

Public Health Preparedness

Since September 11, 2001 the role of the local public health department has expanded to include planning and responding to incidents of bioterrorism and disease outbreaks including Pandemic Influenza 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 allow 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!

PREVENTING SWINE FLU: Good Health Habits Can Help Stop Germs

1. Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.
2. If possible, stay home from work, school, public gatherings and errands when you are sick. You will help prevent others from catching your illness.
3. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick. If you do not have a tissue, sneeze or cough into sleeve.
4. Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
5. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs are often spread when a person touches his or her eyes, nose or mouth.
6. Practice other good health habits. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids and eat nutritious food.

For more information regarding swine flu, visit our website at www.lcdph.org.

RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS

Are you looking to volunteer in your community? The Logan County Medical Reserve Corps is recruiting volunteers. ALL kinds of volunteers are welcome, not just medical. If you are interested in educating our community on public health issues and emergency preparedness or know you would be a great asset to our team in the event of a public health disaster, contact Shana Bean, Logan County Medical Reserve Corps Coordinator, at 217-735-2317 or sbean@lcdph.org. and get your application today!



March 2008 marked the first message from the Pandemic Influenza Community Coalition and the Logan County Department of Public Health regarding influenza preparedness. Continue to look for the "U and the Flu" symbol as our coalition will continue to release these educational messages to the community throughout 2009 to local businesses and organizations.

LIGHTNING SAFETY AWARENESS

June 21-27 marks Lightning Safety Awareness Week for 2009. According to the National Weather Service, on average 62 people are killed by lightning each year in the United States. Even though this number may not seem big, 62 is too high when simple steps may be taken to avoid death by lightning. Follow these steps to better prepare you and your family from lightning:

- Plan safety measures in advance. When you first hear thunder or see lightning is the best time to seek shelter inside a building or vehicle.
- If outdoors, avoid water, high grounds, open spaces and all metal objects including electrical wires, fences, machinery, etc.
- If lightning is striking and you are still outside, crouch down close to the ground without allowing your hands or knees to touch the ground and cover your ears to minimize hearing damage. Also, allow for 15 feet between you and other people.
- If indoors, avoid water, doors and windows. Be sure to turn off, unplug and stay away from electrical appliances due to lightning striking exterior power and electrical lines inducing shocks to inside equipment.
- Suspend outside activities for 30 minutes after last observed lightning or thunder.
- Injured persons do not carry an electrical charge and can be handled safely. If you are qualified to do so, begin First Aid procedures. Call 911 or send for help immediately.

Do you have any questions or comments? If so, please contact the Emergency Response Coordinator at the Logan County Department of Public Health at (217) 735-2317 or sbean@lcdph.org. Thank you!

Quitting Tobacco

By: Mary Southerlan, Dental Hygienist

Tobacco is harmful to your health, your mouth, and your social life! Here are a few reasons why:



- Browned stained teeth
- Loss of bone around your teeth
- Tooth loss
- Smelly breath
- Loss of taste
- Costly
- Oral cancer
- Gum recession

Smoking interferes with the body's immune system making it harder to fight off infections like gum disease. It also interferes with the healing process, making it more difficult for patients to heal who have had treatment for periodontal disease. Once the ingredients are in the blood stream it reduces the amount of oxygen getting to the body's tissues.

Chewing (spit) tobacco is not a safe alternative for smoking! The extremely addictive nicotine is quickly absorbed into the bloodstream. It can cause oral cancer and addiction. Chewing tobacco users can have a higher level of nicotine than a person smoking a pack a day. Because of the high sugar content in chewing tobacco, users are more prone to tooth decay. It also contains 28 known cancer causing chemicals.

Keep reminding yourself of all of the benefits quitting has. You will regain your taste for food, and will become more relaxed without the dependence of nicotine. You will also rid yourself of the smoker's breath, develop whiter teeth, regain that sharper sense of smell, and greatest of all, your friends and family will thank you.

Tips for Getting Started

1. Get support from friends and family
2. Ask someone to quit with you
3. Set a quit date
4. Talk to your doctor or dentist for nicotine cessation aids
5. Call the American Cancer Society Hotline 1-800-4-CANCER

**YES YOU
CAN!**

Want to Quit?
Call 1-866-784-8937
Illinois Tobacco Quitline