Schoharie County Department of Health

Schoharie County Health Matters

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July

- 1st Canada Day
- 4th Independence Day
- UV Safety Month
- Juvenile Arthritis Awareness Month

Inside this issue:

Recreational Water Illnesses	2
What to do in a Heat Wave	2
Healthy Eating Tips	2
Lightning Safety	3
ServNY	3
Bee Sting Remedies	4
Barbecue Food Safely	4
Summer Camp Safety	5
Lyme Disease	6
Public Health Works!	6

Beat the Heat and Keep Your Cool This Summer

Don't let the sun spoil your fun this summer. As temperatures rise, so does your risk of heat-related illnesses such as sunburn, heat cramps, heat exhaustion, heat rash, heat stroke or sun stroke.

Keep your cool with the following tips:

Dress appropriately. Wear lightweight clothing to help your body maintain normal temperatures, and light colors that will reflect rather than absorb sunlight. Cover as much skin as possible to avoid sunburn. Wear a wide-brimmed hat to protect your face, ears and neck and use sunscreen.

Avoid getting too much sun. Not only are sunburns uncomfortable, but they also make it more difficult for your body to dissipate heat.

Cut down on proteins and salty food. They increase your metabolism, which also increases water loss. Eat small meals more often during the day. Eat carbohydrates, salads and fruit.

Drink plenty of water or

other non-alcoholic beverage. Make sure to keep rehydrating constantly, even if you don't feel thirsty. If you have any sort of medical condition, consult your physician before any dramatic change in your fluid intake.

Avoid drinking liquids that contain caffeine, alcohol or large amount of sugary sodas Theses beverages cause a lost of body fluids.

Make use of air conditioning. Stay near one as much as possible each day. No air conditioning - stay indoors on the lowest floor out of the sun. Open windows and shades on the shady side and close them on the sunny side.

Take it easy. Limit any strenuous activities to the coolest place possible, or during the coolest part of the day, which is usually in the morning between 4:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m. If possible, strenuous activity should be eliminated wherever possible.

Never leave elderly, those with special needs, children or pets alone in parked vehicle. Temperatures inside a closed vehicle can reach 140 degrees Fahrenheit within minutes. Such high temperatures kill in minutes.

If you think someone has symptoms of heat stroke, CALL 9-1-1.

Check on family, friends and neighbors often during a heat wave especially the elderly or those with special needs.

Sources: NYSDOH; NY Red Cross

Protect Yourself and Your Family Against Recreational Water Illnesses

Think Healthy.
Be Healthy.
Swim Healthy!

Swimming is a fun, active, and a healthy way to spend leisure time. However, in the past two decades we have seen an increase in the number of Recreational Water Illness (RWI) outbreaks associated with swimming pools, water parks, hot tubs, lakes, rivers, and oceans.

RWIs are illnesses that are spread by swallowing, breathing, or having contact with contaminated water from swimming pools, spas, lakes, rivers, or oceans. Recreational water illnesses can cause a wide variety of symptoms, including gastrointestinal, skin, ear, respiratory, eye, neurologic and wound infections. The most commonly reported RWI is diarrhea. Diarrheal illnesses can be caused by germs such as Crypto, short for *Cryptosporidium*, *Giardia*, *Shigella*, norovirus and *E. coli* .

See the CDC for more information. at http://www.cdc.gov/healthySwimming/

Be Prepared - see NYSDOH for more information

Know What To Do Before a Heat Wave

DID YOU KNOW...

HEAT WAVE: More than 48 hours of excessive heat (90° F or higher) & humidity (80% relative humidity or higher)

Heat-related illnesses occur when the body is unable to cool itself. The most common heat-related illnesses are heat stroke (sun stroke), heat exhaustion, heat cramps and heat rash.

Know the symptoms of heat-related illnesses.

- Make sure that you can open your windows or that your air conditioner is working properly.
- Find out where to cool down – ask local officials about cooling centers in your area. If there are none, identify air-conditioned buildings where you can go (such as libraries, malls, supermarkets, or friends' homes).
- Choose someone that you can call for help or who can check on you.
- Talk to your doctor or pharmacist to learn more about medications that might make you sensitive to the sun or heat.

