

# Englewood Health Watch

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## Back to School Food Safety

### Health Observances

- September – National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month
- October – National Breast Cancer Awareness Month
- November – American Diabetes Month

Children are at high risk of contracting food borne illness because their immune systems are still developing. In fact, children under the age of five have the highest incidence of *Campylobacter*, *E. coli*, and *Salmonella* infection among any other age group in the United States. This highlights the importance of following the USDA’s four food safety steps whenever preparing meals: Clean, Separate, Cook and Chill.

To help families teach the importance of the four steps to protect young children, the USDA’s Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) has developed a food safety “science experiment” that parents and children can carry out together to make sure school lunches are safe to eat come lunch time.

To start, parents should pack their child’s lunch and have their child store it as they would at school. After the normal time between lunch packing and consumption has passed, parents should help their child take the temperature of the lunch contents. Cold items should still be below 40°F, and hot items should be above 140°F. If food is in the Danger Zone, between

40°F and 140°F, parents can use the following tips to ensure their child’s lunch remains safely outside the Danger Zone for future preparations:

\* If the lunch contains perishable food items like luncheon meats, eggs, or yogurt, make sure to pack it with at least two freezer packs. Bacteria multiply rapidly in the Danger Zone, so perishable food transported without an ice source won’t stay safe long.

\* Frozen juice boxes or water can also be used as freezer packs. Freeze these items overnight, and use with at least one other freezer pack. By lunch time, the liquids should be thawed and ready to drink.

\* Pack lunches containing perishable food in an insulated lunchbox or soft-sided lunch bag. Perishable food can be unsafe to eat by lunchtime if packed in a paper bag.

\* If possible, a child’s lunch should be stored in a refrigerator upon arrival. Leave the lid of the lunchbox or bag open in the fridge so that cold air can better circulate and keep the food cold.

\* If packing a hot lunch, like soup, chili or stew, use an insulated container to keep it hot. Fill the container with boiling water, let stand for a few minutes, empty, and then put in the piping hot food. Tell children to keep the insulated container closed until lunch time to keep the food hot - 140°F (73.9 °C) or above.

\* After lunch, discard all leftover food, used food packaging, and paper bags. Do not reuse packaging because it could contaminate other food and cause food borne illness.

\* If packing a child’s lunch the night before, parents should leave it in the refrigerator overnight. The meal will stay cooler longer because everything will be refrigerator temperature when it is placed in the lunchbox.

By following these tips, parents can reduce the risk that their child will be kept home from school due to a food borne illness.

For more tips to keep your family food borne illness free this season, visit [Food-Safety.gov](http://Food-Safety.gov).

Priscilla Lewis, REHS  
Health Inspector

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# Vaccination Protects, So Get Immunized!

Vaccinations are critical to building our immune system. They protect by introducing a weakened form of the germ in our body. Therefore, if or when our body is exposed to these diseases, our immune system remembers and produces antibodies to combat the disease. Each year, preventable diseases kill thousands of people worldwide, so it is beneficial to protect ourselves and family against these diseases by getting the recommended vaccines.

Factors that play a role in how susceptible you are in getting a disease includes your lifestyle, age, immunocompromised/health, environment, migration, and living conditions, just to name a few. Take, for example, a preschooler leaving the comfort of his or her home on the first day of school. The child is introduced to a whole new environment, and the risk of getting a disease becomes easy. NEVER think for a moment that the disease cannot affect you, your family, or your community. It is easier to prevent a disease than to cure it.

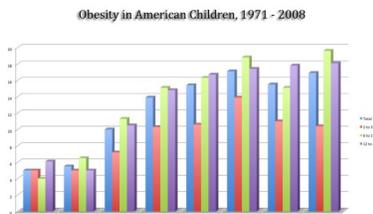
Over the years, vaccinations have proven to reduce, or in some cases eliminate, diseases that killed or severely disabled people a few generations ago. For example, smallpox -- a contagious, disfiguring and often deadly disease -- estimated to kill more people worldwide in the 20<sup>th</sup> century than any other preventable disease, has been completely eradicated from society. Immunizing the population with the smallpox vaccine had stopped the spread of the disease, and the last case reported was in the year 1977.

## September—National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month

What are you contributing to your child's health? Are you feeding your children french fries, chips, candy and soda, or allowing 4 hours of continuous sitting in front of the television screen? According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, obesity rates have been rising over the past few years. Obesity is a risk factor for many weight related diseases and illnesses among adults but significantly among children. Children today are much more prone to the development of type II diabetes, high cholesterol, high blood pressure and/or other health conditions due to excess weight or body fat.

A major contribution to obesity

among children is a lack of physical activity and poor dietary habits. Preventing obesity in children involves many preventive measures including children engaging in the recommended amount of 60 minutes of physical activity daily. Physical activity includes a variation of aerobic, muscle strengthening and bone strengthening exercise.



