

HEALTH UPDATE!

City-County Health Department– Prevention Services Division

Prevention Services works to prevent disease and injury in our community, promote healthier choices and behaviors, prepare and respond to public health emergencies, investigate disease outbreaks and provide quality health information.

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COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PROGRAM

IT'S FLU TIME AGAIN!

With summer coming to a close, it's time for cooler weather and our yearly visitor—the flu. Although flu season doesn't typically peak until well into winter, now is the time to start preparing because flu season usually starts in October. The top three ways to prevent the spread of the flu are getting the flu vaccine, covering your cough and washing your hands.

Most people know about the importance of hand washing, but forget that **getting vaccinated every year is the single best way to protect against the flu!** A common myth is that the flu vaccine causes the flu. This is untrue because the vaccine contains "dead" proteins that are unable to cause infection. Although it is recommended that everyone gets the flu vaccine, it is especially important if you are a

healthcare worker, have a chronic illness, take care of someone with one or care for a child younger than 6 months.

The usual symptoms of the flu include fever, chills, body ache, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, headache, tiredness and possibly vomiting or diarrhea. It is important to note that only having vomiting or diarrhea is most likely not seasonal influenza, but another type of illness more commonly called a "stomach bug" or "stomach flu." People often start spreading the flu virus the day before they come down with symptoms and continue to be contagious up to 5-7 days after becoming sick.

Last year, the media focused on the new strain of H1N1 and how many hospitalizations and deaths it caused. It is important to



Children aged 6 months to 5 years are at increased risk for flu complications. Get your children vaccinated!

remember that each and every year the flu causes between 17,000 and 52,000 deaths. Because this year's flu shot formulation contains H1N1 as well as protection against other strains, you do not need to get two separate flu shots this season.

With the cooler weather and everyone heading inside, it's essential to start thinking about the flu, because it's already thinking about you!

The Health Department will be offering flu vaccination clinics in October. Dates and times will be announced in the newspaper, on the radio and local news and on the CCHD website—www.cchdmt.org

DID YOU KNOW?

- *An average of 800 women are diagnosed with breast cancer every year in Montana.*
- *This year's seasonal flu shot protects against H1N1.*
- *1 in 4 Americans has high blood pressure.*

IMMUNIZATIONS

MEET OUR NEW IMMUNIZATIONS NURSE!

Jill Boettcher, RN is CCHD's new Immunizations Public Health Nurse. Jill, a Great Falls native, graduated from GF High and received a Bachelor of Science in Health and Wellness from the University of Great Falls. After living in Seattle for five years, Jill returned to Montana to pursue a second degree; she graduated from Carroll College in May with a

Bachelor of Arts in Nursing. She decided to go into nursing because she has "a passion for people and wanted to do more."

Jill is very close with her family and enjoys hiking in the summer and snowshoeing in the winter. She is very excited to be part of the prevention team and has enjoyed her first weeks at CCHD.

If you have any questions about immunizations, please feel free to contact Jill directly at 791-9274 or visit www.cchdmt.org

CCHD Immunization Hours:
No appointment necessary.
Tues: 8:30-11:30 am
Weds– Fri: 8:30-11:30 am & 1:00 -4:30 pm

CANCER SCREENING PROGRAM

BREAST CANCER AND MAMMOGRAMS

Women in the United States get breast cancer more than any other type of cancer except for skin cancer. In Montana, an average of 800 women are diagnosed with breast cancer each year. Sometimes breast cells become abnormal. These abnormal cells grow, divide, and create new cells that the body does not need and that do not function normally. The extra cells form a mass called a tumor. Some tumors are “benign” or not cancer. Other tumors are “malignant” and are cancer. Breast cancer often starts out too small to be felt. As it grows, it can spread throughout the breast or to other parts of the body. This causes serious health problems and can cause death.

Breast cancer screening means checking a woman’s breasts for cancer before there are signs or symptoms of the disease. The likelihood of surviving breast cancer increases when the cancer

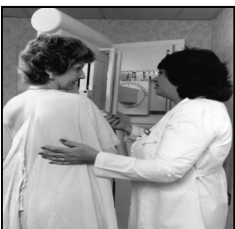


Photo courtesy of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

is detected at an early stage. Nearly 90% of women in Montana with localized breast cancer (not invading the surrounding tissue) survived at least 10 years after diagnosis, while fewer than 10% diagnosed with distant breast cancer (spread from the original tumor) survived 10 years.

TOBACCO USE PREVENTION

FALL PROJECTS

The Tobacco Use Prevention Program has been, and will continue to be very busy! Our reACT Flip-Flop event on August 14 and 15 was a huge success. We piled up 1200 pairs of flip-flops, representing the number of Americans that die every day due to tobacco related diseases. Hopefully each of the 500 people that visited our display learned the importance of breathing clean air avoiding tobacco products.

The Clean Air Reporting System (CARS) for Cascade County has had only 9 reported violations, with just 5 of those being valid complaints.



