

Health Matters

VOLUME 13 ISSUE 2

SPRING
MARCH 2012

Reduce Your Asthma Triggers This Spring!

By: Huda Awaleh, Health Education Intern

Asthma is a chronic, sometimes life-threatening respiratory disease that affects millions of people. Women and girls are especially susceptible to asthma attacks due to naturally occurring hormonal changes like puberty, menstruation, pregnancy, and menopause. This is just one trigger that is unknown to many people, so it is important to know your individual asthma triggers and have a preventive action plan.

Common asthma triggers include:

- Seasonal allergies & rhinitis
- Changes in weather, especially cold, dry air
- Respiratory infections (cold, flu, bronchitis, & sinusitis)
- Cigarette smoke (including secondhand)
- Smoke from cooking or

- wood fires
- Strong smells, sprays, perfumes
- Allergic reactions to cosmetics, soaps, and shampoos
- Allergic reactions to dust/dust mites, molds, feathers, & pet dander
- Gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD)
- Food Allergies



Prevention Tips:

- Identify and avoid asthma triggers
- Aspirin and other painkillers may trigger asthma

- Get an annual flu shot unless your doctor recommends against it
- Ask your doctor if you need a pneumonia vaccination
- Avoid contact with anyone who's sick
- Wash your hands often
- Close windows during pollen season
- Remove clutter & items that collect dust
- Bathe your pets at least twice a week
- Limit use of cleaning products
- Clean your bedding regularly
- Carry your asthma inhalers at all times

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, American Lung Association, Mayo Clinic

Public Health Emergency Response

By: Shana Bean, BS, CHES

Since September 11, 2001 the role of the local public health department has expanded to include planning and responding to incidents of bioterrorism, disease outbreaks and natural disasters along with other local emergency service providers such as fire, police, emergency management and EMS.

The Logan County Department of Public

Health's Emergency Planning and Response department works closely with the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH). We receive grant funds from IDPH that allows for us to create plans and exercise these plans for public health emergencies. A public health emergency may be defined as an event, either manmade or natural, that creates a health risk to the public.

The Logan County Department of Public Health is ready to respond immediately with medications, staff and action plans that will be needed to keep you and your family safe during a public health emergency. As your county health department, we are committed to keeping Logan County residents safe. We are your information source during a public health emergency!

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Asthma Triggers	1
Emergency Response	1
Groundwater	2
Nutrition Month	2
Early Tooth Decay	3
Wellness	3
Health Fair	4

FREE

2012 Central IL MRC Conference

Are you interested in learning how you can make a difference in your community during a public health emergency? If so, join the Logan County Medical Reserve Corps and attend the 5th Annual Central IL MRC Conference for **FREE** on April 28th! Hands on training will be provided by the Illinois Medical Emergency Response Team. For more information, contact Shana Bean, Volunteer Coordinator, at 217-735-2317 or sbean@lcdph.org.



National Groundwater Awareness Week March 11-17

By: Don Cavi, MS, LEHP



The Logan County Department of Public Health would like to recognize National Groundwater Awareness Week (March 11-17). Groundwater serves as the source of drinking water for the vast majority of Americans regardless of whether it comes from a private well or a public water system. Therefore, it is important to recognize the importance of protecting this vital resource.

There are several ways for all of us to protect our groundwater. First, store and properly dispose of hazardous household substances to prevent direct contact with the ground surface. Secondly, if you are not served by a public sewer, properly maintain your onsite septic system to prevent improperly treated waste from entering into the groundwater supply. Third, properly seal unused wells since abandoned wells can provide a direct route for contaminants to enter the groundwater supply. Prior to having a well sealed, contact your local health department for information

concerning regulations.

There is an estimated 400,000 water wells serving the household needs of over approximately 1.3 millions people in Illinois. If you rely on your own water well, it is important to properly maintain the well and well site to prevent groundwater contamination. First, make sure sources of contamination (i.e. chemicals, livestock, septic systems, etc.) are located far enough from your well by establishing a safety zone. This set back may commonly range from 50 feet to over 200 feet depending on type or source of contamination. The Illinois Water Well Construction Code has established regulations for minimum setback distances and your local health department can provide you with this information. Secondly, it is important to have your well routinely inspected by a licensed water well contractor to ensure proper maintenance. Defects such as a crack in the well cap or casing can provide a direct route for surface contaminants to reach your drinking water/ground water.

The water from public systems is regulated by the EPA and routinely monitored for contaminant levels. Private well owners, on the other hand, must manage their own water systems and take responsibility to ensure their water is safe. Therefore, water well owners are encouraged to have their water tested at least annually to monitor bacteria, nitrates, and other contaminants of local concern. Well water test kits are available at the Logan County Department of Public Health at a cost of \$15.00.

The Logan County Department of Public Health asks for your support in doing your part to protect our groundwater in recognition of National Groundwater Awareness Week. If you would like more information, contact the Logan County Department of Public Health at 735-2317.

Source: IL Department of Public Health, IL Association of Groundwater Professionals.

March—National Nutrition Month

By: Mallory Ramos, BS, CHES

In honor of National Nutrition Month taking place in March, make a pledge to yourself to eat more healthy foods.

Eating and physical activity patterns that are focused on consuming fewer calories, making informed food choices, and being physically active can help people attain and maintain a healthy weight, reduce their risk of chronic disease, and promote overall health.

Dietary guidance and nutrition information can help you choose a healthy, nutritious diet.

While there have been guidelines put in place for the country as a whole, please keep in mind that an individual's diet can be different depending

on their own needs.

