Schoharie County Department of Health

Schoharie County Health Matters

Volume 1, Issue 5 May 2009

In May

- NA Occupational Safety & Health Week, May 3-9
- Melanoma Monday, May 4
- Nurses Day, May 6
- Mother's Day, May 10
- Armed Forces Day, May 16
- EMS Week, May 17-23
- Memorial Day Observed, May 25
- Missing Children's Day, May 25
- Senior Health & Fitness Day, May 27

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National Nurses Week May 6-12th

Public health nursing is about educating and promoting health and well-being across our county and working to prevent diseases.

Schoharie County Public Health Nurses (PHNs) are Registered Nurses (RNs) with special training in community health.

Our nurses can help you or your family with health concerns, and with parenting and lifestyle issues.

Our PHNs are knowledgeable about the resources available to the residents of Schoharie County.

Nursing is a profession that embraces dedicated people with varied interests, strengths and passions because of the many opportunities the profession offers.

All of our professional caregivers deliver high-quality, comprehensive healthcare services promoting comfort and well-being to the residents of Schoharie County.

National Nurses Week is celebrated annually from May 6, also known as National Nurses Day, through May 12, the birthday of Florence Nightingale, the founder of modern nursing.

Nurses Building a Healthy America!

Health Tips

Osteoarthritis - What you can do

Osteoarthritis makes your joints hurt or feel stiff after you rest and after activity. It usually affects the hands, low back, neck, hips and knees.

Try these tips so your joints will not hurt so much:

If you are overweight, try to lose 5 to 10 pounds.

- Eating smaller food portions will help you lose weight.

Be active for 2-3 hours a week.

- Walk, swim or ride a bike
- Stretch your muscles and joints.
- Exercise your hands.

See your doctor for the joint pain.

Ask your doctor about:

- Exercises you can do.
- Weight loss program.
- Pain management.

Visit the Arthritis Foundation at http://www.arthritis.org/ for more information.

Stroke Awareness Month

NYSDOH

Up to 80% of strokes are preventable.

May is Stroke Awareness Month. We encourage everyone to learn more about the signs and symptoms of a stroke and the importance of getting medical help without delay if you suspect the onset of a stroke.

Up to 80% of strokes are preventable.

The most common sign of a stroke is sudden weakness of the face, arm or leg, most often on one side of the body.

Other warning signs:

- Sudden numbness of the face, arm or leg.
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding speech.
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes.
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination.
- Sudden severe headache with no known cause.

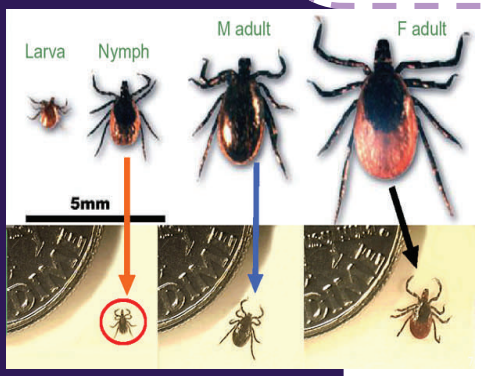
To reduce stroke deaths and disability, we encourage people to recognize the most common stroke symptoms and to act **F.A.S.T**.

F = FACE Ask the person to smile. Does one side of the face droop?

A = ARM Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?

S = SPEECH Ask the person to repeat a simple phrase. Does the speech sound slurred or strange?

T = TIME If you observe any of these signs, it's time to call 9-1-1.



Nearly 90% of all Lyme disease cases have been reported in the Northeastern part of the US.

Lyme Disease Awareness

Lyme disease is the most commonly reported tick-borne disease in the United States. In Schoharie County, suspected Lyme disease cases have increased dramatically in the past year. Lyme disease is passed to humans by the bite of black-legged ticks (also known as deer ticks in the eastern United States). The Lyme disease bacterium normally lives in mice, squirrels, and other small mammals.

When outdoors everyone should exercise care to protect themselves, especially in the late spring and summer when young ticks are most active.

Avoid tick-infested habitat-wooded and grassy areas; when you cannot avoid these areas:

- wear light-colored clothing to be able to spot ticks more clearly
- wear long-sleeved shirts and tuck your pants into socks
- wear high rubber boots - ticks are usually located near the ground
- use insect repellents, follow instructions for applying
- check for ticks and remove promptly

Visit our web site at http://www.schohariecounty-ny.gov/CountyWebSite/Health/healthhome.jsp see our Environmental or Public Education Page for more information on Lyme Disease, Tick Removal, and the NYSDOH Tick Identification Program.

Lyme disease is not limited to humans. Pet owners and veterinarians have reported Lyme in dogs, cats, horses, cattle, sheep, and goats. Just as with humans, it is important for animals to avoid tick bites and receive prompt treatment for Lyme disease.

