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Health and Safety News

Main Monthly Topic:

Spring/Summer Tips (Part II)

Dining Al Fresco

Nothing says summer like the smoky flavor of foods cooked out on the grill. When grilling, use a meat thermometer to ensure that you **cook meat and poultry** thoroughly. Ground beef should be cooked to an internal temperature of 160°F. Also, put cooked meat on a clean platter, rather than back on the one that held the raw meat, to avoid cross-contamination. Whether you're cooking out in the backyard or on a picnic, always keep cold foods cold and hot foods hot. When you're finished eating, refrigerate leftovers promptly.



Around the Yard

Now's the time to seal up, trap up, and clean up to prevent rodent infestation. As you're clearing out clutter, fill any gaps or holes inside and outside your home. Eliminate or seal rodent food sources such as pet food, bird feeders, and garbage cans. Elevate hay, woodpiles, and garbage cans at least 1 foot off the ground, and trim grass and shrubbery within 100 feet of your home.

In the yard, remove any items that may collect standing water, such as buckets, old tires, and toys. Mosquitoes can breed in them in just

days. You can reduce the number of ticks around your home by removing leaf litter and brush- and woodpiles around your house and at the edge of your yard. By clearing trees and brush in your yard, you can reduce the likelihood that deer, rodents, and ticks will live there. Replace or repair torn window screens to keep bugs out of the house.

Gardening is a great outdoor activity for people of all ages. Stay safe and healthy as you grab your tools and head outside. Wear gloves, use safety gear when handling equipment and chemicals, protect yourself from the sun, and use insect repellent. Also watch out for heat stress and know your limitations.

Toxoplasma is a parasite that people can get from contaminated cat feces (stool). To a cat, a sandbox can look like a litter box, so keep it covered to protect your children from toxoplasmosis.

Outdoor pollens and air pollutants can be triggers for allergic reactions and asthma. Some experiences include nasal and sinus allergies and hives. Asthma can cause



recurrent symptoms such as wheezing, chest tightness, shortness of breath and coughing. Stay healthy by properly taking any prescription or over-the-counter allergy medicine and having and following an asthma action plan. Wearing a protective nose and mouth mask, or even sunglasses or protective eyewear, while doing yard work could help to avoid the triggers that cause allergy and asthma complications.

Fun in the Sun

Protect yourself and your family from recreational water illnesses by doing your part to keep germs out of the pool. Do not swim when you have diarrhea, don't swallow pool water, take a shower before swimming, and wash your hands after using the toilet or changing diapers. Keeping germs out of the pool means a safer swim for everyone.



Play it safe in the sun. Avoid midday when the sun is intense, use sunscreen with at least SPF 15, cover up with clothing, wear a brimmed hat, and wear sunglasses that block UVA and UVB rays. Be aware of the signs of heat stress.

In the Great Outdoors



When you're out on the trail, whether hiking, camping, or hunting, protect yourself from mosquitoes and other bugs by using insect repellent. Wear long sleeves, long pants, and long socks when practical. Always check your clothes and body for ticks. If you find any ticks, carefully remove them with tweezers. The ticks that transmit Lyme disease are most active in May, June, and July, so be especially careful during those months. However, you need to look for ticks in all months of the year to protect yourself against other tickborne diseases.

Just because a mountain stream looks clear, it doesn't mean it's safe to drink. *Giardia* and *Cryptosporidium* are two parasites that you can't see, but they can make you very sick, so follow healthy swimming tips. Always treat or filter water to make it safe to drink. Ensure healthy boating and fishing experiences as well.

Bats are fun to watch as they flutter around at dusk. In many camp situations, the mere presence or sighting of bats is common and normal. Sometimes, bats may be infected with rabies and may pose a risk for exposure to humans. Remind children to never touch a bat. If you are bitten by a bat, wash the affected area thoroughly and get medical advice immediately. Whenever possible, the bat should be captured and sent to a laboratory for rabies testing.

During Independence Day, remember to use fireworks safely.

Enjoy the great outdoors. Have a safe and healthy spring and summer!

