ST. CHARLES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF
Community Health & The Environment

Health-E-News

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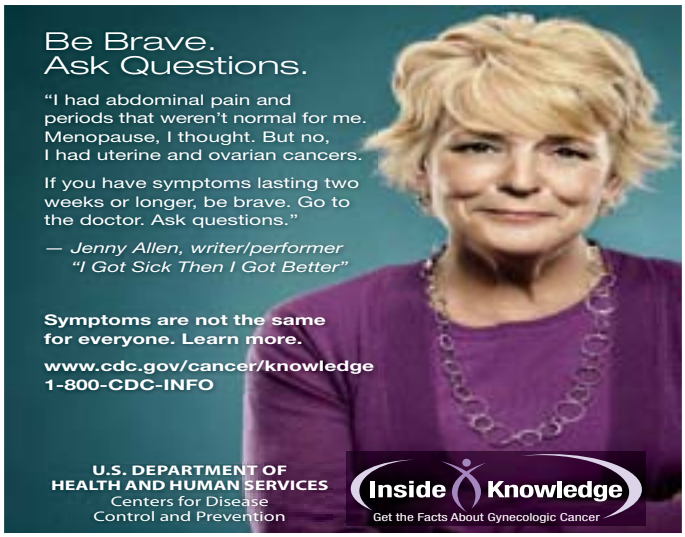
Detection, Early Treatment Are Key To Beating Cancer

In the United States, more than 21,000 women are diagnosed with ovarian cancer, and one in six men are diagnosed with prostate cancer each year, according to the American Cancer Society. As a result of these disturbing numbers and to increase recognition, in September we observe national Ovarian and Prostate Cancer Awareness Month.

Cancers are caused by abnormal cell growths and are named based upon the particular part of the body where this growth begins. Ovarian cancers occur in the female organs responsible for the production of eggs and the hormones estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone. In men, prostate cancers begin in the reproductive organ responsible for producing the fluid that makes up semen.

There is currently no test for early detection of ***OVARIAN CANCER***, but the survival rate for those diagnosed and treated in the early stages is over 90%. Paying attention to subtle symptoms such as bloating, pelvic, abdominal or back pain, trouble eating, fatigue, and a need to urinate frequently or urgently can help to discover the disease in these crucial early stages. If you or someone you know exhibits any of these signs for more than two weeks, it is advisable to visit a physician.



PROSTATE CANCER is the most common non-skin cancer in the U.S., with more than 200,000 new cases diagnosed each year. Early screening tests — such as a Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) blood test and manual prostate exams — are available to help physicians check for the development of prostate cancers. The symptoms of prostate cancer include frequent urination, a weak urine flow, a pain or burning sensation during urination or lower back pain.

As there may be a genetic link to these types of cancers, a full family history is another way to help discover potential risks. Medical professionals have found that approximately one in ten ovarian cancer cases have a hereditary link, and men with immediate relatives diagnosed with prostate cancer have a two- to three-times higher risk for developing the disease themselves.

From the Director

Gil Copley

It is something we in health departments across the state can count on. Come late July and August of each year, parents and children will swarm to our immunization clinics to get caught up on required shots for schools. We hold "back-to-school walk-in clinics" to help deal with the rush of students needing shots. There are usually long waits in crowded waiting rooms, sometimes HOT crowded waiting rooms, and finally the shots are given and a long morning or afternoon spent at the health department is over. In past years, this was mostly an inconvenience for kids and parents.

This year, things changed. Vaccines provided by the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services have been in short supply. When this happens and a required immunization cannot be given, the parent must be provided with an "In Progress" card in order to get their child into school. Without this card the student cannot attend class. This year cards had to be issued for more than one type of vaccine.

To continue reading this article, click on From the Director

It Takes "U" to Prevent The Flu

As kids return to school and many of our activities return indoors, our risk for getting the seasonal flu increases. Flu season typically begins in October and continues through the spring, which makes it a good idea to schedule your flu shot in September since it takes around two weeks for the antibodies to develop.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends an annual flu shot for everyone six months and older, although children may require two shots during their first season for maximized protection. The 2011-2012 flu vaccine is designed to protect against all of those strains anticipated for the coming season.

These shots are available through the ***IMMUNIZATION CLINIC***, area doctors, and many other health care facilities throughout the County. Appointments are required for those using the Immunization Clinic and are arranged by calling (636) 949-1857.