Hepatitis Awareness Month CDC

Hepatitis means inflammation of the liver. Toxins, certain drugs, some diseases, heavy alcohol use, and bacterial and viral infections can all cause hepatitis. Hepatitis is also the name of a family of viral infections that affect the liver; the most common types in the United States are hepatitis A, hepatitis B, and hepatitis C.

Hepatitis B is a contagious liver disease that results from infection with the hepatitis B virus. It can range in severity from a mild illness lasting a few weeks to a serious, lifelong illness. Hepatitis B is usually spread when blood, semen, or another body fluid from a person infected with the hepatitis B virus enters the body of someone who is not infected. This can happen through sexual contact with an infected person or sharing needles, syringes, or other drug-injection equipment. Hepatitis B can also be passed from an infected mother to her baby at birth.

Hepatitis B can be either acute or chronic. Acute hepatitis B virus infection is a short-term illness that occurs within the first 6 months after someone is exposed to the hepatitis B virus. Acute infection can — but does not always — lead to chronic infection. Chronic hepatitis B virus infection is a long-term illness that occurs when the hepatitis B virus remains in a person's body. Chronic hepatitis B is a serious disease that can result in long-term health problems, and even death.

The best way to prevent hepatitis B is by getting vaccinated.

For more information visit the Centers for Disease Control's web site at http://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/

This newsletter provides general information only. Our readers should make an appointment with their primary health care provider for all health issues and concerns.

Preventing the Flu: Good Health Habits Can Help Stop Germs

Avoid close contact.
Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.

Stay home when you are sick.
If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. You will help prevent others from catching your illness.

Cover your mouth and nose.
Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.

Clean your hands.
Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.

Practice other good health habits.
Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.

See the CDC web site or NYSDOH for further information on the flu.

Melanoma/Skin Cancer Awareness and Prevention Centers for Disease Control

Protect yourself from the sun to prevent skin cancer, the most common form of cancer in the United States.

To help prevent skin cancer while still having fun outdoors, regularly use sun protective practices such as

Seek shade, especially during midday hours (10 a.m.–4 p.m.), when UV rays are strongest and do the most damage.

Cover up with clothing to protect exposed skin. A long-sleeved shirt and long pants with a tight weave are best.

Get a hat with a wide brim to shade the face, head, ears, and neck.

Grab shades that wrap around and block as close to 100% of both UVA and UVB rays as possible.

Rub on sunscreen with sun protective factor (SPF) 15 or higher, and both UVA and UVB protection.

Visit the CDC or the American Academy of Dermatology's web sites for further information.

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Today's Health Tomorrow's Future

SCHOHARIE COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

SPRING 2009
RABIES CLINIC SCHEDULE

WED MAY 6	GILBOA TOWN HIGHWAY GARAGE Stryker Road, Gilboa Dr. Doerge D.V.M
WED MAY 13	COBLESKILL FAIRGROUNDS South Grand Street, Cobleskill Cobleskill Veterinary Clinic
WED MAY 20	SCHOHARIE SCHOOL BUS GARAGE Prospect Street, Schoharie Schoharie Valley Veterinary Clinic
WED MAY 27	SHARON SPRINGS TOWN HIGHWAY GARAGE Beechwood Road, Village of Sharon Howes Cave Animal Hospital

ALL CLINICS ARE 6-8 P.M.
Vaccinations available free of charge
Donations to offset clinic expenses are appreciated.

Animals must be at least 3 months of age.
Animals must be properly restrained or they will not be vaccinated. Cats and Ferrets must be brought in a carrier or a well-sealed, sturdy container.

Anyone needing further information may contact
Robert Thomas, DVM, Schoharie County Rabies Coordinator
at 518-234-2039.

SCDOH

Living Today for a Better Tomorrow

OLDER AMERICANS MONTH MAY 2009

May is Older Americans Month, a great time to bring attention to the issues that affect older adults and create community-wide opportunities to help older residents improve their quality of life. This year's theme is "Living Today For a Better Tomorrow."

Older Americans are the fastest-growing age group. More than 13 percent of New Yorkers are over the age of 65 and that proportion will double in the next 20 years.

Older adults can greatly benefit from a regular exercise routine that includes strength, balance, stretching and endurance exercises.

Good nutrition is vital in maintaining good health. Reducing saturated fats and eating a balanced diet of fruits, vegetables, and grains can help out older men and women on the right track to staying healthy.

Older adults who stop smoking will gain immediate and long-term health benefits.

It's important for older Americans to maintain good mental health; nearly 20 percent of Americans age 55 and older experience depression and anxiety disorders. Social activities within the community can greatly improve mental health. Statistics show volunteering provides older adults with benefits that include improved mental and physical health, greater life satisfaction, lower rates of depression and lower mortality rates.

Contact the Schoharie County Office for the Aging at 295-8300 or visit their pages on the county's web site for a list of services provided.

Actively search out ways you can involve your community's older adults in volunteer efforts, allowing them to share their wisdom and energy. By working together, we can improve the health and well-being of our older adults and pave the way for better health as we age.

For further information visit the Administration on Aging:

AoA
Administration on Aging