



The Englewood Health Watch

El Observador de Salud de Englewood

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Men's Health Month

Each year, during the month of June, Men's Health Month is celebrated across the country with health education, screenings, health fairs, and community outreach. The purpose of Men's Health Month is to raise awareness concerning preventable disease, illness, and health problems through early detection and treatment of disease among men. It is important that men are screened for both colorectal and prostate cancers.

Colorectal cancer is the second leading cancer killer in the United States. In 2009, approximately 136,000 new cases were diagnosed and approximately 51,000 people died from it (CDC). Colorectal cancer is characterized by abnormal cell growth in the colon or rectum. Starting at the age of 50, men should get a colonoscopy regularly until the age of 75.

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men. The prostate is a walnut size organ in men located below the bladder and in front of the rectum. Every year, approximately 25,000 men die from prostate cancer. It is important for men to talk to their physician about screening options (CDC).

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for men, but this is also a preventable and controllable disease. About 715,000 Americans have a heart attack and about 600,000 people die each year from heart disease (CDC).

By making healthy choices and managing any medical conditions, you can prevent and/or control health-related problems. Eating a healthy diet and getting regular exercise is key to a healthy lifestyle. It is important that men be proactive when it comes to their health and consult their healthcare physician when need be. Let's spread awareness of preventable health problems and promote healthy living.

Source: CDC (Centers for Disease Prevention)

School vaccinations

Will your child or grandchild be starting Kindergarten later this year?

You may wonder whether your young child, who is ready to enter school in September 2013, will need any vaccines. Typically, children who are 4-6 years of age receive additional doses of DTaP, IPV, MMR, and Varicella vaccine.

If you are feeling comfortable that this is an important and necessary thing to do, your child will also be more comfortable. Be honest with your child, explaining that it may hurt a bit, but it will not be for long. Also, explain that the vaccine will keep him or her healthy.

It is better to call your child's doctor or the Health Department in the Spring rather than wait until August to try to get an appointment for immunizations. Making sure that children of all ages receive all their vaccinations on time is one of the most important things parents can do to ensure their children's long-term health as well as the health of friends, classmates, and others in the community. Additional information can be found at this website:

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/index.html>

Respiratory Versus GI Flu! What's the difference?

Know the difference between Influenza and Gastroenteritis

When someone experiences symptoms such as nausea, vomiting and diarrhea it's often referred to as the "stomach flu". This can be a misleading and confusing term to many people. More appropriately called "gastroenteritis", this illness can be caused by a number of viruses and bacteria such as norovirus, salmonella, e. coli, etc.

* These types of infections are spread by the fecal-oral route, meaning that the bacteria or virus is found in the stool and is spread when someone introduces the virus or bacteria into their body by touching their eyes, nose or mouth after having

contact with contaminated items or by eating contaminated food.

* Contaminated items often include surfaces such as doorknobs or countertops and sometimes water.

* Symptoms usually last from a few days up to a week and will usually resolve on their own.

* Hand washing, especially after going to the bathroom and before eating, is one of the most effective ways to prevent gastroenteritis.

* If you become ill, it's extremely important to stay home until after symptoms are gone. Influenza (flu) is an illness that causes cough, congestion, muscle and body aches and fatigue.

* Influenza is spread by breathing in respiratory secretions from the air that an infected person has released while coughing or sneezing.

* Unlike gastroenteritis, influenza can result in serious health related complications, like pneumonia, and causes thousands of hospitalizations and deaths each year.

* The single best defense we have against influenza is the influenza vaccine which is needed every year.

* In addition to the vaccine, covering coughs and sneezes by using a tissue or coughing or sneezing into the inside of your elbow will decrease the number of people exposed to the virus in the air.

* Hand washing, especially after coughing or sneezing, is another important step to prevent the spread of influenza.

So remember that GI illness is not the flu! It is gastroenteritis. Proper hand washing can prevent not just gastroenteritis and influenza but many other illnesses. For more information, please contact the Public Health Nurse of the Englewood Health Department at 201-871-6511.

Licensing News

Coming this summer of 2013, the Department of Health will launch an on-line application, renewal, and payment process for pet and retail licenses. The service will enhance the credit card payment options already offered through an agreement with VitalChek Network, a LexisNexis Company. The Department's partnership with VitalChek began by serving customers who needed a way to purchase vital records (birth, death, and marriage certificates) via the internet and has since added point-of-service credit card payment for any type of transaction as a value added benefit to customers.

