

PENNINGTON & RED LAKE COUNTIES WELLNESS COALITION NEWSLETTER June 2015



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Home Canning/Freezing- Are you doing it safely?

You may have heard about the church potluck in Ohio where one person died and 19 people got very sick as a result of some improperly home canned food recently. This was caused by Botulism poisoning. The people who lived experienced severe illness, double vision and blurred vision. It is extremely important to process your home canned foods according to current recommendations.

Interest in home canning has been growing again in the younger generations. This is due to interest in using local foods, going to farmer's markets and doing more home gardening. People are realizing that eating healthy food that is fresh and not full of additives is better nutritionally. However, if we do not prepare those fresh foods properly; we are putting our family and friends at risk for food borne illness.

If you do want to freeze and can your own foods, it is important to start with up to date research-based information. Do not use any recipes or publication written prior to 1994. One of my favorite sources is the current [Ball Canning Guide](#). You can also find accurate information on the web under reputable sites related to canning and freezing such as state extension service sites, etc. You will also need to invest in some equipment. You will need a large kettle for your boiling water bath processing and a pressure canner for your foods that require a higher temperature for proper processing. Other equipment includes proper canning jars, lids and seals, a jar lifter, freezer bags or containers, etc. Using mayonnaise jars, etc. is not acceptable for canning as the glass is not tempered for the higher processing heat required, etc. Using these jars may result in broken glass in your canner.

Freezing foods is not nearly as difficult as canning foods. When freezing, it is important to make sure you are using clean, fresh food. Blanching is required for most frozen food but not all. Blanching is submerging your product in boiling

water for a recommended amount of time to stop or slow enzyme growth so that your food does not continue to mature. Food is then quickly chilled and packed for the freezer. Freezing foods is great but it also takes up your freezer space. Some people also prefer to can their food rather than freeze and get a great feeling of satisfaction looking at their beautifully lined pantry shelves full of filled canning jars.

When canning however, even greater care must be taken to process your food properly to ensure it will be safe to eat later.

There are two methods of canning. One method is called the **Boiling Water Bath process**. This is only recommended for foods such as fruits, pickles, tomatoes, jams and jellies (foods that are normally considered higher acid foods). The boiling water bath method is using the large kettle and placing your jars in boiling water that covers the jars on the stove for a recommended amount of time. The temperature in this method of canning never exceeds the boiling point which is 212 degrees F. This temperature will kill yeast, mold and most bacteria but not all types.

This is why the **pressure canner** is required for use with lower acid types of foods such as vegetables, meats and poultry. When using a pressure canner, the temperature inside the pressure canner and jar reaches 240 degrees F. which is hot enough to kill Botulinum spores that may be present on your food. For your own safety, be sure to read how to use your pressure canner properly prior to using it. Foods processed in the pressure canner must be processed according to the recommended length of time to ensure food safety and quality. Do not experiment and try to be creative when canning. Any time you add a new vegetable or a different amount of that vegetable, etc. you are changing the acid ratios in that jar. Be sure to follow recommended canning recipes exactly.

Once you have finished the canning process, be sure to store your jars in a cool, dry place out of the sun light. Do not store canned food longer than the recommended length of time for that particular type of food. This information can be found in your canning guide.

Yes, freezing and canning your own foods fresh from your garden or farmer's market can be fun and very nutritious. BUT, make sure you take the proper steps to ensure you will have a great tasting and SAFE product to eat when you bring it to your table!

Information Source: University of MN Extension

"Feelin' Fit 'N Fine" from Quin Community Health Services, to promote healthy behaviors for ages 3-12 starts on June 8! Find the score card your child received while in school or pick up a card from Inter-County

Nursing Service in either Pennington or Red Lake Counties. Your child will have fun and get prizes while learning healthy behaviors!



"Walk Around Quin", an activity for all ages, to encourage walking the distance around the 5 counties Quin serves, starts June 15. Pick up a scorecard for this too, complete it and receive a prize! There will be Grand Prize Drawings for both when the activities end.

World No Tobacco Day was Sunday May 31

Every year the World Health Organization marks World No Tobacco Day. This event informs the public about the dangers of using tobacco and what WHO is doing to fight the global tobacco epidemic and what people around the world can do to claim their right to health and healthy living and to protect future generations. The first World No Tobacco day was held on May 31, 1988.

As smoking rates have declined in the United States, the tobacco industry has implemented a strategy to develop new markets for cigarettes in other countries around the world. Many of these countries have had little or no use of cigarettes and have never had to cope with the high cost of premature death and disease caused by smoking. The global tobacco epidemic is one of the biggest public health threats the world has ever faced; killing nearly six million people a year. More than five million of those deaths are the result of direct tobacco use while more than 600,000 is the result of non-smokers being exposed to secondhand smoke. At the global level, approximately one person dies every six seconds due to tobacco, accounting for one in 10 adult deaths. Up to half of current users will eventually die of a tobacco-related disease.

In Minnesota, many of the measures recommended by the WHO to fight the tobacco epidemic have already been implemented like the Minnesota Clean Indoor air Act, Quitplan, ANSR, and the tobacco tax increase in 2013, and Clearway Minnesota.

-Helen Anderson

Tweets from our Teens

Twitter address: @RedPennWellness

Parenting Tips

Pools, waterparks, hot tubs/spas are great places to have fun, be active, or just relax. Having fun while you swim this summer means knowing how to stay healthy and safe while enjoying the water! Healthy and Safe Swimming Week 2015, which fell in May, focused on how swimmers, parents of young swimmers, aquatics and beach staff, residential pool owners, and public health officials can minimize the risk of recreational water illnesses (RWIs). RWIs can be caused by germs spread by swallowing, breathing in mists or aerosols of, or having contact with contaminated water in swimming pools, hot tubs/spas, lakes, rivers, or oceans. RWIs can be a wide variety of infections, including gastrointestinal, skin, ear, respiratory, eye, neurologic, and wound infections.

Keep the pee, poop, sweat, and germs out of the water!

- Stay out of the water if you have diarrhea.
- Shower before you get in the water.
- Don't pee or poop in the water.
- Don't swallow the water.

Every hour—everyone out!

- Take kids on bathroom breaks.
- Check diapers, and change them in a bathroom or diaper-changing area—not poolside.
- Reapply sunscreen.
- Drink plenty of fluids.

<http://www.cdc.gov/features/healthyswimming/>

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