

Your Health Your Life

A Women's Health
Newsletter from the
Atlantic County
Division of Public Health

October–December, 2006



The National Fire Protection Association wants to teach families and kids how to keep cooking fires from starting. Here are some fast facts and safety tips on cooking fires.

- Between 1999-2002, there were 114,000 reported home fires associated with cooking equipment on average per year.
- Unattended cooking is the leading cause of home cooking fires.
- 3 in 10 reported home fires start in the kitchen.
- 2 out of 3 reported home cooking fires start with the range or stove.
- Electric ranges or stoves have a higher risk of fires, injuries and property damage, compared to gas ranges or stoves, but gas ranges or stoves have a higher risk of fire deaths.

But there's even more to learn! To get important prevention information go to: www.firepreventionweek.org

National Health Observances

October:

National Breast Cancer Awareness Month
Children's Health Month
Fire Prevention Week - 8th - 14th

November:

American Diabetes Month
Nat'l. Healthy Skin Month
Great American SmokeOut

December:

World AIDS Day - 1st
National Handwashing Awareness Week - 3rd - 9th

"Reproduced from NFPA's Fire Prevention Week Web site, www.firepreventionweek.org. ©2006 NFPA."

The Flu: What Women Need to Know: Part 2 of a 3 Part Series. . .

Each year autumn brings falling leaves, falling temperatures and inevitable the start of another flu season.

The county will once again be offering shots for the 2006-2007 flu season to help our residents stay healthy. Once the vaccination clinic schedule has been finalized, it will be announced and posted on the county website at www.aclink.org and publicized in your local newspaper. You can also contact the Division of Public Health at 609-645-5933 for more information.

The influenza virus is a highly contagious infection of the respiratory tract. Symptoms include fever, headache, extreme fatigue, chest discomfort and cough, muscle aches and pains. The flu typically occurs in our area between October and early April and generally peaks in January and February.

Residents at high risk for complications from the flu are encouraged to get vaccinated. The Centers For Disease Control has guidelines for determining high risk individuals and recommends that these people should be vaccinated. They include:

- People 65 years and older;
- People who live in nursing homes and other long-term care

facilities that house those with long-term illnesses;

- Adults and children 6 months and older with chronic heart or lung conditions, including asthma;
- Adults and children 6 months and older who needed regular medical care or were in a hospital during the previous year because of a metabolic disease (like diabetes), chronic kidney disease, or weakened immune system (including immune system problems caused by medicines or by infection with human immunodeficiency virus [HIV/AIDS]);
- Children 6 months to 18 years of age who are on long-term aspirin therapy. (Children given aspirin while they have influenza are at risk of Reye syndrome.);
- Women who will be pregnant during the influenza season;
- All children 6 to 59 months of age;
- People with any condition that can compromise respiratory function or the handling of respiratory secretions (that is, a condition that makes it hard to breathe or swallow, such as brain injury or disease, spinal cord injuries, seizure disorders, or other nerve or muscle disorders.)

For more information on the flu, go to the Centers For Disease Control's website: www.cdc.gov/flu. Or the Atlantic County website at: www.aclink.org/PublicHealth



Women and Diabetes.... Learn to protect yourself...

Diabetes is a serious disease that affects the body's ability to produce or respond properly to insulin, a hormone that allows blood glucose (sugar) to enter the cells of the body and be used for energy. Nearly 21 million children and adults in the U.S. have diabetes, including 9.7 million women and one third of them don't know it. Diabetes can be especially hard on women; the burden of diabetes on women is unique, because the disease can affect both mothers and their unborn children. Diabetes can cause difficulties during pregnancy such as a miscarriage or a baby born with birth defects. Women with diabetes are also more likely to have a heart attack, and at a younger age, than other women without diabetes. Also, women with diabetes are more likely to be poor which makes it harder to manage the disease.

Diabetes is the fifth deadliest disease in the U.S. and it has no cure. For women who do not currently have diabetes, pregnancy brings the risk of gestational diabetes. Gestational diabetes develops in 2% to 5% of all pregnancies but disappears when a pregnancy is over. Women who have had gestational diabetes or have given birth to a baby weighing more than 9 pounds are at an increased risk for developing type 2 diabetes later in life.

The prevalence of diabetes is at least 2 - 4 times higher among African American, Hispanic/Latino, American Indian, and Asian/Pacific Islander women than among white women.

The risk for diabetes also increases with age. Because of the increasing lifespan of women and the rapid growth of minority populations, the number of women in the United States at high risk for diabetes and its complications is increasing. Diabetes is a powerful risk factor for heart disease in women. Heart disease is the leading cause of death in women with diabetes. Women with diabetes are twice as likely to have a second heart attack and 4 times more likely to have heart failure than women without diabetes.



What can you do to protect yourself?

- Don't smoke
- Control your blood pressure
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Eat a low-fat diet
- Exercise regularly

To help you get started on your way to prevention, remember, the Atlantic County Division of Public Health offers preventive screenings in our: [Live Stronger, Longer Clinic](#); [Women's Health Clinic](#) and [Men's Health Clinic](#). To schedule an appointment or for more information call us at: [609-645-5933](tel:609-645-5933)

Keeping our communities healthier....one handwash at a time....



Learn and practice the four principles of hand awareness and then teach them to your family, friends and coworkers. It's the best way to stay healthy, especially with flu season on the way.

The Four Principles of Hand Awareness:

- Wash your hands when they are dirty and before eating.
- Do NOT cough into your hands
- Do NOT sneeze into your hands
- Above all, do NOT put your fingers in your eyes, nose or mouth!

In addition to these four principles remember that while sharing may be great, when it comes to preventing sickness, SHARING is not healthy.

In addition to washing your hands, there are still other SIMPLE ways to keep yourself healthy.

- Cover your coughs and sneezes or cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hand. And throw away your tissues.
- Stay at home when you are sick. And when you're not, avoid close contact with people who are sick.

By following these simple rules, you can protect yourself and those you love from colds, flu and other respiratory illnesses

Wellness Tip of the Quarter: Knowledge is Power.

If you have access to a computer, please visit the links provided in this newsletter for more detailed information. To learn more about any health related topic or the topics in this newsletter, call the Atlantic County Division of Public Health at 609-645-5853. And remember, as the holidays approach, take the time to take care of yourself, it will make for a happier, healthier and safer season.



Atlantic County Division of Public Health: Working for Healthy People and Healthy Communities

Atlantic County Executive, Dennis Levinson. Atlantic County Board of Chosen Freeholders, Joseph F. Silipena, Chairman.