Now, with the use of licensing applications developed by National Geomatica, VitalChek's On-Line Payment Services will allow residents and business owners to submit license applications and renewals electronically. License fees may be paid on-line with a credit card or e-check. Payments can be made when the Department is closed, and it can't be lost in the mail! This service is available for a nominal fee to VitalChek - \$2.50 or 3.25%, whichever is greater, per transaction.

Health Department staff will be notified when a payment transaction has been made. License fees, rabies expiration dates (if applicable), and other pertinent information in our records will be verified. The License Clerk will contact the owner/payee if there are any questions or problems. Licenses will then be processed and mailed - just as they have always been. We hope that this additional application/renewal/ payment option news is as exciting for you as it is for us. Stay tuned for the announcement of the launch date.

Summer Grilling Safety

Memorial Day is the traditional, if unofficial, beginning of summer. As you make plans to purchase grills, charcoals, and meats, make sure food safety is at the top of your priority list. Before you fire up the grill, you should be aware of food safety practices to ensure you, your family, and friends enjoy a safe and tasty meal.

There are four easy steps to make your grilling season a safe and happy one. They are as follows:

1. Clean: Make sure your hands and food contact surfaces are clean. Ensure that hands are properly washed before handling foods. Hands should be washed thoroughly with soap and warm water for 20 seconds before and after handling food. Also ensure that all ready to eat foods, such as buns and cooked meats, are handled with tongs or gloved hands. Equally important are the surfaces and utensils that come in contact with raw and cooked foods – make sure they are properly cleaned before you start and are washed frequently throughout use.

2. Separate: Raw meats and poultry should be prepared separately from veggies and cooked foods. When you chop meats and veggies, be sure to use separate cutting boards. Cutting boards should be washed thoroughly before cutting any food item. Juices from raw meats can contain harmful bacteria that could cross-contaminate raw veggies and already cooked foods.

3. Cook: Ensure that you have a thermometer to measure finished cooked products. Color of meat is not an adequate indicator of meat temperature.

Meat and poultry cooked on a grill often brown quickly and may appear done on the outside, but still may not have reached a safe minimum internal temperature to kill any harmful bacteria. Steaks, roasts and chops should be cooked to 145°F. Hamburgers should reach 155°F. All poultry should reach a minimum of 165°F. Fish should be cooked to 145°F. Fully cooked meats, like hot dogs, should be grilled to 165°F or until steaming hot.

As you take the cooked meats off the grill, be sure to place them on a clean plate or platter, NOT on the unwashed dish that held them when they were raw. The juices left on the plate from the raw meats can cross-contaminate cooked foods.

If you prefer to prepare meats using a smoker, the temperature in the smoker should be maintained between 225°F and 300°F for safety. Be sure to use your food thermometer to be certain the food has reached a safe, minimum internal temperature.

4. Chill: Keeping food at a safe temperature is always a major concern at picnics and cookouts. Many times, food is prepared and left to sit out while guests munch over the course of several hours. However, bacteria can start to grow on perishable food that has been sitting out too long.

It's important to keep hot food hot and cold food cold. Hot food can be kept safe at 135°F or above in chafing dishes, slow cookers, or warming trays, and cold food can be kept chilled at 40°F or below with ice packs or ice cubes in a cooler.

Perishable food should never sit out for more than TWO hours. And if the temperature is above 90°F – which can be common at summer picnics – perishable foods shouldn't sit out more than one hour. Refrigerate or freeze leftovers promptly and discard any food that has sat out too long.

Remember to enjoy the summer season. Invite friends, family and loved ones to your bar-b-ques. However, follow these safety tips and keep E-coli, salmonella and other unwanted food borne illnesses from making an unwelcomed appearance at your next yard party.

Preventive Measures against the West Nile Virus

The West Nile virus is an illness that is transmitted from an infected bird to a mosquito and then from a mosquito to humans or animals. Approximately 80% of people infected with the West Nile virus show no symptoms and 20% show a mild case of symptoms. For instance, skin rash, fever, chills, body aches, and nausea. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) states that “about one in 150 people infected with WNV will develop severe illness.” Some symptoms can lead to permanent damage or even death. It is important that the community works together to reduce the mosquito population and prevent themselves from being bitten.