Tips for Stress-Free Summer Travel



Tips for air travel include:

- **Book your ticket ASAP.** If you must book last minute, remember, you have options. The key to securing the best deal is flexibility in travel dates—ask your ASTA travel agent to check into special fares or consider flying into an alternate airport and renting a car. If your vacation includes international travel, make sure you have a valid passport. Your travel agent can advise you on the new rules and how to apply.
- **Arrive early.** Difficult airport parking, long lines at security checkpoints and the possibility of the airline overselling the flight and bumping passengers, should all be considered when deciding what time to arrive at the airport. Give yourself plenty of extra time. Need some incentive? Keep in mind that those who arrive earliest for an overbooked flight stand the greatest chance of staying onboard.
- **Keep a close eye on all your belongings.** Just as flights are becoming extremely crowded, airports can also be fraught with thieves. Be aware of your surroundings and maintain a close watch over tickets, wallets, purses, and other belongings at all times.
- **Avoid getting bumped.** 1) Get an advance seat assignment. Passengers with seat assignments are typically only bumped if they arrive late and their seat assignment is released. 2) Check-in online. Most airlines allow you to do so within 24 hours of departure. Seat assignments that were not available at the time of ticketing may be available when checking in online. 3) Don't be late. If all else fails, get to the airport early. Some airlines reserve a portion of their seat assignment inventory for airport check-in. If you are denied a seat assignment at check-in, put your name on the "standby" seat assignment list.
- **Remember 3-1-1.** New regulations limit the amount of gels and liquids passengers can take through security in their carry-on luggage to travel-size toiletries of three (3) ounces or less that fit comfortably in one (1) quart-size, clear plastic zip-top bag and the one (1) bag per passenger must be placed in the screening bin.
- **Know your limits.** Pack light and know baggage limits. Some airlines now charge for a second piece of checked luggage.



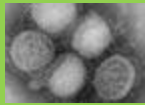
Tips for travel by car include:

- **Plan itineraries and arrange accommodations well in advance.** Reservations for hotels, restaurants and rental cars get booked quickly during peak travel times. Your travel agent can help you get the lowest rate and make sure your rental car has room for your family, luggage and whatever souvenirs you bring home.

- **Get a tune up.** Before any long-distance drive, make sure to have your oil changed and your brakes, fluids and tire pressure checked. The slightest deficiency in air pressure significantly reduces your car's gas mileage. On the flip side, too much air can result in a flat. Be sure to follow the instructions of the tire manufacturer.
- **Get an early start to avoid holiday weekend gridlock.** Traveling during late night/early morning hours helps. The worst times to travel are after meals since most travelers postpone leaving until they've eaten with their families. Make sure that all drivers are thoroughly rested.

Information courtesy of <http://www.travelsense.org/tips/stressfreesummertravel.cfm>

Alerts/Warnings



H1N1 Flu (Swine Flu)

A New Influenza Virus

A New Virus Emerges

Novel influenza A (H1N1) is a new flu virus of swine origin that was first detected in Mexico and the United States in March and April, 2009. The first novel H1N1 patient in the United States was confirmed by laboratory testing at CDC on April 15, 2009. The second patient was confirmed on April 17, 2009. It was quickly determined that the virus was spreading from person-to-person. On April 22, CDC activated its Emergency Operations Center to better coordinate the public health response. On April 26, 2009, the United States Government declared a public health emergency.

It's thought that novel influenza A (H1N1) flu spreads in the same way that regular seasonal influenza viruses spread; mainly through the coughs and sneezes of people who are sick with the virus.

Since the outbreak began in the United States, an increasing number of U.S. states have reported cases of novel H1N1 influenza with associated hospitalizations and deaths. By June 3, 2009, all 50 states in the United States and the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico were reporting cases of novel H1N1 infection. While nationwide [U.S. influenza surveillance systems](#) indicate that overall influenza activity is decreasing in the country at this time, novel H1N1 outbreaks are ongoing in parts of the U.S., in some cases with intense activity.

It's uncertain at this time how serious or severe this novel H1N1 virus will be in terms of how many people infected will develop serious complications or die or how this new virus may affect the U.S. during its upcoming influenza season in the fall and winter. Because this is a new virus, most people will have little or no immunity against it, and

illness may be more severe and widespread as a result. In addition, currently there is no vaccine to protect against this novel H1N1 virus. CDC anticipates that there will be more cases, more hospitalizations and more deaths associated with this new virus.

At this time, most people who have become ill with novel H1N1 in the United States have recovered without requiring medical treatment and have experienced typical flu symptoms.

CDC is continuing to watch the situation carefully, to support the public health response and to gather information about this virus and its characteristics.

Map: Weekly Influenza Activity Estimates, Including Novel H1N1 Flu



With the exception of the summer traveling tips, all information in newsletter is courtesy of the CDC. For more information visit this link <http://www.cdc.gov>