



The Englewood Health Watch

El Observador de Salud de Englewood

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Update: Bergenfield/Englewood Mass Immunization Exercise

On June 4, 2011, the Bergenfield and Englewood Health Departments, along with several partner agencies, conducted a Mass Immunization (mock) Exercise sponsored by a New Jersey Health Officers Association mini grant. The drive-thru/walk-in clinic was held at McCloud Elementary School to test the ability of these communities to react to an immediate need to immunize their populations in a pandemic situation.

This grant proposal, written by a graduate student intern of Hunter College, and submitted by Bergenfield's Health Officer, was unique in that: -during the exercise, nursing students were provided with on-site, "Just-In-Time Training" as published in NJHOA's Best Practices from Lessons Learned in the Exercises (2009)

-Bergenfield, with Englewood's collaboration, was the only local Health Department to apply for and receive funding from NJHOA for this mini grant. All others were County or Regional Health Departments

The participating agencies were

- Bergenfield Department of Health
- Bergenfield Board of Health
- Bergenfield Emergency Medical Services
- Englewood Department of Health
- Englewood Board of Health
- Englewood Office of Emergency Management (Department of Police)
- Englewood Emergency Medical Services (Department of Fire)
- Englewood Volunteer Ambulance Corps.

A photo presentation of the event is available for viewing on the City of Englewood's Facebook page and on YouTube.

Food allergies

Food allergies are a common and serious health problem, and September is National Food Safety Education Month. The Englewood Health Department wants the community to become aware and better informed on what a food allergy is and what kinds of food can trigger an allergic reaction. Any food can, though some foods cause the vast majority of negative reactions. Eight foods account for 90 percent of all food allergies. They include: milk, shellfish, fish, soy, wheat, peanuts, tree nuts (like walnuts and cashews), and eggs. Latex, from gloves worn by food service staff, may come into contact with food. For those with a latex allergy, this may cause an allergic reaction when the food is eaten. Individuals with a latex allergy should ask that food preparers not wear latex gloves when preparing their meals. According to www.foodallergy.rutgers.edu,

* Approximately 327,000 New Jerseyans suffer from food allergies, including nearly 100,000 children.

* Food allergy is the leading cause of anaphylaxis (a sudden, severe, potentially fatal, systemic allergic reaction), accounting for an estimated 30,000 emergency department visits, 2,000 hospitalizations, and 200 deaths nationwide each year.

* Currently, the only way to treat food allergies is by avoiding the foods that trigger reactions. Therefore, consumers should take precautionary steps, especially when eating out.

The following tips are useful for adults with food allergies or parents who have children with food allergies:

* In restaurants, ask BEFORE you order. Speak with restaurant staff to determine exactly what ingredients are in a food item. Ask for suggestions of menu items that do not include the food you're allergic to. You may also inquire if the kitchen can prepare a menu item for you that does not contain the food allergen.

* **READ ALL FOOD LABELS CAREFULLY.** The eight major food allergens are required by law to appear on packaged food labels. Be sure to check the entire packaging because sometimes manufacturers do not list allergens in the same area as they list the ingredients especially if the food in question doesn't contain an allergen but is made in the processing plant as one. (This is a big concern regarding peanuts.) If you're not completely sure, contact the manufacturer directly.

* If you or your child experiences a food allergic reaction, seek medical help immediately. It only takes minutes for a severe reaction to happen, so a quick response is critical.

Keep the holidays happy - put food safety first!

The season for fond memories, gift giving, hosting parties and family gatherings with good food is just around the corner. How time flies! As you prepare your festive holiday spreads remember to keep food fresh and safe to eat. If food containing harmful bacteria is consumed, it could cause food borne illness. So, when planning a big feast, follow this safety checklist.



Temperature

* Remember to keep cold foods cold – 41°F and below and to keep hot foods hot – 135°F and above

Combat Cross-Contamination

* Store poultry, raw meat, and seafood on a plate or tray (in that order from bottom to top) or on the lowest possible refrigerator shelf so raw juices don't drip onto other foods.

* Use one cutting board and one set of utensils for raw meat products and another one for salads and other ready to eat foods, or thoroughly wash and sanitize the cutting board and utensils in between each use.

* Never place cooked food on a plate that previously held raw meat, poultry, or seafood unless the plate has been washed and sanitized.

Clean Up

* Thoroughly wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds before and after handling raw products

* Use plastic or other non-porous cutting boards. Cutting boards should be run through the dishwasher or washed, rinsed, and sanitized after each use.

* Don't spread bacteria with dirty sponges, dishcloths, or towels. Bacteria often thrive in the moist areas of these items where bits of food may also exist. Use paper towels, soap, and hot water to clean food preparation surfaces.

When is a cough not just a cough

As soon as our children are born, we do everything we can to protect them. We buy car seats to bring them home from the hospital, buy books on how to care and feed them, purchase outlet covers and safety gates; we stop at nothing to ensure their health and safety.

Unbeknownst to us parents, grandparents, siblings and caregivers, we can inadvertently be harming the children we

try so hard to protect. In recent months, there has been a resurgence of Whooping Cough, aka Pertussis, a very contagious disease. Pertussis can cause violent and rapid coughing, over and over, until the air is gone from the lungs and you are forced to inhale with a loud "whooping" sound. This extreme coughing can cause nausea and extreme fatigue. The cough can last for months. Whooping Cough (Pertussis) can cause serious illness in adults, children and especially infants. 1 in 10 children with Whooping Cough (Pertussis) get pneumonia and more than half of the infants one year old and younger are hospitalized.

