



# The Englewood Health Watch El Observador de Salud de Englewood

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## Open House at the Health Department

As part of our commemoration of Public Health Week (April 4-10), the Health Department cordially invites you to an Open House on Tuesday, April 5<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 to 7:30 p.m. This year's theme is "*Safety is NO Accident: Live Injury Free*". Visit our newly refurbished office, discuss safety issues with our staff, and enjoy some light refreshments with your neighbors.

## World Health Day

Celebrated each year on April 7, World Health Day was called for by the delegates from the first World Health Assembly in 1948 and took effect in 1950. The day not only marks the anniversary of the World Health Organization (WHO) but also draws attention to global health priorities. The theme this year is "Antimicrobial Resistance". It is a call to all WHO members to address this important issue and prevent the emergence of highly resistant microbes, or superbugs, through policy enactment.

Antimicrobials have been in use since the 1940s and have greatly reduced illness and death from infectious diseases. Taken correctly, their value is inestimable. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), these drugs have been so widely and sometimes incorrectly used that infectious organisms have adapted to them, making them less effective. Some organisms may develop resistance to one antimicrobial agent, and others to several antimicrobial agents or classes. These are referred to as multidrug-resistant (MDR) strains.

Antimicrobial resistance is more prevalent in countries where prescription of antimicrobials is unregulated and available over the counter. The use of antibiotics appears to have increased specially in the agriculture-food industry – in cattle, poultry, hog and fish farming, honeybee hives – where these agents are used as growth promoters. Some estimates suggest that the use in animals and fish is at least 1,000 fold greater compared with use in humans.

The WHO hopes to make world governments aware of the problem and the necessity to take action. Multidrug-resistant organisms constitute a serious global threat. Living in a global world, where people travel from one continent to another within 24 hours, increases the risk of a global spread of multidrug resistant strains, which constitutes a serious threat. Such strains have already spread internationally. John Conly, professor of Medicine, Microbiology and Infectious Diseases and Pathology at the University of Calgary in Canada said: "We are essentially back to an era with no antibiotics."

World Health Day will raise awareness on this worrisome issue and launch a worldwide campaign to safeguard achievements. The scientific community has accomplished important breakthroughs in the medical and pharmaceutical fields, making new techniques and new drugs readily available to treat medical conditions that, just a few years ago, were considered deadly, i.e. HIV/AIDS. It is our responsibility not to jeopardize these advancements for future generations.

## Easter Ducklings & Chicks Linked to Salmonella



Ducklings and chicks are often given to children during the Easter Season as a treat to care for and enjoy as they grow. These cute chicks and ducklings are adorable but carry a hidden threat: Salmonella. This article is to educate you on the threat

of salmonella and review Englewood's policy on fowl.

Salmonella, a severe diarrheal infection, is carried in the intestines of farmyard birds and water fowl such as ducks and geese. Feces contaminate the environment of the animal as well as the entire surface of the animal. Children may be exposed to the bacteria by handling, petting, cuddling, kissing or cleaning up after the ducklings and chicks. Hand washing is the best preventative measure against Salmonella and should be done after handling the chicks or ducklings and their environment (cages, water and food dishes, etc). Children should not be allowed to kiss these birds under any circumstances and should always be supervised during their time with the animals.

The City of Englewood has an ordinance against the housing of any bird or farmyard animal: Chapter 4, article 2: "No person, firm or corporation shall raise, keep, harbor or slaughter any fowl, including but not limited to chickens, ducks, geese, pigeons or turkeys within the City [of Englewood]." Aside from the illegality of having these young birds in your home, there is a significant risk associated with them. We at the Health Department urge you to reconsider housing these animals at your home and be aware of the high risk of illness associated with it. We hope you and your children have a happy and healthy spring season.

## Free Rabies Clinic

Thursday, April 28<sup>th</sup> from 6 to 7 pm, will be the last opportunity to obtain free rabies vaccinations for your pet from the Health Department. Licensing is required if you have not already done so, and late fees apply to renewals (\$15.00 until May 1<sup>st</sup>, at which time the \$20.00 maximum late penalty will go into effect). If you no longer own your pet, please call the Health Department at (201) 871-6503.

