



# The Englewood Health Watch

## El Observador de Salud de Englewood

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Nelson Xavier Cruz, MS, MBA  
Director, Health Services / Health Officer



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### Grant partnership with Bergenfield Borough: Mass Vaccination Exercise

On April 13<sup>th</sup> the New Jersey Health Officers Association awarded a \$25,000 grant to the Bergenfield Department of Health for a proposal submitted, in partnership with Englewood Department of Health. The Mass Vaccination Exercise proposed will take place during the weekend of June 4-5 at McCloud Elementary School on Tenafly Road. According to the Grant Award Notice, "...participation in this initiative, along with that of the other grant recipients, will result in the development of a standard operating procedures/best practices manual, which will be used to promote best practices and continuity among all health departments in New Jersey."

The exercise has been planned by key personnel of both Health Departments, a member of Bergenfield's Board of Health/Volunteer Ambulance Corps., Englewood's Office of Emergency Management and Emergency Medical Services. Members of Englewood's Youth Advisory Board were recruited to simulate the population to be vaccinated in an emergency situation. Although a key objective is to determine how much time it would take to vaccinate the citizens of these two communities, it is significant to note:

- 1.) Bergenfield, with Englewood as its partner, was the only local health department to apply for and receive this grant award (all other recipients were County health departments);
- 2.) The grant award was, in part, due to its innovative proposal – the use of non-traditional (i.e. non-medical) personnel to administer the vaccines.

We hope that you will share our excitement in this project and continue to follow its progress.

### Depression

Depression is an extremely common mental illness. It is debilitating to the sufferers and can result in increased work absenteeism, short-term disability, and decreased productivity. It affects how the individual feels, thinks, and behaves. It is not "the blues" or something that someone can snap out of, but a chronic illness that requires long-term treatment. Depressive disorders include major depression and dysthymia, mild to moderate depression that may subside during periods of normal mood that last up to two months.

Causes – genetic factors: neurotransmitters (brain chemicals linked to mood), personality defects, childhood events (abuse, loss of a parent), psychological stresses (divorce, unemployment), hormones (thyroid problems, menopause).

Risk Factors – Although the exact cause of depression is unknown, the following factors can play a role in triggering the event: substance abuse, serious illness (cancer, heart disease, Alzheimer, HIV/AIDS), poverty, a family history of depressive disorders, postpartum depression, stressful life events, and medications.

Symptoms – Depression affects each person differently. People usually feel miserable without knowing why. Symptoms generally include: feelings of worthlessness, sadness or unhappiness, inability to concentrate, anxiety, chronic fatigue, poor appetite or overeating, loss of interest and inability to experience pleasure, withdrawal, feelings of guilt, loss of sexual drive, restlessness, crying spells, physical symptoms such as back pain or headaches, and thoughts of death, dying or suicide.

Complications – Untreated depression can result in health problems that affect every aspect of life. The most important complication is suicide. Those who are

overwhelmed by life problems experience great ambivalence -- they do not want to die, but they do not want to go on either. Guns and drugs must be removed from the household. Driving should be prohibited. Depression can also result in self-mutilation, most commonly wrist cutting. Less severe complications include: alcohol abuse, substance abuse, anxiety, sleep disturbances, work or school problems, family conflicts, relationship difficulties, and social isolation.

Prevention – People experiencing symptoms of depression should make an appointment to visit their physician as soon as possible. Other options would be to contact a friend, a loved one, or a faith leader, or call a suicide hotline to talk to a trained counselor. In the United States, the "National Prevention Lifeline" is available 24/7 at 800-273-8255.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Mayo Clinic

### Measles persists as a threat but vaccination can help

Measles may be considered an illness of the past, but in the U.S., about 50 cases per year are still diagnosed - with most originating from outside of the country. Measles can lead to complications which include pneumonia, ear infections, swelling of the brain accompanied by seizures, and miscarriage for pregnant women. According to the CDC, for every 1000 children who contract the measles virus, 1 or 2 children will die as a result of complications.

The symptoms of measles generally begin about 7-14 days after a person is infected, and include:

- \* Blotchy rash (usually begins on the face and spreads downward to entire body)
- \* High Fever
- \* Cough
- \* Runny nose
- \* Red, watery eyes
- \* Feeling run down, achy
- \* Tiny white spots with bluish-white centers inside the mouth

Greater vaccination rates against the measles virus has made it an uncommon illness in the U. S, however measles is more common in other countries. Therefore, vaccination is very important to protect your family from this serious disease.

In planning international travel, the immunization recommendations by the CDC are:

- \* Infants 6 months through 11 months of age should have at least one dose of measles-containing vaccine.
- \* Children 12 months of age or older should have two doses separated by at least 28 days.
- \* Adults should review their vaccination records to sure that they have received 2 doses of measles vaccine.

Even if not planning a trip abroad, keeping vaccinations up to date can help to protect yourself and your family from vaccine preventable diseases including the measles.

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

Source: <http://www.cdc.gov/measles/about/overview.html>

### Swimming pools

It is essential to regularly treat all swimming pools and jacuzzis (even small domestic pools) with disinfectants. This ensures any bacteria, and other organisms which get into the water, are killed. A variety of medical conditions can be transmitted to pool users if good standards of hygiene are not maintained.

These include:

- \* gastro-intestinal infections
- \* skin infections
- \* conjunctivitis
- \* nose, throat and respiratory infections.