Pertussis is spread when someone who has the disease coughs or sneezes in close proximity to other people, who then breathe in the bacteria. It is common for adults and adolescents to infect infants even if they had the vaccination series in early childhood known as Dtap.

What can you do? There is a booster shot known as Tdap, which adults and adolescents should receive as part of the Tetanus series. You simply replace a Td shot, which is needed every 10 years with a Tdap shot. It's that simple. You should get this vaccine if you visit with or care for infants less than 1 year old; you might become pregnant; before you leave the hospital if you are a new mother, or if you are healthcare personnel.

Fortunately for our residents, as part of a grant with the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the Englewood Health Department is able to give Free, (yes, Free) vaccines of Tdap. We also have the Meningitis vaccine, which college freshmen are required to have if they are going to live in a dorm, and Gardasil, which helps protect against HPV, a virus that can cause genital warts and cervical cancer. Gardasil is recommended for men and women up to age 26.

To get any or all of these vaccines, call the Public Health Nurse at the Health Department at 201-871-6511 if you have any questions or to schedule an appointment.

For more information you can visit the Centers for Disease Control Website at

www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/pertussis/default.htm

So get vaccinated and spread the word, not the disease.

Earthquake safety checklist

An earthquake is a sudden, rapid shaking of the earth caused by the breaking and shifting of rock beneath the earth's surface. Earthquakes strike suddenly, without warning, and they can occur at any time of the year, day or night. Forty-five states and territories in the United States are at moderate to very high risk of earthquakes, and they are located in every region of the country.

Did you know?

Doorways are no stronger than any other part of the structure. During an earthquake, get under a sturdy piece of furniture and hold on. This will provide some protection from falling objects that can injure you during an earthquake.

How can you prepare?

Keep and maintain an emergency supplies kit in an easy-to-access location.

Become aware of fire evacuation and earthquake plans for all of the buildings you occupy regularly. Pick safe places in each room of your home, workplace and/or school. A safe place could be under a piece of furniture or against an interior wall away from windows, bookcases or tall furniture that could fall on you.

What should you do during an earthquake?

Drop, cover and hold on. Move as little as possible. Stay away from windows to avoid being injured by shattered glass. Stay indoors until the shaking stops and you are sure it is safe to exit. If you must leave the building after the shaking stops, use stairs rather than an elevator in case there are aftershocks, power outages or other damage.

If you are outside when the shaking starts:

Find a clear spot and drop to the ground. Stay there until the shaking stops (away from buildings, power lines, trees, streetlights). If you are in a vehicle, pull over to a clear

location and stop. Avoid bridges, overpasses and power lines if possible. Stay inside with your seatbelt fastened until the shaking stops. Then, drive carefully, avoiding bridges and ramps that may have been damaged.

What do you do after an earthquake?

Check yourself for injuries and get first aid, if necessary, before helping injured or trapped persons. Look quickly for damage in and around your home and get everyone out if your home is unsafe. Listen to a portable, battery-operated or hand-crank radio for updated emergency information and instructions.

For more information on disaster and emergency preparedness, visit www.RedCross.org or call

1-866-Get-Info (1-866-438-4636)

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Alzheimer's Disease

Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia affecting older adults. It is a chronic disabling condition that causes problems with memory and intellectual abilities, thinking, and behavior. It progresses slowly and the affected individual loses the ability to learn, function, and remember. Alzheimer's is seen as the epidemic of the future. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the number of individuals affected is expected to reach 16 million by 2050. In 2010, the total Medicare and Medicaid spending was estimated at \$123 billion.

The cause of the disease is not yet known. It is believed that several factors play role in the advent of the disease. The causes include genetic, environmental, and lifestyle factors.

Risk Factors – Age, 65 and older, is the most important factor, Alzheimer's is not a normal part of aging. Other implications in the process: traumatic brain injury, lower education level, genetics (family history), presence of apolipoprotein (APOE4), elevated levels of homocysteine, Down's syndrome in first degree relative, family history of Alzheimer's Disease, smoking, and depression.

Symptoms – The most common early symptom of Alzheimer's is difficulty remembering newly learned information. Other symptoms include: trouble remembering things, such as how to get to familiar places, names of friends and family members, how to perform activities of daily living, e.g. cooking, dressing, bathing, paying bills, housekeeping, trouble concentrating on tasks, trouble completing sentences due to lost or forgotten words, inability to remember the date, time of day, season, loss of interest in usual activities, withdrawal, poor coordination, slowness and loss of purposeful movement.

Treatment – There is no cure for Alzheimer's disease. Treatment is multi faceted and includes helping people to maintain mental function, managing behavioral symptoms, and slowing the disease progression. Four drugs are currently used: Aricept, Exelon, Razadyne, Namanda. They work by regulating the chemicals that transmit the messages between the neurons, and help maintain thinking, memory, speaking skills, and behavior problems.

Caring for a person affected with Alzheimer's is very demanding and has a high physical and emotional cost, not to mention financial. Programs are put in place to teach families about the disease stages and the flexible and practical strategies for dealing with difficult care-giving situations. Developing good coping skills and strong family support network is important for caregivers to handle the day to day stresses. Support group is a critical lifeline. Caregivers will find respite, be able to express their concerns, share their experiences, get tips, and receive emotional comfort.

Prevention – Since the cause is unknown, there are no guidelines for preventing Alzheimer's disease.

Source: Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Alzheimer's Association, National Institute on Aging.