Did you know... Losing even 10 pounds can lower your blood pressure. -National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

Tips for Healthy Eating

- Eat breakfast every day.
- Choose whole grains more often.
- Select a mix of colorful vegetables each day.
- Choose fresh, canned, or frozen fruit more often than fruit juice.
- Use fats and oils sparingly.
- Eat sweets sparingly.
- Eat three meals every day.
- Have low-fat, low-sugar snacks on hand.

For more information see The National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and (NIDDK) http://win.niddk.nih.gov/

Lightning Safety - When Thunder Roars Go Indoors! - NOAA

Lightning is dangerous. With common sense, you can greatly increase your safety and the safety of those you are with. At the first clap of thunder, go to a large building or fully enclosed vehicle and wait 30 minutes after the last clap of thunder before you go back outside.

Be prepared. Watch for developing thunderstorms which are more likely to occur in the spring and summer but can occur year round.

Lightning can strike as far away as 10 miles from the area where it is raining. If you hear thunder, you are within striking distance. Seek shelter immediately.

If outdoors stop activities at the first roar of thunder to allow everyone time to seek shelter in a large building or enclosed vehicle.

If indoors, stay off phones, computer and other electrical equipment. Stay away from the water, pools, tubs, showers and other plumbing.

Help. A lightning strike victim does not carry an electrical charge and will need urgent medical attention. CALL 9-1-1! If the person is unresponsive or not breathing perform CPR, if trained or use an Automatic External Defibrillator. Source: NOAA

DID YOU KNOW...

Lightning kills more people in this country than tornadoes, floods or hurricanes. Thunderstorm activity is greatest during July and August.

Volunteer to Serv NY
Register. Prepare. Care.

medical reserve corps

For more information on our MRC visit http://www.schoharie county-ny.gov/CountyWebSite/Health/healthhome.jsp

In cooperation with the New York State Department of Health, The Schoharie County Health Department is proud to be participating in ServNY, a comprehensive volunteer management system created to assist officials during public health emergencies.

Public Health and healthcare emergencies caused by natural disasters, terrorist attacks, or disease outbreaks require a health and medical response that depends primarily on the mobilization of qualified, well-trained personnel. Volunteers will be called upon when the response to an emergency or disaster requires more personnel and resources than local emergency response programs have on hand. Not every emergency will require volunteers.

Volunteers may be called upon to dispense medications and vaccinations, treat evacuees in an emergency shelter, or assist in many other ways.

The Schoharie County Health Department MRC is a registry of healthcare and non-healthcare personnel who volunteer to provide assistance in an emergency or major disaster in Schoharie County.

Registering does not guarantee that you will be called upon, nor does it mean that you must participate. By completing the registration prior to an emergency you can be deployed quickly and efficiently during an actual event.

Volunteers will receive *free advance training* and "on the spot" training if their services are ever needed.

For further information please call 518–295-8365 or click here to *JOIN NOW*.

Bee Stings

DID YOU KNOW... Everybody reacts some way to bee stings. Most swell around the stung area.

Flowers are part of the beauty of summer attracting bees and increasing the chances of bee stings.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) indicates that as many as 40-50 people die each year from bee stings. If you are allergic to bee stings you should always carry an epinephrine pen and wear a medical alert ID bracelet.

The first thing you need to do after being stung is to determine if there is a stinger that needs to be removed from the skin. Wasps, hornets, and yellow jackets do not leave their stingers behind. A honey bee leaves its stinger embedded in the skin, and the stinger will need to be removed.

Do not pull it out by squeezing it, such as with a pair of tweezers. Squeezing the stinger will release any remaining poison and actually worsen the sting. Gently scrape against the side of the stinger with your fingernail until the stinger dislodges. Next apply an icepack to help reduce the swelling.

There are a number of home remedies for lessening the effects of a bee sting. The main objective is to use something that will neutralize the acid contained in the bee's poison:

- Apply a paste of baking soda and water

- Apply a paste of meat tenderizer and water
- Apply household ammonia directly to the sting
- Apply a paste of aspirin dissolved in water
- Apply toothpaste
- Apply apple cider vinegar

Seek medical attention immediately if you see signs of allergic reaction such as hives, headache, trouble breathing, tightness in the throat or chest, dizziness, nausea or vomiting. See a doctor if swelling spreads to a large area of the body or if pain and selling last more than three days.

Barbecue Food Safely

For more tips on Barbecue and Food Safety see the USDA fact sheet.