Various chemical dosing systems are available to ensure that your pool water is kept in perfect condition. Advice on the best system to use with your pool or jacuzzi can be obtained from suppliers of pool chemicals. Names and addresses can be found in the Yellow Pages.

Public swimming and paddling pools should be regularly treated. The Englewood Health Department performs checks to ensure that public pools are treated to a satisfactory standard.

#### Pool Hygiene Safety Tips

- \* Practice proper hygiene before and after swimming, such as showering and thorough hand washing.
  - \* Wash and dry hands thoroughly after using the toilet.
  - \* Test the water daily with an inexpensive, easy-to-use kit available from your pool supply store.
  - \* Remember to take children on frequent bathroom breaks.
  - \* Children who are not toilet trained should wear tightly fitted plastic or rubber pants/nappies, recommended for swimming by the manufacturer.
  - \* Do not let children swim if they have diarrhoea.
  - \* Do not swallow the water and try to avoid getting pool water in your mouth.
  - \* Do not wear contact lenses while swimming.
- Micro-organisms in the water can cause infections if they get between the lens and eye.

#### Enjoy a safe and healthy barbeque season

Summer and fall are the most popular times for barbequing. It is a great way to enjoy food and cook it in a healthier way than frying. However, there are some dangers associated with cooking and eating outdoors. This article provides ways to avoid an E. Coli infection (also known as Escherichia coli), symptoms as well as good management practices.

E. coli is a bacterium found in the gut of all warm-blooded animals, including humans. Most often infectious E. Coli is associated with beef products, especially hamburgers. Steaks and other whole cuts of beef are generally considered safe to cook medium rare unless they are pinned or injected with flavor. These processes introduce the external bacteria into the inside of steak as it pierces or grinds the muscle.

When cooking in the summer, follow these simple guidelines to avoid an E. Coli infection and other food-borne illnesses:

- \* Defrost meat in the fridge 24 hrs. ahead of time or run under cold water to defrost - do not leave out at room temp to defrost as this promotes bacterial growth in the meat.
- \* Keep the meat and cheese in the fridge or freezer until you are ready to cook it; only bring out what you plan to cook at that moment.
- \* Use one plate for the uncooked meat and another for the cooked meat.
- \* Any time you touch an uncooked burger, wash your hands before touching anything else that is cooking/cooked.
- \* Use separate utensils to handle raw and cooked meats
- \* Purchase a thin-probed thermometer so you can monitor the temperature of the meats.
- \* Cook ALL burgers being served to children and seniors to 155 degrees Fahrenheit; only then is the beef burger "well done".
- \* If food is being left out, throw it out after 2 hours.

Symptoms: E. Coli infection symptoms are normally the following: within 1-6 days the person will get severe stomach cramping and tenderness, diarrhea that starts out watery but becomes bloody over time, and nausea and vomiting. These symptoms usually disappear in healthy adolescents and adults in a week's time. However, symptoms may persist for 2-14 days accompanied by bloody diarrhea. This can lead to kidney failure, known as HUS (Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome) and is especially dangerous and even fatal in children and the elderly.

Escherichia coli is a very preventable illness if you take the steps in preventing infection. Make sure to defrost meat properly and keep it cold until it is time to cook it. Be mindful of cross contamination from utensils, hands, plates, etc. Be aware of hand washing; wash after touching raw meat and before handling utensils and cooked product. Take temperatures of the meat just after it's been taken off the grill to make sure it was cooked to 155 degrees at the center; this kills the E. coli bacteria. And finally, if food is left out at room temperature, throw it out after 2 hours to ensure you and your guests' safety. If symptoms do arise, contact your physician, especially if they are noticed in children, as more serious complications may occur.

If you follow these simple tips, your family and friends will have a happy, healthy and safe barbeque season. Enjoy!

#### Summer safety tips for children

Summer is a great opportunity for our children to go outside, get exercise, and participate in activities that will help them stay fit throughout their lives. But participating in these activities always brings the risk of our children getting hurt. Here are some tips for keeping your child safe while swimming, bicycling, and skateboarding.

Nothing is more fun for a child than cooling off in a pool, beach, lake, or water park; however, playing in and around water comes with risks. According to the National Safety Council, an estimated 5,000 children ages 14 and under are hospitalized due to unintentional drowning-related incidents each year; 15 percent die in the hospital, and as many as 20 percent suffer severe, permanent neurological disability.

- \* Never leave your child unattended in or around open water
  - \* Learning to swim can help them stay safe in the water
  - \* Remind your child not to play near deep water
  - \* Swim only in designated areas
  - \* Wear a life jacket
  - \* Set rules for your child around water and enforce them
- Skateboarding and bicycling can be fun, as well as a great source of exercise. It is important that your child follows these rules to ensure their bicycling or skateboarding experience is a fun and safe one:
- \* Wear protective gear; this includes a helmet, knee and elbow pads, risk guards and appropriate footwear especially while skateboarding, because chances are they WILL fall.
  - \* Check skateboard or bicycle for safety
  - \* Obey the rules of the road if they are riding or skating outside
  - \* Watch out for cars and pedestrians.
  - \* Be wary of their environment; avoid rocks and cracks in sidewalks, these may cause your child to lose control and fall.

Now that you are equipped with some tips to keep your child safe this summer, get out, have fun, get some exercise together, make sure and wear appropriate sunscreen, and always be mindful of the hidden dangers with any activity.

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