

# PENNINGTON & RED LAKE COUNTIES WELLNESS COALITION NEWSLETTER May 2015



## Zoonotic Diseases

Every year, tens of thousands of Americans get sick from a disease caught from an infected bug or animal. These are known as zoonotic diseases. Because diseases from bugs and animals cause about 3 out of 5 new human sicknesses the CDC tracks and reports them. Diseases spread by ticks and mosquitoes can be serious.

Some of the zoonotic diseases include:

- Lyme disease, Anaplasmosis, Babesiosis and Powassan disease which you can get from a tick bite.
- West Nile virus, which you can get from a mosquito bite.
- Salmonella infection, which you can get after handling a baby chick, chicken, duck, turtle, or snake.
- E. coli infection, E. coli are bacteria found in the environment and in the intestines of people and animals. You can get this infection if you touch areas on farms, in a petting zoo or animal exhibit where E. coli germs are present.

## What you can do to protect yourself and your children from zoonotic diseases

First, note that some people are more likely than others to get really sick and even die of zoonotic diseases. Plan to take special steps to protect these people:

- Children under the age of 5 years
- Pregnant women
- Adults over the age of 65 years
- Anyone with a weakened immune system

Next, be aware of places where you might come into contact with an infected bug or animal:

- Nature parks of any type—fields, woods, beaches, deserts
- Wooded and bushy areas
- Petting zoos, and pet stores
- Farms
- County or state fairs

Always wash your hands after you are around an animal. Help children wash their hands. Wash for

20 seconds. It may not be convenient to wash hands, but it's important.

## To protect yourself from bug bites – and the diseases they cause

- Wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts.
- Spray any uncovered skin with bug repellent containing DEET.
- Look for repellents with “EPA-registered” on the label. These contain 20% or more DEET.
- Remember that repellents only last for a few hours. Follow the instructions on the label.
- Spray your clothing and gear—including boots, pants, socks, bed nets, and tents—with products containing permethrin, which repels and kills ticks, mosquitoes, and other arthropods.
- Get rid of any standing water. Check buckets, flower pots, old tires, and even litter. Mosquitoes breed in standing water, so get rid of the water in these areas outside your home.

## Check for ticks after you've been outdoors

Check your body and your children's bodies for ticks, if you find a tick, remove it right away.

\*Use fine-tipped tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin's surface as possible.

\*Pull upward with steady, even pressure. Don't twist or jerk the tick. This can cause the mouth-parts to break off and remain in the skin. If this happens, remove the mouth-parts with tweezers. If you are unable to remove the mouth easily with clean tweezers, leave it alone and let the skin heal.

\*After removing the tick, thoroughly clean the bite area and your hands with rubbing alcohol, an iodine scrub, or soap and water.

\*Never crush a tick with your fingers.

\*Dispose of a live tick by flushing it down the toilet, submersing it in alcohol, placing it in a sealed bag/container, or wrapping it tightly in tape.

\*Don't “paint” the tick with nail polish or petroleum jelly.

\*Don't use heat to make the tick detach from the skin. These methods will NOT work.

Check your dogs and cats for ticks.

--www.cdc.gov

Quin Community Health Services will have a “Walk Around Quin” activity to encourage walking the distance around the 5 counties Quin serves. The activity will take place over several months. Watch for more details coming soon!

Quin CHS will also encourage healthy activities for kids over the summer by offering prizes for recording various activities.

Watch for more on “Feelin’ Fit ‘N Fine”!



### More Research On Electronic Cigarettes

A main selling point of electronic cigarettes is use of water vapor and not smoke to deliver the nicotine. An analysis in the New England Journal of Medicine found exposure to formaldehyde from e-cigarettes could be 5 to 15 times higher than from smoking cigarettes. Researchers show toxins exist sometimes in higher levels than cigarettes.

In a regular pack of cigarettes a smoker can inhale 3 mg of formaldehyde, while vaping e-cigarette liquid at a high voltage can generate 14 mg of formaldehyde. This is troubling because teen use of e-cigarettes has doubled over the last two years in Minnesota. The FDA states that “e-cigarettes have not been fully studied so consumers really don’t know all the risks of e-cigarettes when used as intended, how much nicotine or chemicals are being inhaled during use or whether there are any benefits associated with using these products.” A study published by the University of Rochester Medical Center in February found that e-cigarette aerosol emissions and flavoring-particularly cinnamon, created stress and toxicity on lung tissue. In comparison, a study published in the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health found lung cells exposed to mainstream cigarette smoke received 4.5 times more damage when exposed to vapor from e-cigarettes. The study found both caused damage. Though the study only used bronchial cells from only two different donors...one for e-cigarettes and one for cigarettes-the authors argue their “experiment setup delivered reproducible data thus provides the opportunity for routine testing.”

-Helen Anderson

### Parenting Tips

#### Guidelines for Supervising Children

The age of the child is not the only factor parents should consider when deciding if children may be left alone. Consider other factors such as the time of day or night, other children present, location and environmental conditions, and the accessibility of a responsible adult.

The ultimate responsibility for the safety, care, well-being, and behavior of children remains with the parent, whether they are present to supervise them or not.

The following are suggested guidelines:

- Children 8 years of age and under should be supervised at all times. This includes in vehicles, playgrounds and other public places.
- Children who are 9 years of age should not be left unsupervised for a period of greater than 2 hours during the daytime. This age should never be unsupervised at night or supervise other children.
- Children age 10 or 11 may be left alone for longer periods of time during the day, but caution is advised in leaving children unsupervised during sleeping hours.
- Children age 11 are strongly encouraged to complete a babysitting training course before supervising other children.
- Children who are age 12 and older may act as babysitters.

—Pennington Co. Human Services

**Tweets from our Teens**  
Twitter address: @RedPennWellness

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