Helpful Phone Numbers

Division of Public Health (636) 949-7400	WIC (636) 949-7402
Immunizations (636) 949-1857	Recycle Works Central (636) 949-1800
Vital Records (636) 949-7558	Recycle Works West (636) 949-1800
Health Education and STD Clinic (636) 949-7401	Division of Humane Services Pet Adoption Center (636) 949-7387
Division of Environmental Health and Protection (636) 949-1800	Animal Control (636) 949-7347

While getting a flu vaccine is the most important step in protecting against the disease, there are many additional things you can do to prevent the spread. Family members should wash their hands with soap and hot water regularly, especially after coughing or sneezing and before eating. If you do need to cough or sneeze, remember to cover your nose and mouth and to throw away soiled tissues. A final precaution is to avoid sharing drink glasses or utensils.

Even after following each of these precautions, there is a chance you can still get the flu. A few common symptoms are a sore throat and cough, a runny or stuffy nose, headache, fatigue, vomiting, and fever (*although, please note that not all flu sufferers will have a fever*). As the flu is contagious, you can infect others beginning one day before the symptoms develop and up to five or seven days after you become sick. For that reason, you're encouraged to follow your doctor's advice and to stay home until fully recovered.

For more information on the seasonal flu, please click ***HERE***.

HEALTHY RECIPES

Each month, we'll take a traditional recipe and offer a healthy alternative. This time, we'll take advantage of the fall's bounty to create a...

Chunky Apple Cake

Recipe makes 12 servings. One serving contains 136 calories, 3 grams of fat (1g of unsaturated fat), 18 mg of cholesterol, 88 mg of sodium, 25 grams of carbohydrates, and 2 grams of protein.

Cake

1 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
3/4 cup granulated sugar
1 egg
2 large apples (cored and sliced)
1/2 tsp ground nutmeg
1/4 tsp salt
3 Tbsp stick margarine (soft)
2 Tbsp low-fat milk

Topping

1 tsp granulated sugar
1/2 tsp ground cinnamon

Steps:

1. Pre-heat oven to 350° F. Spray 8x8x2 baking pan with non-stick cooking spray.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, nutmeg, cinnamon, and salt.
3. In another bowl, with an electric mixer at medium speed, beat sugar and margarine together until fluffy (about 2 minutes). Add egg and milk and beat until smooth (about 1 minute). Add flour mixture to margarine mixture in thirds, beating until smooth (about 2 minutes). With a large spoon, stir in apples until even. Spread cake mixture evenly in baking pan.
4. In a small bowl, combine sugar and cinnamon topping. Spread evenly over cake. Place cake in oven and bake until brown (approximately 40 minutes).

(Recipe courtesy of *U.S. Food & Drug Administration*)

State Grant, Local Program Seeks To Prevent Suicides

The mortality rate for suicide has been gradually increasing in our region since 2003. According to data reported by the Department of Health and Senior Services, the hospitalization rates for self-inflicted injuries — including attempted suicide — in St. Charles County is highest among 15-19 year olds.

Although it is impossible to pinpoint specific types of people who may be suicidal, we do know that some young people are at a higher risk for suicide because of the particular situations or problems they face. Teenagers and young adults at higher risk for suicide are those who are depressed, have alcohol or other drug problems, are gay or lesbian, or who have attempted suicide previously.

There are many myths about adolescent suicide, and many believe it is a rare occurrence, but, in fact, suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death among young people today. Many feel that the subject of suicide is considered taboo and that by discussing it openly, more teens want to try suicide. In reality, talking about suicide offers teens a chance to bring their feelings out in the open. Studies show that suicidal thoughts that are out in the open are less like to become suicidal behaviors. Some also think that if teenagers are suicidal, there's no way you can stop them from killing themselves, whereas the truth is that suicide is preventable and few suicides happen without some warning — a concerned, caring friend, classmate, or family member ***can make a difference***!

Through funding from the Missouri Department of Mental Health, the Health Education department has begun a program to promote mental health and suicide awareness for both high school students and school professionals. The program teaches students how to identify the symptoms of depression in themselves or their peers and encourages help-seeking through evidence based and developmentally appropriate techniques. Any St. Charles County high school interested in participating in this program should contact Brittany Camacho (636-949-7400 ext. 6255) for more information.

Please click ***SUICIDE PREVENTION*** to learn more ways you can help. Additional assistance is available 24-hours a day through the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-TALK).

Take Your Dog For a W-A-L-K!

When cool, fall breezes return, there's nothing better than an afternoon walking along one of the county's many trails. And, you can double the fun by bringing along your furry friend to enjoy the sights, sounds, and smells. Although hiking is indeed a great exercise, a few helpful tips will keep you and your pet safe during the adventure.