Some preventive measures include:

* Installing or maintaining good window and door screens to prevent mosquitoes from getting inside the house.

* Many mosquitoes are most active at dusk and dawn. Wearing long sleeves and long pants is recommended or using an insect repellent that contains an EPA-registered active ingredient, such as DEET and Picaridin, when

outdoors. To determine which mosquito repellent is right for you, visit <http://www2.epa.gov/mosquitocontrol>.

* Routinely check your yard and around the house to ensure there is no stagnant water for the mosquitoes to breed. For instance, tires, buckets, pools, flower pots, bird baths, etc.

The CDC is working with local health departments and other agencies to prepare and track the virus. If you see a dead bird on the ground, do not touch it, and contact the Englewood Health Department at (201) 568-3450 for instructions.

Source: West Nile Virus: What You Need To Know. (2012, September 12). Retrieved May 21, 2013, from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/wnv_factSheet.htm#what

Recreational Water Illnesses

Recreational water illnesses (RWIs) are caused by germs spread by swallowing, breathing in mists or aerosols of, or having contact with, contaminated water in swimming pools, hot tubs, water parks, water play areas, interactive fountains, lakes, rivers, or oceans. RWIs can also be caused by chemicals in the water or chemicals that evaporate from the water and cause indoor air quality problems.

RWIs include a wide variety of infections, including gastrointestinal, skin, ear, respiratory, eye, neurologic, and wound infections. The most commonly reported RWI is diarrhea. In the past two decades, there has been a substantial increase in the number of RWI outbreaks associated with swimming.

Keeping chlorine at recommended levels is essential to maintain a healthy pool. With RWI outbreaks on the rise, swimmers need to take an active role in helping to protect themselves and prevent the spread of germs.

Three Steps for swimmers

Keep germs from causing recreational water illnesses (RWIs):

* Don't swim when you have diarrhea. You can spread germs in the water and make other people sick.

* Don't swallow the pool water. Avoid getting water in your mouth.

* Practice good hygiene. Shower with soap before swimming and wash your hands after using the toilet or changing diapers.

Three Steps for parents of young kids

Keep germs out of the pool:

* Take your kids on bathroom breaks or check diapers often. Waiting to hear "I have to go" may mean that it's too late.

* Change diapers in a bathroom or a diaper-changing area and not at pool side. Germs can spread in and around the pool.

* Wash your child thoroughly (especially the rear end) with soap and water before swimming. Invisible amounts of fecal matter can end up in the pool

Source: CDC (Centers for Disease Control & Prevention)

Keep Your Cool this Summer!

School is out, or soon will be, and summer is right around the corner! With the cold and dreary winter that Englewood had, who wouldn't want to be outside in the sunshine? Although being outdoors sounds like a great idea, it is important to keep several safety precautions in mind to protect you and your family in the heat.

Know the temperature. The heat and air quality during the summer days adds extra stress to your body and increases your internal temperature. When the air quality is decreased, especially during humid days, it makes it harder for your body to sweat resulting in a higher body temperature. Therefore, it is very important to take care of yourself when outdoors to avoid any serious health issue.

Fluids, fluids, fluids! Keep well hydrated during the course of your time outdoors. Staying hydrated will help your body sweat and cool down. Drink plenty of water or sports drinks while in the heat, and avoid any alcoholic beverages.

Dress appropriately. It is important to wear lightweight, loose fitting clothing during the summer months. Avoid wearing dark clothing, which can absorb heat. If possible, wear a hat to protect yourself from the ultraviolet sun rays. If you and your family plan to take a bike ride, make sure helmets are worn to avoid any serious head related injury.

Avoid midday sun. If you are planning to take the kids to the park, make sure it is during the morning or evening when it is

cooler. The ultraviolet sun rays are their strongest between 10am and 4pm. During this time, stay in the shade if possible, or take your kids to the pool!

Wear sun screen. Make sure to wear sun screen with an SPF of 15 or higher, and always reapply after swimming, towel drying or excess perspiration! A sunburn decreases your body's ability to cool itself down resulting in an elevated body temperature and skin discomfort.

Know your medical risks. Certain medical conditions or medications can increase your risk of a heat-related illness. If you plan to be out in the heat, talk to your doctor about precautions.