**Simple ways to exercise with your family include:**

\* Using the stairs, not elevators

or escalators

- \* Scheduling family walks or bike rides
- \* Dancing to a favorite album
- \* Taking children to the local park
- \* Having children play sports at their school
- \* Parking farther away from your destination and walking

Physical activity is great, however dietary habits are even more important when it comes to children's overall health. Children must eat the recommended amount of 2 ½ cups to 6 ½ cups of fruits and vegetables a day. Fruits and vegetables provide

## Vaccination (cont'd)

Polio, measles, mumps, whooping cough, and diphtheria incidences and occurrences have been reduced significantly due to the use of vaccines. Although these diseases may resurface and cause an outbreak, the use of vaccines make it controllable, thus causing less fatality. Polio is another disease that has been eradicated from the United States due to administering polio vaccine, but it is still prevalent in other countries. The last reported case of polio in United States was in the year 1999.

As effective and safe as vaccines are, they do have side effects. Each vaccine may have a different side

effect on each individual. Vaccination may cause pain, discomfort, redness, or tenderness at the injection site, but this is minimal compared to the pain, discomfort, and trauma that getting the disease will bring. In other words, getting sick from the vaccine is more bearable than getting sick from the disease.

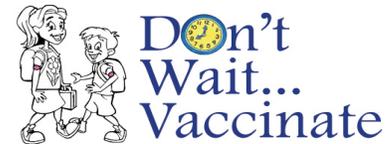
Remember, vaccinations save lives, prevent the spread of preventable diseases, and allow for a healthier and safer community. Get vaccinated today!

Claudette Murdock, RN, BSN  
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Sources:

<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/agent/smallpox/overview/disease-facts.asp>  
<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/agent/smallpox/overview/disease-facts.asp>

<http://www.cdc.gov/polio/updates/>



## Obesity (cont'd)

many of the vitamins and minerals needed for children's growth and development. Fruits and vegetables also help reduce the risk of cancer, obesity, type II diabetes and many other chronic diseases.

Parents and/or guardians have to

consider children's calorie intake verses physical activity. Children are burning very few calories compared to calories consumed. It is crucial for parents to teach their children about their health to prevent weight related illnesses in the future. Parents must realize that the habits chil-

dren learn today are the habits they will carry into adulthood.

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Youth Health Educator

Source:

[www.cdc.gov/healthyouth/obesity](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyouth/obesity)

## Quit Cold Turkey—Lunch!

The Great American Smoke-out™ takes place every third Thursday in November to challenge people to stop using tobacco products, as well as making them aware of the tools they can use to quit. Therefore, on Thursday, November 20, the Englewood Health Department will provide a turkey lunch to help City employees quit the use of tobacco products “cold

turkey”. Each participant will be given educational materials and resources to help kick the habit.

According to the American Cancer Society, recent statistics show that lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death for both men and women, and 87% of lung cancer deaths are from smoking. Another 8.6 million people live with seri-

ous illnesses caused by the use of tobacco products, such as heart disease, diabetes and other related illnesses.

Over the years, the Great American Smoke-out has aided in the changing of laws by drawing attention to deaths and chronic diseases caused by smoking. State and local government responded to such efforts by banning smoking in public areas, raising

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**Public Health**  
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**[www.cityofenglewood.org](http://www.cityofenglewood.org)**

*This local health department offers a comprehensive array of public health prevention, promotion, and protection services and programs serving 27,147 residents (census data of 2010) in the City of Englewood, New Jersey. The Department operates under the mandated, legal framework of the Public Health Practice Standards of Performance for Local Boards of Health in New Jersey (N.J.A.C 8:52) and the New Jersey State Sanitary Code (N.J.A.C 8:26). Under the governing authority of the Englewood Board of Health, its mission is to improve the quality of life for individuals and families in the City of Englewood through innovative policies, effective services, and strong community partnerships.*

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*Deborah L. Baldwin, CMR, Editor.*

## Cold Turkey (cont'd)

cigarette prices and taxes, and funded more educational programs to decrease tobacco use and sales. Just recently, the age to purchase tobacco products in Englewood has been changed from 19 to 21 in an effort to reduce smoking amongst teens.

For more information on the Great American Smoke-out, please visit [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

For local smoking cessation programs please visit [www.co.bergen.nj.us](http://www.co.bergen.nj.us)

Megan Maletich, BS, CHES  
Health Educator



GREAT AMERICAN SMOKE-OUT

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21

### PET CENSUS UPDATE

The Department of Health thanks all Englewood residents for their cooperation in assisting us in completing the 2014 Pet Census.

Over 900 letters were mailed to residences identified with pets whose license status could not be verified. This was an important part of the process to insure that all pets are vaccinated against rabies, which is the reason for the licensing of dogs and cats.

Thank you again!

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