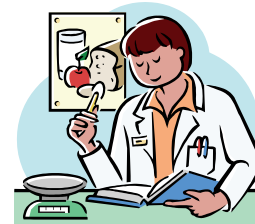
Start slowly to increase healthy foods in your diet, by replacing some "junk foods" with healthier options:

- Increase fruit and vegetable intake
- Eat a variety of vegetables, especially dark green and red and orange vegetables and peas
- Consume at least half of all grains as whole grains.
- Increase intake of fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products, such as milk, yogurt, cheese, or fortified soy beverages
- Choose a variety of protein foods, which include seafood, lean meat and poultry, eggs, beans and peas, soy

products, and unsalted nuts and seeds

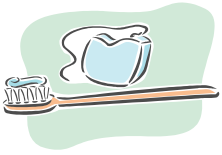
- Increase the amount and variety of seafood consumed by choosing seafood in place of some meat and poultry
- Choose foods that provide more potassium, dietary fiber, calcium, and vitamin D, which are nutrients of concern in American diets.

Source: www.nutrition.gov



Early Childhood Tooth Decay

By: Mallory Ramos, BS, CHES



Tooth decay can progress rapidly in your child's first teeth. First (baby) teeth are important for a number of reasons, such as eating, talking, guiding adult teeth, and physical appearance. Some molars in the back of the mouth stay until age 12. Cavities in baby teeth should be fixed as soon as possible.

Early childhood tooth decay can be prevented in a number of ways:

- Do not put your child to bed with a bottle or sippy cup. If your child must have one, use only water.
- Do not dip soothers in sugar or sweetened things like honey or syrup
- Use a small, soft toothbrush and water to clean the teeth. Either use

no toothpaste or a nonfluoride paste until age 2. Then use a small amount (pea size or smear) of fluoride toothpaste two times a day for 2 minutes until the age of 7.

- Parental example: Set a good example for your children by brushing your teeth
- Lift your child's lip often to check the teeth and gums. If you see chalky, white or brown spots, visit your dentist.
- "Clean" teeth regularly, as soon as they show. Clean at least twice a day. Parents should clean their child's teeth at least once a day until 6 years of age.

Babies switch from bottles to drinking or sippy cups around 1 year of age. Do not use bottles, sippy cups, or food to "quiet" the child.

Feeding should last for a specific time. Do not allow your child to become a "bottle walker" - walking around with a bottle or sippy cup. Chances of tooth decay rise when bottles or sippy cups are used often and for long periods of time.

The Dental Clinic serves Medicaid eligible children and adults free of charge and uninsured or underinsured children and adults on a sliding fee basis.

Preventative care includes complete exams, x-rays, and hygiene service.

Restorative dental care includes fillings, root canals, extractions, and dentures. Hours by appointment Monday-Friday 7:30AM-4:30 PM. (217) 735-2317



1-866-QUIT-YES

Call for FREE...7:00am to 7:00pm
CST Monday through Friday

Smoking is a serious addiction and quitting can be difficult. Becoming smoke-free will take a lot of work and commitment, but you are worth it.

The Illinois Tobacco Quitline is staffed by Registered Nurses, Respiratory Therapists and Tobacco Addiction Specialists. All services are completely confidential.

To learn more about the Illinois Tobacco Quitline, visit online at www.lungil.org

Seven Dimensions of Wellness

By: Huda Awaleh, Health Education Intern

- **Social Wellness**, turn off the TV & interact with family and friends. Join a book club—learn while you socialize.
- **Emotional Wellness**, relax and do nothing for at least thirty minutes every day. Surround yourself with healthy, positive people.
- **Spiritual Wellness**, deepen your existing spiritual or religious commitment or seek out a new tradition. Practice some form of meditation. Take time to quietly reflect each day, even if it's just a few minutes before bedtime.
- **Environment Wellness**, go outside for at least 20 minutes every day. Grow house plants to increase oxygen levels and filter the air.
- **Occupational Wellness**, practice safety on the job every day: Think safe & act safe. Make to-do lists and prioritize your tasks.
- **Intellectual Wellness**, keep your brain sharp by learning/practicing a challenging new skill each day. Play brain games—crosswords, brain teasers, etc.
- **Physical Wellness**, eat a healthy breakfast every day. Get 30-60

minutes of physical activity daily. Try to get 6-8 hours of sleep each night. Improve your posture—stand and sit up straighter. Wear comfortable shoes to protect your feet. Start a cessation program if you smoke or chew tobacco.

Sources:
National Wellness Institute
University of California at Riverside





Public Health

Prevent · Promote · Protect

Logan County Department of
Public Health

109 Third Street
P.O. Box 508
Lincoln, IL 62656-0508
Phone: (217) 735-2317
Fax: (217) 735-1872
Hours: Monday-Friday
7:30am-4:30pm

We're on the Web!
Check us out at...
www.lcdph.org

"Like" us on Facebook

Contributing Editor:
Mallory Ramos, CHES
Health Educator

This institution is an equal opportunity provider. Funding provided in whole or in part by the Illinois Department of Human Services.

Free!



2012 Community Health Fair "Getting Healthy by Leaps and Bounds"

Saturday, March 31st 9AM-1PM
Lincoln Park District Sports Center
1400 Primm Road, Lincoln, IL

Health and Safety information from local, regional, and
statewide agencies and organizations

Entertainment each hour

Blood Drive

Car Seat Checks Available by appointment

Call 217-735-2317 to schedule

Recycling

Sponsored by: Lincoln Park District
Logan County Department of Public Health

FREE and Low- Cost Screenings

Including:

- ◆ Body Mass Index
- ◆ Oral Cancer
- ◆ Water Nitrate Levels
- ◆ Blood Pressure
- ◆ Cholesterol (\$5)
- ◆ Hemoglobin (\$1)
- ◆ Spine and stress

PRESORT STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
SPRINGFIELD, IL
PERMIT NO. 500