Make the Call to Protect Your Child or Adolescent from Vaccine-Preventable Diseases

Vaccine-preventable diseases are still present in Michigan, and may cause disability or death. Immunization is one of our most cost-effective measures to protect children from these diseases. A high proportion of children must be immunized to prevent outbreaks of disease in school settings and other places where children work and play closely together.

Summer is a good time to review your child's immunization record. New immunizations are recommended and your child may not be fully protected from all vaccine-preventable diseases.

If your child hasn't received these vaccines, now is a good time to get caught up.

**Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis (Tdap)**
- Tetanus can be found in soil and enters the body through a cut or wound
- Whooping cough (pertussis) causes coughing or choking making it hard to eat or breath
- One dose is needed at 11-12 years of age

**Meningitis**
- Affects the brain and spinal cord
- Spread through sneezing, coughing, kissing, and sharing food or drinks with infected persons
- First dose should be given at 11-12 years of age
- Many teens will need a booster dose

**Human Papillomavirus (HPV)**
- Can cause genital warts in males and females, and cervical cancer in females
- Three doses are needed beginning at 11-12 years

**Hepatitis A**
- Hepatitis A can cause fever, tiredness, loss of appetite, nausea, and jaundice
- Children and teens need two doses of Hepatitis A vaccine

**Varicella (Chickenpox)**
- Causes an itchy rash all over the body
- Can lead to severe skin infections, scars, and pneumonia
- All school-age children and teens – who have not had chickenpox – now need two doses of vaccine

Make sure to ask your healthcare provider if your child is up-to-date on other needed vaccines, such as Hepatitis B, Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) and Polio. Visit the CDC website at [http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/) for the recommended immunization schedule.

**SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT THIS SUMMER** before your child heads off to school or college this fall! For more information or to schedule an appointment, call the Health Department (906) 774-1868 or (906) 265-9913.
As Michigan residents enjoy camping, swimming, and fresh homegrown food this summer, health officials are reminding everyone to reduce their risk of exposure to bacteria and viruses that can cause illness. The Health Department is kicking off a summer long awareness campaign to inform local residents about what they can do to prevent illness.

“Be aware of potential infection from various sources during the summer months, but do not let it keep you from enjoying the many activities that the Counties have to offer for fun and recreation,” said Daren Deyaert, Environmental Health Director. “You can protect yourself and your family by taking special precautions.”

Michigan residents should be aware of and protect themselves from illnesses such as Lyme disease, rabies and West Nile virus. Lyme disease is a bacterial infection resulting from the bite of an infected deer tick. Early symptoms may include a distinctive rash at the site of the tick bite, fever, headache, fatigue, eye symptoms and muscle/joint pain. “There are deer tick populations in the U.P. that can transmit Lyme, so avoidance is important. Your local health department and the Michigan Department of Community Health websites have lots of information on prevention strategies,” states Dr. Teresa Frankovich, Medical Director. “These include wearing light, long clothing that allows ticks to be spotted more easily, staying on trails and groomed paths in wooded and tall, grassy areas when possible, using appropriate repellants and checking skin for ticks when coming indoors from areas where ticks are likely to reside. It takes about 24-48 hours of attachment for a tick to transmit the bacterial infection, so checking daily can be very effective at preventing disease.”

Rabies and West Nile virus are both viral infections. Rabies is contracted through a bite or scratch from an infected animal. It can also be transmitted if saliva from an infected animal gets into an open wound or into a person’s eyes, nose, or mouth. In Michigan, rabies has been reported most often in bats. Once a person develops symptoms of rabies, it is almost universally fatal, so reducing your exposure is crucial. Make sure your cat or dog is kept up to date with its rabies vaccination and avoid contact with unfamiliar/stray and wild animals. If you believe you may have been exposed, contact your healthcare provider or the Health Department. Don’t wait to seek treatment as there is highly effective preventative treatment available.

West Nile virus is spread to humans primarily by the bite of an infected mosquito. A mosquito becomes infected by biting a bird that carries the virus. Most people who are infected with West Nile virus either have no symptoms or experience mild illness such as fever, headache and body aches. Again, avoidance is important. Strategies to avoid exposure include wearing long, protective clothing, using appropriate repellants, getting rid of standing water in your yard when feasible and staying indoors when mosquitoes are very active. If you have symptoms of concern, contact your healthcare provider.

