

the

Health Source

A newsletter from the Middletown Health Department in collaboration with the Monmouth Public Health Consortium (MPHC)*



Plants: Partners in Health?

Is there anything more delicious and nutritious than vine-ripened tomatoes, just-harvested peaches and corn, or fresh herbs and spices? Growing your own edible plants—whether in a backyard garden or a few pots on your windowsill—can be fun, rewarding, and healthful.

Gardening might enhance your mental health as well. Some studies have found that being physically active in natural environments—or even simple exposure to nature—can improve mood, reduce anxiety, and enhance self-esteem.

Get out of the house and get into nature!

Save the Date!

National Infant Immunization Week

April 18 to 25

Promotes benefits of immunizations and health of children two years and younger.

Bike to School Day

May 4

Demonstrates a method of incorporating physical activity in your daily routine.

World No Tobacco Day

May 31

Raises awareness of the harm to people's health caused by the illicit trade in tobacco products.

Health Officer's Corner

Over the last few years, we have encountered many types of wildlife appearing ill or sick. In 2014, Middletown was aggressively conducting surveillance of these animals. During that year, we found 20 raccoons, 1 skunk and 1 fox testing positive. In 2015, routine surveillance was limited to animals with having exposure to domestic animals and humans. We had 6 raccoons, 3 skunks and 1 fox positive for the rabies virus. But, in November, something else happened. A cat, although feral, which is considered a domestic animal also tested positive.

The Middletown Township Health Department finds it alarming when a cat is found to be rabid. What happened early February of this year in Aberdeen, just a short distance away, raised the red warning flags. A family dog that

Continued on page 5

Lead and Water

Lead is a soft grey metal. Lead in drinking water usually comes from water distribution lines or household plumbing and fixtures rather than the water source.



Health Effects of Lead

It is estimated that 20% or more of human exposure to lead may come from lead in drinking water. It is also estimated that formula-fed infants can receive 40-60% of their lead exposure from drinking water containing lead.

Most children with elevated blood lead levels do not exhibit any symptoms, however effects may appear later in age. Lead can hurt your child's growing brain and nervous system. In children under age 6, lead can cause slow growth, slow learning, and behavior problems that may not show up right away. Young children and fetuses are at greatest risk of toxic effects of lead.

How to Reduce Exposure

1. If water from the cold water faucet has been sitting for several hours, you should let it run

until the water is noticeably colder and stays colder for about one minute. Flush your water before using it for drinking, cooking, or preparing beverages.

2. Lead is likely to be highest in hot water faucets so never drink, cook, or prepare beverages from the hot water faucet.
3. Boiling does not remove lead from drinking water. Avoid boiling water for an excessive amount of time for food preparation, drinking, or preparing beverages, it increases the lead concentration in the water by evaporation.

For more information visit:

www.state.nj.us/health/fhs/newborn/lead.shtml

Recipe: New Jersey Tuna Melt

Recipe By: COOKINGIRLLJ

Ingredients

- 2 (6 ounce) cans solid white tuna in water, drained
- 1/4 cup mayonnaise
- 1/4 cup finely chopped celery
- 1 1/2 tablespoons finely chopped onion
- 1 tablespoon chopped parsley
- 3/4 teaspoon red wine vinegar
- 1 pinch salt
- 1 pinch freshly ground black pepper
- 4 slices seedless rye bread
- 8 slices ripe tomato
- 8 slices Swiss cheese
- paprika, for garnish

Directions

1. Preheat the oven broiler.
2. In a bowl, mix the tuna, mayonnaise, celery, onion, parsley, and vinegar. Season with salt and pepper.
3. Place the rye bread slices on a baking sheet, and broil 1 minute in the preheated oven, until lightly toasted. Remove from heat, and spread with the tuna salad. Place 1 cheese slice over the tuna salad on each piece of bread, layer with a tomato slice, and top with remaining cheese slices.
4. Return layered bread to the preheated oven, and broil 3 to 5 minutes, until cheese is melted.



Image by bertwagner

Mosquito Control: Stop Zika at the Source!

With spring weather and mosquito season coming soon in New Jersey, the Zika virus – and the mosquitoes that carry the virus – may be a major concern. Zika virus is primarily spread through the bite of an infected *Aedes aegypti* mosquito. People and communities can take steps to reduce the number of mosquitoes in their homes and communities to protect themselves from Zika.



How does water help mosquitoes breed?

Aedes aegypti is known as a “container-breeding mosquito” because it likes to lay eggs in and around standing water that collects or is stored in manmade containers.

Aedes aegypti mosquitoes lay eggs on the walls of water-filled containers. Eggs stick to containers like glue and remain attached until they are scrubbed off. The eggs can survive when they dry out—up to 8 months. When it rains or water covers the eggs, they hatch and become adults in about a week.

The *Culex pipiens*, which is the breed most commonly associated with carrying the West Nile virus, requires only an inch of standing water to lay its eggs.