Warm weather is the ideal time to cook out: more people cook outdoors in summer than any other time of the year.

Warm temperatures are ideal for bacteria to multiply causing food borne illnesses. Use these simple guideline for grilling food safely.

- Take meat and poultry straight home from the store and refrigerate.
- Marinate foods in the refrigerator.
- Don't reuse marinade.
- Pre-cook immediately before placing food on grill.
- Don't use the same platter and utensils for raw and cooked meats.

Health and Safety Tips for Summer Camp - CDC

Get your kids vaccinated.
Be sure your kids' vaccinations are up-to-date. Ask their doctor or nurse what vaccines are recommended for summer camp.

Encourage safe physical activities.

Children should get 60 minutes or more of physical activity on most days of the week. To help prevent injury, pack protective gear, such as helmets and life jackets, if the camp will not be providing them. Tell your kids not to swim if they are alone or if they have diarrhea.

Teach your kids to stay hydrated.
Explain to your kids that the human body needs fluids on a regular basis. They shouldn't wait until they feel thirsty to drink water. Encourage your kids to drink plenty of non-carbonated, sugar-free fluids throughout the day.

Teach your kids to avoid wild animals.

Teach kids that animals can carry diseases that are dangerous to people. Encourage them to enjoy watching them from a safe distance in their natural surroundings.

Pack protection.

Be sure your kids have plenty of insect repellent and sunscreen to wear to protect themselves from mosquitoes, ticks, and the sun. Pack layers of light-weight, light-colored clothes for hot days and blankets and warm clothes for cool nights.

Be proactive.
Find out how you will be notified if your child becomes ill and what the procedures are for caring for your child, if indicated. Teach your kids to cover their nose and mouth with a tissue when they cough or sneeze and to throw the tissue in the trash after using it; to wash their hands often with soap and water (or alcohol-based hand cleaners), especially after they cough or sneeze; and to avoid touching their eyes, nose or mouth. Also, tell your kids to notify camp staff if they or someone they come into contact with becomes ill.

Prepare your kids.
Make sure your kids are prepared. Teach them what to do in an emergency. Use the Centers for Disease Control's **packing checklist** on the CDC web site to help start them out on the right foot at camp.

Visit http://www.cdc.gov/features/summercamp/

CDC
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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Today's Health Tomorrow's Future

What Is Lyme Disease?

Lyme disease is a bacterial infection caused by the bite of an infected deer tick. Untreated, the disease can cause a number of health problems. Patients treated with antibiotics in the early stage of the infection usually recover rapidly and completely.

What Are the Symptoms of Lyme Disease?

The early symptoms of Lyme disease may be mild and easily missed. If you find a tick attached to your skin, remove the tick with tweezers and watch for the symptoms of Lyme disease. In 60-80% of cases the first symptom is a rash, known as *erythema migrans,* that:

- Occurs at or near the site of the tick bite.
- Is a "bulls-eye" circular patch or solid red patch that grows larger.
- Appears between three days and one month after the tick bite.
- Has a diameter of two to six inches.
- Lasts for about three to five weeks.
- May or may not be warm to the touch.
- Is usually not painful or itchy.
- Sometimes multiple rashes appear.

Consult your primary health provider.—source: NYSDOH

This newsletter provides general information only. Our readers should consult with their primary health care providers for all health issues and concerns.

SCDOH

Public Health Works! Honor Roll 2009

John Driessen, RN; Kathleen Strack, Public Health Director; Michele Roach, RN and Jennifer Tsamis

The Public Health Works! Honor Roll recognizes the local public health workforce as an essential component of Commissioner of Health Richard F. Daines' public health agenda to make New York one of the healthiest states in the nation. At the heart of all successful public health initiatives are the workers who promote and protect the public's health and safety.

In 2008, the Schoharie County Department of Health implemented a new clinical and financial software system for the Community Home Health Agency (CHHA) and public health nursing. John Driessen, Michele Roach and Jennifer Tsamis became "super users" of the new software. Michele wrote the care plans for the new system and issues regular news bulletins informing staff of changes. John takes calls or sits down with any nurse who needs help. As system administrator, Jennifer sets up all phases of the system and is the one person who understands how it works.

Their dedication, caring and teaching is reflected in the work that they do.

A presentation of Dr. Daines' awards was held June 19, 2009 at the Schoharie County Board of Supervisors meeting.