The program’s work plan for 2010-2011 includes various exciting events. The Montana Tobacco Use Prevention Program statewide conference, scheduled for September 28 and 29 in Bozeman. We have invited Stanton Glantz, a renowned tobacco research scientist, and Danny McGoldrick, from Tobacco Free Kids, as our guest speakers. Everyone is welcome, so please pass this information along to anyone interested.

October will be filled with a mini reACT summit, Red Ribbon Week and our seventh anniversary of the Montana Clean Indoor Air Act! We will also be in the area schools with tobacco education and specific events for those students.

For more information about tobacco use prevention call 452-0881 ext. 307 or visit www.cchdmt.org

Throughout the year, we will be working to aid in the implementation of non-smoking multi-housing units. This will be done in coordination with building owners and managers.

Mammograms are the best method to detect breast cancer early when it is easier to treat and before it is big enough to feel or cause symptoms. If you are 40 years or older, be sure to have a screening mammogram every 1 to 2 years. Talk to your medical provider if you have any breast symptoms or changes in your breast or if breast cancer runs in your family. He or she may recommend that you have a mammogram before age 40 or more often than usual.

Since 1991, Montana law mandated that breast cancer screening using mammography be covered by health insurance. Additional laws have since been enacted, and cover aspects of reimbursement for reconstruction, alternative therapies, treatment and care.

The Montana Cancer Control Program provides mammograms, clinical breast exams, Pap tests and pelvic exams for the early detection of breast and cervical cancer. These services may be provided for free to eligible women. **Call toll-free 1-888-803-9343 or locally, call Karen Grindeland at 791-9272 to inquire about enrolling in the program.**

HIV PROGRAM

HIV MEDICATIONS

The world of HIV treatment has changed dramatically over the last 20 years. With the introduction of the antiretroviral drug AZT (Retrovir, zidovudine) in 1987, the era of HIV treatment began. There was optimism early on when AZT was used, but it became very clear after a while that the HIV virus could quickly become resistant to a single drug. It was 9 years later in 1996, before drug combinations were developed and a real transformation in how to treat HIV-infected individuals began.

Around thirty medications have been approved by the US government to fight HIV and AIDS, and many more are in development. HIV/AIDS medications fall into several groups or “classes.” Each class attacks HIV a little differently and has diverse risks and benefits. To maximize the impact against HIV, a treatment regimen is made up of drugs from different classes. The drugs work by suppressing, or controlling, the reproduction of the virus. Though these drugs do not eliminate HIV, they keep the virus from breaking down the immune system, thus keeping an individual healthier longer.

Though the medication regimens are effective at suppressing the HIV virus, it is important to remember that people can live a long time without symptoms of HIV disease. Treatment cannot begin if a person does not know they are HIV positive. Knowing your status is the first step. Get tested today.

Testing is available 8am-12pm & 1pm-5pm Monday-Friday at the City-County Health Department. Contact the HIV Program Personnel for more information.

1 in 5 people with HIV/AIDS do not know they are infected

PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH

An emergency situation can occur at any time, in any place and when you least expect it. If Cascade County were to suddenly experience a disaster, would you know what to do? September is National Preparedness Month, and there are some simple steps that you can take this month to ensure that you and your family, workplace and neighborhood are prepared.

Get a kit! Make sure that you have an emergency kit that will help you have access to the essentials for survival. Have enough supplies on hand to sustain your family for at least three days.

Make a plan! Make an emergency plan and share it with family, friends and neighbors. Know their plans as well. Know



how you would keep in touch with one another, where you would go if you had to evacuate and how you would get there.

Be informed! Find out what kinds of disasters are most likely to occur in your area. Make sure you know the emergency plans that are in place at your work and your child's school or daycare.

The general public is invited to attend an **Emergency Preparedness Forum on**

October 7 from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm at MSU College of Technology's Heritage Hall.

The forum is free and lunch will be provided. RSVPs are required before September 24.

The forum will include information on building an emergency kit, how to receive information during an emergency and different tools and resources that are available in our community.

To learn more, call Public Health Emergency Preparedness at 452-0881 ext. 310.

For more information about emergency preparedness and National Preparedness Month, visit www.cchdmt.org or www.ready.gov today!

WELLNESS

STAYING HEALTHY AND WELL AT WORK

The average work week has grown to almost 50 hours in the US. The typical US employee now works the equivalent of *one extra month per year* compared to his or her counterpart in 1970.

What does this mean for the health of working people in America?

- 1 in 4 has high blood pressure
- 3 in 5 are overweight or obese
- 50%+ have high cholesterol
- The typical American has 7 chronic risk conditions

What can you do? Take breaks, take lunches, promote worksite wellness, start a walking group, **be proactive!** Find a good work/life balance for yourself.

For more information on wellness at work, call Penny Paul at 452-0881 x308 or visit www.cchdmt.org



Photo courtesy of KRTV

Take time out for a walk during your workday, like these city and county employees did during a recent "buddy walk."

PREVENTION SERVICES STAFF DIRECTORY

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Visit us online at www.cchdmt.org