



# The Englewood Health Watch

## El Observador de Salud de Englewood

a Newsletter Published by the Englewood Department of Health

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#### **Influenza (Also Called Flu)**

##### *The Disease*

The flu is a contagious respiratory infection caused by influenza viruses. The disease can be mild to severe and, at times, lead to death. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in the United States, an average of 5% to 20% of the population gets the flu, 200,000 are hospitalized from flu complications, and 36,000 die.

##### *Who is at risk?*

Older people, young children, people with chronic health conditions such as: diabetes, asthma, heart disease.

##### *Signs and Symptoms*

Usually high fever, headache, extreme tiredness, dry cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscles aches, stomach symptoms (nausea, vomiting, diarrhea).

##### *Types of Influenza Viruses*

There are 3 types of influenza viruses: A, B, and C. Types A and B cause seasonal epidemics almost every winter in the United States. Type C is mild and does not cause epidemic. Influenza A is divided into subtypes: H1N1 and H3N2. Influenza B is not subdivided into subtypes but is broken down into different strains. The Flu Vaccine is made of subtypes Influenza A(H1N1), A(H3N2), and Influenza B strains.

##### *How Flu Spreads*

Mainly from person to person through coughing and sneezing. People may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.

##### *Complications*

Ear infections, sinus infections, dehydration, pneumonia, and worsening of chronic medical conditions.

##### *Prevention*

- \* Flu Vaccine
- \* Nasal-spray flu vaccine

Flu vaccination should begin in September and continue throughout the influenza season into January and beyond.

##### *Who Should Get Vaccinated*

Children aged 6 months up to their 19th birthday, pregnant women, people aged 50 and older, people of any age with chronic medical conditions, people living in long-term care facilities, health care workers, home care givers of children less than 6 months of age, and household contacts of persons at high risk for complications from the flu.

#### **Be Prepared This Winter**

The Englewood Health Department urges all residents to plan ahead now that we are experiencing winter weather. Whether it be a case of extremely cold weather, deep snow, or an ice storm, it is best to be prepared. All of these events might mean you can not travel to the store – with little or no notice. Following these simple winter emergency tips can help keep your family safe this winter:

- Keep several days' supply of food on hand. Make sure to have food that does not need to be cooked or refrigerated – such as bread, crackers, cereal, canned foods and dried fruits. Remember baby food and formula if you have young children.
- Keep water stored in clean containers or purchase bottled water in case your water pipes freeze and rupture.
- Keep medicines that any family member may need.

- Keep an alternative way to heat – such as dry wood for a fireplace or wood stove, or kerosene for a kerosene heater.

- Keep blankets, matches, first aid kit, flashlight or battery-powered lantern, a battery powered radio, extra batteries, a multi-purpose dry chemical fire extinguisher, and a non-electric can opener.

It is a good idea to also keep a snow shovel and some rock salt on hand.

#### **Cervical Cancer**

Five main types of cancer affect women's reproductive organs: cervical, ovarian, uterine, vaginal, and vulvar. All cervical cancers are caused by Human Papillomavirus (HPV), a virus that can be passed from one person to another during sex. HPV is the main cause of cervical cancer. Many women may have an HPV infection, but few will get cervical cancer.

##### *Who Gets Cervical Cancer?*

All women are at risk for cervical cancer. Any woman who has had sex can get cervical cancer. It occurs most often in women over 30 years of age.

##### *Risk Factors*

- \* Not having regular Pap tests
- \* Not following up with your doctor when your Pap test result is not normal
- \* Having a condition that weakens the immune system (HIV/AIDS)
- \* Smoking

##### *Signs and Symptoms*

Early on, there are no signs and symptoms. However, advanced cervical cancer may cause bleeding and vaginal discharge. Bleeding after sex is common. There may be other causes for these symptoms; the only way to know is to see your doctor.

##### *Statistics*

For the past 40 years, the number of new cases of cervical cancer (incidence) and the number of deaths have decreased significantly. It is the result of regular Pap tests, which can find pre-cancer condition before it turns into cancer.

Cervical cancer rates are higher among Hispanic and African-American women. About 10,800 new cases of HPV-associated cervical cancer are diagnosed each year in the United States, and 3,850 women died of the disease in 2004.

##### *Prevention*

Cervical cancer screening: Pap test or Pap smear and the HPV test. The Pap test is recommended for all women. It should be regular, so that pre-cancer changes can be found. Do not smoke. Use condoms during sex. Limit the number of sexual partners.

If you have a low income or do not have health insurance, you can get a free or low-cost Pap test through the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

#### **Practice Good Gym Hygiene**

Is your New Years' Resolution to hit the gym more often? If so, good for you! Now take your new-found appreciation for health one step further by protecting

yourself from contracting a “staph” infection while working out. Staphylococcus aureus (staph) is a bacteria that can cause various diseases as a result of infection in tissues of the body. Good hygiene is the best way to prevent a staph infection. The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention recommends the following for preventing staph transmission at the gym:

- Wash your hands often and shower after a workout
- Keep all abrasions and cuts covered with a clean, dry bandage
- Avoid sharing towels or razors
- Use a barrier between your skin and exercise machines
- Use an alcohol-based wipe to clean equipment before and after use

For more information, please call the Nursing Unit at 201-871-6511 or the Health Education Unit at 201-871-6508.