## Misconceptions about Vaccinations

Edward Jenner discovered vaccination 200 years ago. During the smallpox epidemic that ravaged Europe, Jenner inoculated a man with live smallpox virus to create some type of immunity, thus curtailing the deadly course of the disease.

Vaccination rates have been declining with a corresponding rise in vaccine-preventable diseases. In the United States, in 2006 and 2009, thousands of individuals contracted mumps in the Midwest and the East Coast. As of January 2010, a total of 1,521 cases had been reported, with onset dates from June 28, 2009, through January 29, 2010, a substantial increase from the 179 cases reported as of October 30, 2009. In California, an outbreak of whooping cough sickened 6,000 individuals since January 1, 2010, with 10 fatalities.

Parents have been declining immunization for their children based on their religious beliefs, concerns about the safety of the vaccines, belief that vaccine-preventable diseases do not pose a serious health risk, and political beliefs that mandatory vaccination is an interference of the government with their private choice. These are legitimate concerns, fears, and beliefs that must be taken into consideration by healthcare professionals.

Dr. Bruce Gellin, Director of the National Vaccine Program Office, conducted a survey to assess parents' understanding of vaccine-preventable diseases, immunization practices, and policies. The results showed: 25% of parents believe too many immunizations weakened the immune system; 23% believe children get more immunizations than needed; 87% of parents believe it is an important step to keep their children healthy. The majority does believe that vaccination is of great benefit for their children, but their confidence is being eroded by misleading information.

In 1998, Andrew Whitefield, the infamous British physician whose publication in "The Lancet" suggested a link between vaccines and the onset of childhood autism, fueled the anti-vaccination movement, and provided its numerous advocates with a scientific arm to attack government's efforts. His study has now been debunked, his claims have been proven to be false, and The Lancet fully retracted his paper from its published record. However, it had already sown the seeds of doubt in many parents' minds.

No vaccine is 100% effective. Vaccines are more thoroughly tested than antibiotics and vitamins. It is a proven fact that unvaccinated individuals are at increased risk of contracting an infectious disease. This has been demonstrated by numerous large studies; making the choice not to get vaccinated is not risk-free.

Parents need to look at both the risks and benefits. It is a fact that a child would be far more likely to be seriously affected and even die from one of these diseases. With a decline of 15% to 30%, the community will no longer be protected by "herd immunity" which can lead to devastating consequences. We do not live in a bubble, and our decisions affect the well being of others all over the world.

### Aging and Illness

As we age, our immune system is less effective in fighting off infections and we are more prone to develop disease. Flu shots or other immunizations may not work as well, and the immune system's ability to detect and correct cell defects also declines, which can increase the risk of cancer. Other conditions can contribute to the chance of infection such as: sensation changes, unsteady gait and changes in the skin structure, all of which increase the risk of injury where bacteria can enter broken skin. Also, senior living with increased travel, visits with family and friends, use of medications and frequent eating at restaurants, can increase exposures to disease and create the potential for illness. Developing an illness or having surgery can further weaken the immune system, making the body more susceptible to subsequent infections. To better protect one's health as we age, older adults need to take extra steps in preventing and treating infection.

Maintaining good health as an older adult involves:

- \* Exercise and adequate sleep
- \* Proper nutrition
- \* Avoidance of smoking and second hand smoke
- \* Limited alcohol use
- \* Added safety measures to avoid falls and other injuries
- \* Receiving immunizations that may include vaccines against: flu, pneumonia, shingles and tetanus
- \* Careful selection, preparation and storage of foods, to prevent food borne illnesses
- \* Preventative medical exams, and prompt medical attention at the first sign of illness
- \* Frequent hand washing as a general precaution to prevent the spread of illness

Taking extra steps to preserve our health in later years can help prevent avoidable illnesses and contribute to a more productive enjoyable senior lifestyle.