In addition to the recommended conversation with your doctor about beginning a new exercise, a chat with your pet's veterinarian will ensure good health and will make certain that his or her vaccinations (especially rabies) are current. The vet will also pay attention to injuries or health issues that may limit your pet's level of exercise. Lastly, it's important to protect your pet from fleas, ticks, and parasites by using products suggested by your vet.

After these preparations, you'll be ready to gather your gear and hit the trail. Walking in most areas of St. Charles County, you are required to keep your dog on leash and under control — both for your dog's safety and for the well-being of those around you. It's also advised to make sure your contact information can be easily found on the dog's collar, and that your pet has been ***MICROCHIPPED***. When walking in an area with little drinkable water, you should plan to bring along some fresh water and a travel bowl, as well as a first aid kit.

Using common hiker's etiquette and teaching your dog to be comfortable around strangers will go a long way toward making the day more enjoyable. Keep an eye out for wildlife and dangerous plants, as well as for other hikers, cyclists, and horseback riders. Be courteous to fellow hikers and to native wildlife by picking up after your pet and following the *Pack In, Pack Out* mantra.

After a long walk, give your pet some much deserved appreciation while checking for any unwanted tag-alongs. Pay special attention to searches on the belly, behind ears, and in skin folds for ticks or other insects and thorns. Be careful when removing a tick or splinter, as it can lead to infection.

For more hiking safety tips for your pet, please visit the ***ASPCA*** website.

PREPARE TO MAKE CAMPING SAFE

Our community offers several inviting campsites for you and your family to enjoy. Whether you're visiting a ***ST. CHARLES COUNTY PARK*** or getting away to another nearby campground, it's important to prepare yourself before leaving home and to follow simple safety rules.

First, make certain you have everything you need before you leave and to check weather conditions. When you're out in the woods and miles from home is not the time to discover that you've forgotten your tent, your bedding, your first aid kit or necessary medicines. Be sure to bring enough water and food to sustain each person for the duration of the trip and to include a familiar item from home to help calm young children. If camping alone, be sure to alert a family member, friend, or park ranger to your location and to bring along a cell phone or other communications device.

When visiting a campground like St. Charles County's Klondike Park, shown here, remember to follow simple precautions to keep your family safe.

Next, find a safe location and scan the area for potential dangers. Flash floods or other rapidly rising waters can quickly sweep away an ill-chosen campsite, while one with overhanging trees or extremely dry brush can easily become a forest fire. Be on the lookout for wildlife common to this area and use insect repellent containing DEET on clothing and exposed skin. To minimize dangers and lessen your impact on the area, be sure to stay within camping areas and on designated trails.

If you're planning to build a campfire, take the extra time to do it safely. Make certain that you encircle the fire pit with a metal fire ring or several large rocks. Keep overhanging trees and flammable equipment well away from your campfire. When leaving, make certain that the flames are completely extinguished.

Lastly, please remember to respect the natural world. Pick up all litter and place it in a trash container. After packing up all materials, look around your campsite to make certain it looks like it did before your arrival. By taking the time to clean your area, you lessen your impact and will keep the site ready for your return.

For additional camping safety tips, please visit the ***CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION***.

Household Hazardous Waste Recycling Ends Sept. 30

St. Charles County residents have just a few more days this year to take advantage of the offer to properly dispose of household toxic materials in a safe and convenient manner.

Through Sept. 30, residents may safely dispose of household hazardous waste that typically is not collected by curbside recycling programs. Residents may bring unwanted items like chemicals, automobile fluids, pesticides, and oil-based paints to the Recycle Works Central location (60 Triad South Dr. in St. Charles) from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tuesdays through Fridays with no appointment necessary. An end of the season event is also scheduled on Saturday, Sept. 24 (9 a.m. to 3 p.m.) There is a nominal $10 fee for loads up to 50 pounds, with additional fees for larger sizes.

For a list of materials accepted at the facility, please call (636) 949-1800 or click ***RECYCLE WORKS CENTRAL*** — please note that latex paints are no longer accepted. This service is open to St. Charles County residents only (*proof of residency may be required*).

To ensure safety, please follow these precautions in bringing hazardous waste to Recycle Works Central:

1. Make certain that the waste is properly packed and do not mix with other materials.
2. Wherever possible, leave materials in their original containers. Items that are not in their original packaging should be clearly labeled with their contents. Mixed waste in plastic bags will not be accepted.
3. Be sure the lid is securely attached.
4. Place the material inside a box that is lined with newspaper (filling gaps with additional crumpled newspaper will help prevent spills during transport to the facility)
5. Place the filled box in the trunk of your vehicle while transporting to Recycle Works Central.
6. Upon arrival at the facility, please remain in your vehicle until assisted.