### Stray Cats

Each year, across the country, millions of cats are subjected to euthanasia for lack of a home or shortage of space at various animal shelters. In the past, the Englewood Health Department has dealt with the majority of stray cat complaints by trapping and turning the cats over to the Bergen County Animal Shelter. The future for these cats, by and large, was euthanasia following a two-week period at the shelter. This inhumane and ineffective practice only temporarily fixed, or put a band-aid on, the problem. Before long, other cats would re-enter the area, reproduce, and require the process to be repeated.

Recently, the Englewood Health Department and the Bergen County Animal Shelter have partnered to introduce cat colonies. These would eliminate the necessity for trapping and euthanasia of cats. Instead, the cats would be trapped, vaccinated, spayed/neutered, and released. This program, TNR (Trap, Neuter & Release) helps to ensure that these cats would be vaccinated against rabies and spayed or neutered, controlling the number of stray cats in a given area. Sites for these cat colonies would be decided on a case by case basis. For more information on the TNR Program, please contact Matthew Traudt at 201-871-6517.

### Rabies Clinic

Free Rabies Vaccinations will be available for your pet on Saturday, February 21<sup>st</sup> from 12:00 noon - 3:00 p.m. at the Municipal Court

Make-up Date, in the event of adverse weather, will be Saturday, February 28<sup>th</sup> (same time)

Licensing For 2009 Is Required if not already licensed at the Health Department

Please check the Rabies Expiration Date on your pet's renewal notice to verify whether a vaccine is required in order to renew. If not, simply return the renewal notice with the proper fee.

### New State Statute Regarding Debarked Dogs

In accordance with NJ State Ordinance Chapter 102, C:4:19-42

5.c. The municipal clerk or other official designated by the governing body of any municipality to license dogs therein may, upon request of any law enforcement officer or municipal animal control officer, provide notice thereto of the name and address of any person indicating on a dog license application the possession of a surgically debarked or silenced dog.

6. An owner, keeper or harbinger of a dog that has been surgically debarked or silenced shall, prior to selling or donating the dog, inform the prospective owner that the dog has been surgically debarked or silenced. A person who violates this section shall be guilty of a petty disorderly persons offense.

The Department of Health may be required to provide to law enforcement or animal control officers a report that includes Debarked Dog designations.

Dog owners are to indicate, on new or renewal applications, if the dog being licensed has been surgically debarked or silenced. ‘DEBARKED DOG’ will now appear on the license and license renewal application forms.

### January is Radon Awareness Month

According to the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), Radon is a radioactive gas, which has always been a part of our environment. It comes from the breakdown of naturally occurring uranium in soil and rock. It is invisible, odorless and tasteless, and can only be detected by specialized tests. Radon enters homes through openings that are in contact with the ground, such as cracks in the foundation, small openings around pipes, and sump pits.

Radon and its decay products release radioactive energy that can damage lung tissue. The more radon you are exposed to, and the longer the exposure, the greater the risk of eventually developing lung cancer. Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States, resulting in 15,000 to 22,000 deaths per year, and is the leading cause of lung cancer for non-smokers.

Testing your home for radon is easy, and homes with high levels of radon can be fixed (mitigated). NJDEP recommends that all homes be tested for radon. The DEP and the EPA both recommend that you take action to mitigate your home if your test results indicate radon levels of 4.0pCi/L of radon or more.

Homeowners can test for radon themselves or hire a NJ certified radon measurement company to perform the testing. Test kits are often available in your local hardware stores. Please follow the testing instructions entirely and complete the form that accompanies the test device. A list of certified companies, including companies that can mail you a “do-it-yourself” test, is available through the NJDEP Radon Program's Information Line, (800) 648-0394, or web site, [www.njradon.org](http://www.njradon.org)

**\*\*Please Note\*\***

Test your home today! Free radon testing kits will be available on a first-come, first-serve basis (while supplies last), beginning 01/01/09 at the Bergen County Department of Health Services at 327 East Ridgewood Avenue, Room 103A, Paramus, NJ. For more information, call (201) 634-2803.

### February is Dental Health Month

Dental screening sessions for children have been scheduled by the Department of Health as follows:

Thurs. February 26 – 9:00 a.m.  
Vincent K. Tibbs, 183 William St.  
Age: 2 to 5 years

Wed. March 4 – 4:00 to 7:00 p.m.  
Department of Health, 73 S. Van Brunt St.  
Age: 17 years and younger

Thurs. March 5 – 9:00 a.m.  
Bergen Family Center, 44 Armory st.  
Age: 2 to 5 years

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