Sources:  
<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/seniorshealth.html>  
<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/eid/vol7no2/straussbaugh.htm>

### The Quest Against Youth Violence

In 2001, the Journal of the American Medical Association released a study that showed approximately 1 in 5 female public high school students experienced physical and/or sexual abuse from their dating partner. Adolescent girls who reported abuse from their dating partners were found to be at higher risk for the following:

- \* Substance abuse (alcohol, tobacco, and cocaine)
- \* Unhealthy weight maintenance
- \* Unhealthy sexual behavior
- \* Pregnancy
- \* Suicide

The issues associated with teen violence have become epidemic, especially with the rise of the World Wide Web and social media outlets. Cyberbullying, sextexting and

cyberstalking are the new era of teen violence, and Englewood's Youth Advisory Board (YAB) is tackling the problem head-on with the launch of its Teen Violence Campaign. YAB is a committee comprised of Englewood high school and middle school students who act as a liaison between Englewood City Officials and its youth. Their mission is to plan, promote, and implement programs/events that serve the Bergen County community. They believe in "Giving Youth a Voice with a Cause".

YAB kicked off its new year with a bang and hosted an event for parents, youth and local leaders about teen violence on January 6<sup>th</sup>. The Urban League for Bergen County, the YWCA of Bergen County Rape Crisis Center, the Health Department of Englewood and Youth Advisory Board partnered together to present a panel discussion on teen violence and cyberbullying. This event was held at the Englewood Hospital and Medical Center in the Chiang Auditorium located at 350 Engle Street, Englewood, NJ.

With over 80 attendees present, Ms. Chrisla Tasiopoulos, Senior Director of the YWCA of Bergen County Rape Crisis Center, along with Shirvanna Gobin, Director of Community Initiatives for the Urban League for Bergen County, discussed the Underserved Teen Victims Initiative (UTVI) and the goal of the project. Keynote speaker Sergeant Sharon Malone followed with a detailed presentation about precautions for the Internet, giving resources and tips for parents and youth about cyberstalking, dating violence and technology. This was followed by a panel discussion including speakers from The Bergen Family Center, Bergen Community College and The Englewood Youth Advisory Board (YAB) on the mental health effects of cyberbullying. YAB's very own Yash Tiwari and Alicia Chen sat on the panel and shared their own experiences with cyberbullying and highlighted what YAB was doing to combat this problem and create safe environments in our schools. Q&A and testimony from the audience ended the event.

This panel discussion was the first step for many addressing issues of teen violence cyberbullying, sextexting, and cyber stalking. It was a momentous step and we look forward to continuing the conversation. To find out more about YAB's dynamic programs, gain resources or become involved, please visit them on Facebook at Englewood's Youth Advisory Board

[http://www.facebook.com/search.php?q=Englewood+Youth+Advisory+Board&init=quick&tas=search\\_preload#!/pages/Englewoods-Youth-Advisory-Board/119888248068247](http://www.facebook.com/search.php?q=Englewood+Youth+Advisory+Board&init=quick&tas=search_preload#!/pages/Englewoods-Youth-Advisory-Board/119888248068247)

### Creating Good Sleep Habits

Sleep habits are an essential part of good health. The appropriate amount and type of sleep helps to regulate your mood, keeps your memory sharp, and has been linked to prevention of weight gain. Although the amount of sleep required is different for each adult, 7-9 hours of continuous sleep is usually recommended. Daytime fatigue that interferes with concentration and daily



activities may be a sign that you are lacking adequate sleep. The following practices can help to achieve good sleep habits:

- \* Avoid caffeine (coffee, tea, and caffeinated soft drinks, chocolate) close to bedtime.
  - \* Avoid alcohol in the evening as it can lead to disrupted sleep.
  - \* Exercise regularly, but complete your workout at least 3 hours before bedtime.
  - \* Establish a regular, relaxing, bedtime routine.
  - \* Create a comfortable, pleasant sleeping environment.
  - \* Go to sleep and wake at regular times, even on weekends.
- Sleep can also be affected by more serious conditions such as those related to pain, breathing problems and side effects of medication. Ongoing problems with sleep should be discussed with your doctor to determine if there is an underlying medical cause, or if a referral to a sleep specialist is indicated.

Source: <http://www.sleepfoundation.org/article/how-sleep-works/let-sleep-work-you>

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