Have a very safe, healthy and cool summer!

Safety precautions adapted from mayoclinic.com

Are You Prepared?

Emergency preparedness is on everyone's lips these days. We have all been told to make sure we have adequate drinking water, extra batteries and non-perishable food on hand to last for at least 3 days. But what if you become incapacitated and cannot speak for yourself? How will you let emergency service personnel know what medications you are taking? Who to contact? If you have allergies? If you don't want CPR?

It is just as important to plan for a medical emergency as it is to plan for a natural or manmade disaster.

To prepare for an emergent situation, you should keep a list of your health information with you at all times. You should have:

1. Your physician's name and phone number.
2. A list of medications you are taking, including dosage and frequency.
3. Any allergies you may have.
4. An emergency contact name and phone number.
5. If you have a living will or a DNR (Do not resuscitate).

It is very important to keep this information in your wallet with your personal identification so, in the event of an emergency, you can receive the care you need.

Melanoma: What you don't know

Melanoma facts that may astound you:

- * Melanoma is the fastest growing cancer in the U.S.
- * One American dies of melanoma every hour.
- * One in 50 Americans has a lifetime risk of developing melanoma.
- * Melanoma is the most common form of cancer for young adults 25-29 years old.
- * There have been no significant advances in the survival rate in the last 30 years.
- * If caught in the early stages, melanoma is treatable, with a survival rate of 100%.
- * The majority of melanoma is caused by UV light and sun exposure.
- * Exposure to tanning beds before the age of 30 increases the risk of developing melanoma by 75%.
- * According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, on average, a child's exposure to the sun is three times that of an adult.
- * Just one bad blistering sunburn during childhood can more than double the risk of melanoma later in life.

Research shows an association between sunburn and melanoma. Here are some ways to protect yourself:

- * Avoid tanning beds.
- * Avoid direct sunlight between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. when ultraviolet (UV) rays are most intense.
- * Wear a hat with a brim wide enough to shade the face, ears and neck, and clothes that cover as much as possible of the arms, legs and torso.
- * Use a broad spectrum sunscreen daily with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30. Re-apply frequently.

* Fulfill a Vitamin D deficiency through changes in your diet and supplements. Do not seek sun or tanning beds.

* Know your skin, examine it regularly and schedule an annual skin screening by your doctor.

What is Meningitis?

Meningitis is a serious life threatening disease that can affect anyone at any time. The speed at which people can become ill, and the dramatic and sometimes devastating course of events, makes meningitis an alarming disease.

Meningitis is the inflammation of the protective coverings of the brain and spinal cord. Meningitis can be caused by an infection by certain bacteria or viruses. The bacterial form is less common than the viral form, but is more severe. Since the symptoms of viral and bacterial meningitis are similar, if meningitis is suspected or if there has been close contact with someone who has meningitis – it is imperative to seek prompt medical attention.

Symptoms of meningitis may include:

- * high fever
- * headache
- * stiff neck
- * nausea and vomiting
- * sensitivity to light
- * confusion
- * sleepiness
- * skin rashes
- * seizures

Symptoms in infants may be different and may include:

- * lethargy
- * yellow skin (jaundice)
- * high-pitched cry
- * bulging fontanel (soft spot at the top of the infant's head)
- * poor feeding
- * irritability

Bacterial meningitis can be spread from person-to-person through close contact with respiratory droplets and saliva (kissing, sneezing, and sharing of utensils and cups). Therefore, bacterial meningitis can be passed among household contacts, intimate contacts, and those living in close quarters such as dormitories, camp, and boarding school.

A person with bacterial meningitis can be treated with antibiotics, and close contacts of a person with meningitis can also be given antibiotics to prevent them from becoming sick.

Viral meningitis is more common and is usually much less serious than the bacterial form. The symptoms last from 1-2 weeks and the patient recovers completely, usually without treatment. Viral meningitis is a complication of a viral illness and is not contagious, although others may be susceptible to developing the viral illness itself.

Those most at risk for developing bacterial meningitis are the very young and the elderly, and those living in group housing situations such as college students and the military.

Vaccines are available through the Health Department, which can protect against certain strains of bacteria that cause bacterial meningitis.

For more information, please call the Public Health Nurse at 201-871-6511.

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