Reduce mosquitoes at home

Reducing the number of mosquito breeding areas around your home will lower your risk of being bitten by a mosquito.

The best action you can take to prevent mosquitos from living and breeding around your home is to:

Remove standing water!

Know the breeding sites

Keep mosquitoes from laying eggs inside and outside of your home. Items in and around people’s homes can collect water. **Once a week**, empty and scrub, turn over, cover, or throw out containers that hold water, such as:

- vases
- pet water bowls
- flowerpot saucers
- discarded tires
- pool covers
- birdbaths
- trash cans
- rain barrels

These actions can help reduce the number of mosquitoes around areas where people live.



If you have a mosquito problem that is too big to tackle, you can submit a request for service to the Monmouth County Mosquito Control Division at 732-542-3630 or online at www.visitmonmouth.com/mosquito.

Over-the-Counter Relief

Whether it's a winter flu, spring allergies, or a summer cold, many of us seek relief with over-the-counter (OTC) medications before we visit our health care provider. It's important to know which type of medicine will help your specific symptom.

Analgesics

...relieve muscle aches and pains, and reduce fever. [Aspirin, acetaminophen (Tylenol), ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil), sodium naproxen (Aleve)].

Antihistamines

...relieve runny nose, sneezing, itching of the nose and throat and watery eyes due to allergies. However, they have the opposite effect on cold symptoms, further drying nasal membranes and slowing the flow of mucus. [Diphenhydramine, cetirizine, loratadine (Benadryl, Zyrtec, Claritin)]

Expectorants

...work by thinning mucus so that it can be more easily coughed up. [Guaifeneim (Mucinex)]

Note that “combos” like Theraflu or Tylenol Cold*, may increase your chances of taking too much medication as you may not realize as you take an aspirin for your back ache, that the Theraflu you were taking for congestion also has Aspirin for pain relief.



Decongestants

...shrink the nasal passages and reduce congestion. [Pseudoephedrine, phenylephrine (Sudafed)]

Antitussives

...are cough suppressants that work by quieting a cough. They are usually recommended for dry (nonproductive) coughs where you are not producing mucus. [Dextromethorphan (Robitussin)]



General Guidelines

- Drink a full glass of water when taking capsules or tablets.
- Always take medication standing up or sitting up – never lying down.
- Read the label carefully. Some OTC medications contain hidden sodium (effervescent or “fizzy” products), sugar (sweet or fruit flavored syrups), or caffeine (cough and cold products).
- Pay special attention to the active ingredients if you are taking more than one OTC or prescription drug to avoid taking too much of a particular ingredient.



Cats and Rabies: What's the connection?

Rabies is a dangerous virus that is transmitted through the saliva of animals. Feral, stray, and pet cats are all susceptible to rabies.

Rabies in the U.S.

More than 90% of all rabid animals reported to CDC each year occur in wildlife. Most people are exposed to rabies due to close contact with domestic animals, such as cats or dogs. In New Jersey, cats have accounted for 90% of the domestic animal cases since 1989.

Protecting You and Your Family

One of the best ways to protect yourself and your family from rabies is to vaccinate your pets and avoid contact with wild animals. Do not feed or handle them, even if they seem friendly. Stray animals roaming your neighborhood can pose a real danger as they are probably unvaccinated. If you see a wild animal acting strangely, report it to animal control.

To help reduce this risk:

- Keep rabies vaccinations up-to-date for all cats, ferrets, and dogs.
- Do not feed or water your pets outside and keep your garbage securely covered. These items may attract wild or stray animals.
- Spay or neuter your pets.



Health Officer Corner, Continued

had bitten a few people also was found to be rabid! Since the current raccoon variant strain of the rabies virus entered New Jersey in 1989, this is only the 8th dog diagnosed with rabies in the state, but the only one in Monmouth County.

Rabies is a fatal disease, but it is preventable. The virus can be found in raccoons, groundhogs, foxes, skunks, bats, dogs and cats. We urge everyone to vaccinate their dogs and cats and license them. If anyone comes across any ill appearing wildlife, do not try and handle it, rather, call Animal Control at 732-615-2097 or the Police Department after business hours, weekends and holidays at 732-615-2100.

Visit www.middlestownnj.org and register for the citizen alerts to keep up to date on rabies cases and other important issues happening throughout the township.



Stay Current!

Want to get all the latest public health news and alerts.
Visit our website at <http://www.middletonnj.org/>.

The Middletown Health Department

180 Main Street,
Port Monmouth, NJ 07758
732-615-2095

*The following local health departments form the Monmouth Public Health Consortium:

Colts Neck - Thomas Frank, HO

Freehold - Margaret Jahn, HO

Long Branch – David Henry, Interim HO

Manalapan - W. David Richardson, HO

Monmouth County Regional Health Commission – David Henry, HO