on Chanukah at UCH hospital in London.

A Helping Hand Covers the following in England for the Jewish Community:

- " **Jewish Hospital Liaison**
- " **Cheer up Squad**
- " **Special Meals**
- " **Religious Essentials**
- " **24h Emergency Advice Hotline**

Yad Ezra

"A Helping Hand"

**A non-profit Organisation
providing support to
the sick and disabled and their
families within the community**

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**24h Emergency Hotline
0777 256 3441**

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All About Chanukah

**The Eight Day
Festival of Lights
8th December 2012**

יד עזרה
עזרה מיוחדת לנצרכים
Yad Ezra UK
A helping hand
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Information leaflet for NHS Staff 

The Chanukah Story

Chanukah is a Jewish holiday celebrated for eight days and nights. It starts on the 25th of the Jewish month of Kislev.

In Hebrew, the word "Chanukah" means "dedication." The name reminds us that this holiday commemorates the re-dedication of the holy Temple in Jerusalem following the Jewish victory over the Syrian-Greeks in 165 B.C.E.

In 168 B.C.E. the Jewish Temple was seized by Syrian-Greek soldiers and dedicated to the worship of idols. This upset the Jewish people, but many were afraid to fight back for fear of reprisals. Then the Syrian-Greek emperor Antiochus made the observance of Judaism an offense punishable by death. He also ordered all Jews to worship Greek idols. Jewish resistance began in the village of Modiin, near Jerusalem. Greek soldiers forcibly gathered the Jewish villagers and told them to bow down to an idol, then eat the flesh of a pig - both practices that are forbidden to Jews. A Greek officer ordered Mattathias, a High Priest who was a G-d fearing Jew, to acquiesce to their demands, but Mattathias refused.

Mattathias and his five sons went to the mountains, where other Jews wishing to fight against the Greeks joined them. Eventually they succeeded in retaking their land from the Greeks. These rebels became known as the Maccabees, or Hasmoneans.

Once the Maccabees had regained control they returned to the Temple in Jerusalem. By this time it had been spiritually defiled by being used for the worship of idols. Jewish troops were determined to purify the Temple by burning ritual oil in the Temple's menorah for eight days. But to their dismay, they discovered that there was only one day's worth of oil left in the Temple. They lit the menorah and Hashem Made a miracle that the small amount of oil lasted for eight days.

This is the miracle of the Chanukah oil that is celebrated every year when Jews light a special menorah. One candle is lit on the first night of Chanukah, two on the second, and so on, until eight candles are lit.



Significance of Chanukah

According to Jewish law, Chanukah is one of the most important Jewish holidays. Chanukah falls on the twenty-fifth day of the Jewish month of Kislev.

Chanukah Traditions

Every community has its unique Chanukah traditions, but there are some traditions that are almost universally practiced. They are: lighting the menorah, spinning the dreidel and eating fried foods.

Lighting the menorah: Every year it is customary to commemorate the miracle of the Chanukah oil by lighting candles on a menorah. The menorah is lit every night for eight nights.

Spinning the dreidel: A popular Chanukah game is spinning the dreidel, which is a four-sided top with Hebrew letters written on each side.

Eating fried foods: Because Chanukah celebrates the miracle of oil, it is traditional to eat fried foods such as latkes and doughnuts during the holiday. Latkes are pancakes made out of potatoes and onions, which are fried in oil, doughnuts are jelly-filled and fried and sometimes dusted with confectioners' sugar before eating.

