

Public Health Points

York City Bureau of Health

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How To Have a Healthy and Safe 2012 Summer

As we get into the 2012 Summer season, what are the top public health topics to be aware of? Simple precautions can help you have a healthy and safe Summer.

Mosquitoes and West Nile Virus – Eliminate stagnant water around your home and yard. Stagnant water of 4 days or more can result in mosquito breeding sites and hundreds of these bothersome pests. Mosquitoes infected with WNV can transmit the virus to humans who then can develop WNV fever or encephalitis.

Ticks and Lyme Disease – Dress properly when out in the woods or wooded areas, especially pants to cover your legs. Use insect repellants containing DEET. Check your body and scalp for ticks once you are home. Check your dog frequently too. A recent study showed that people who let their dog sleep on their bed at night are more likely to get Lyme Disease.

Cooking meats on the grill – Grill meats until thoroughly cooked, especially ground beef hamburgers and chicken. Harmful bacteria such as *Salmonella* and *E. coli* can cause mild to severe gastrointestinal illness.

Wash fresh fruits and vegetables – Before eating fresh fruits and vegetables, rinse well under running water to wash off dirt and harmful microbes that may cause illness. Produce from our own gardens is usually safer than that from large produce farms in the U.S. or from foreign countries. Wash all vegetables and fruit regardless of origin to be on the safe side.

Picnics and cookouts – Keep cold foods cold and hot foods hot. Don't let foods that can spoil sit in the sun or out in the heat for any significant length of time. Bacteria can multiply quickly once a hot food item cools off or a cold food item warms up. Food poisoning can quickly spoil an enjoyable outing.

Immunizations catch-up – Summertime is a great time to catch children up on their immunizations, especially children entering school in the fall or teens going into 7th Grade. There's plenty of time to make those doctor or clinic appointments. Plus, kids are out of school now and summertime appointments don't require missed hours from the classroom.

Skin cancer and the sun – With skin cancer, especially malignant melanoma, on the rise, avoid sunburns and excess sun exposure. Use broad-spectrum suntan lotions with SPF 15 or higher. Stay in the shade during the sunniest hours of the day. Don't forget your hat and sunglasses.

Injury prevention – Wear helmets when riding bicycles, ATV's, and motorcycles. Learn to swim and children should swim only where there is adult or lifeguard supervision. When boating, don't forget personal floatation devices for each and every passenger. Last but not least, wear your seatbelt when riding in a car – seat belts save lives is a proven fact!

Reportable Conditions – 2012 City of York, Pa

Reported Cases	May	Total
Animal Bites	11	43
Campylobacter Enteritis	0	2
Chlamydia	58	236
Cryptosporidiosis	0	1
Gonorrhea	40	149
Hepatitis B	0	1
Hepatitis C	6	41
HIV Infection	1	5
Influenza, Type A	1	1
Influenza, Type B	0	3
Invasive Group A Beta-Strep Disease	1	2
Lead Poisoning	1	12
Lyme Disease	0	1
Pertussis	0	1
Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Infection	1	35
Salmonellosis	0	2
Syphilis – Primary/Secondary	0	1
Total Case Reports	120	536

Severe heat advisories – From time to time during the Summer, one day or a spell of days may be extremely hot and humid, resulting in extreme weather conditions that can cause heat exhaustion, heat stroke, or heat cramps. Infants, young children, and elderly are most at risk. Stay out of the heat, drink plenty of liquids, dress lightly, and do not overexert yourself in the sun or heat.

Perhaps you know some additional things to do during the Summer to stay healthy and safe. “Friend” us on our York City Bureau of Health Facebook page and let us know about your ideas. In the meantime, have an enjoyable Summer.

York City Bureau of Health’s Violence & Injury Prevention Program (VIPP) Offers Programs for the Community

The VIPP grant focuses on three important areas of injury prevention: 1) suicide prevention in adolescents and teens, 2) fall prevention in older adults, and 3) unintentional injuries in youth. The first program, *Lifelines Curriculum*, is a comprehensive, evidence-based suicide prevention program for middle and high schools (8th-12th grade) within York County. *Lifelines* has four components consisting of an administrative readiness consultation, faculty/staff training, parent workshop, and the student curriculum. In order to implement *Lifelines* in the school, all four components must be completed.

The second focus area is fall prevention in older adults. The Health Bureau has staff trained to conduct the evidence-based *Matter of Balance Program* (MOB). *Matter of Balance* incorporates fall prevention education to reduce the fear of falling, assists with making environmental changes to participant’s homes/apartments, and teaches participants exercises that help increase their strength, balance, and coordination. There are eight two-hour sessions in the program. The Health Bureau’s *Matter of Balance* program can be implemented countywide.

The final focus area is unintentional injuries in youth. The program that is offered is called *Risk Watch* and addresses eight injury prevention and safety areas in youth from Pre-K through 8th grade in the City of York. The topic areas include the following: 1) choking, suffocation, and strangulation, 2) water safety, 3) motor vehicle safety, 4) falls prevention, 5) fire and burn prevention, 6) bike and pedestrian safety, 7) firearms injury prevention, and 8) poisoning prevention. The Health Bureau will assist teachers with implementing the curriculum within their classrooms. A community safety expert, such as



a police officer, will help the teacher with completing each of the eight topic areas.

All of our VIPP programs are free to those who would be interested in participating or implementing one of them. For more information on the VIPP offerings, please contact Tamara Ramer, Community Health Specialist at 717-845-6532.

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