Not only should you be aware of potential illness from animal and tick bites during the summer months, but also illness from consuming contaminated food and beverages. Here are some precautions you can take to protect yourself and your family from foodborne illness:

- When carrying food to another location, keep it cold to minimize bacterial growth. Cold food should be held at or below 40°F. Pack food right from the refrigerator into the cooler immediately before leaving home.
- When using a cooler, keep it out of the direct sun by placing it in the shade or shelter. Avoid opening the lid too often, which lets cold air out and warm air in.
- Be sure there are plenty of clean utensils and platters. To prevent foodborne illness, don’t use the same platter and utensils for raw and cooked meat and poultry. Harmful bacteria present in raw meat and poultry and their juices can contaminate safely cooked food.

**Water Safety Tips**

Many families try to escape the summer heat in a pool or nearby lake. To keep your kids safe around the water be sure to:

- **Childproof your pool** by enclosing it in a fence with a self-closing and self-latching gate.
- **Supervise your kids** around the pool, even if they know how to swim.
- **Have children who don’t know how to swim** wear a life vest instead of "floaties" when they are in the pool.
- **Always have your child wear a life vest** when on a lake or river, even if they know how to swim.
- **Take your child to swimming lessons** once he or she is four to five years old, the age when most kids can learn to swim.
UV Safety Month

July is one of the hottest and sunniest months, a time when millions of Americans seek maximum enjoyment at beaches, barbecues and baseball games while wearing minimal clothing. Unfortunately, all this fun in the sun can damage your skin and eyes, increasing your risk of skin cancer and eyesight-robbing conditions such as cataracts and macular degeneration.

So the American Academy of Dermatology and the American Academy of Ophthalmology join forces each year in July to support UV Safety Month and remind people to protect their skin and eyes by applying sunscreen and wearing sunglasses and wide-brimmed hats when heading outdoors.

It’s important to remember that skin and eye protection is essential year-round, not just during the warm and sunny seasons. Even during the hazy and cloudy days of fall and winter, ultraviolet (UV) rays can cause serious damage, especially if they reflect off surfaces such as water, cement, sand, or snow.

In the continental United States, the most hazardous hours for UV exposure are 10 a.m.-4 p.m. daylight savings time (9 a.m.-3 p.m. standard time). Although prolonged sun exposure can damage anyone’s skin and eyes, the risk is highest in people who have white or light-colored skin with freckles, blond or red hair, and blue or green eyes.

How to Protect Your Skin

The easiest way to prevent skin cancer, including melanoma, is to protect your skin from the sun. You can significantly decrease your risk of skin cancer by following these eight tips from the American Academy of Dermatology:

- Generously apply a broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen with a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of at least 30 to all exposed skin before going outdoors. The sun’s UV rays can damage your skin in as little as 15 minutes. Use a “broad-spectrum” sunscreen that protects against ultraviolet A (UV-A) and ultraviolet B (UV-B) rays, and reapply it every two hours and also after swimming or sweating.

- Wear protective clothing such as a long-sleeved shirt, pants, a wide-brimmed hat, and sunglasses.

- Seek shade between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. A good rule of thumb is to find a shady spot whenever your shadow appears to be shorter than you are.

- Protect children from sun exposure. Early, severe sunburns increase the risk of skin cancer later in life.

- Use extra caution near water, snow, and sand.

- Get vitamin D safely from dietary sources and/or supplements. Don’t seek the sun for vitamin D.

- Avoid tanning beds. Like the sun, they prematurely age skin, cause wrinkling, and increase your risk of skin cancer. You can safely achieve a tanned look with sunless, self-tanning creams and lotions.

- Check your birthday suit on your birthday. Consult a dermatologist if you notice anything changing, growing, or bleeding on your skin. When caught early, skin cancer is usually very treatable.

Sunscreens contain different ingredients. So if your skin reacts badly to one product, try another one or call your doctor. It’s also important to make sure that your sunscreen is unexpired. Sunscreen generally has a shelf life of no more than three years, but deteriorates more rapidly if exposed to high temperatures. Although some cosmetics and lip balms contain some of the same ingredients found in sunscreens, don’t rely on them alone if they have an SPF rating less than 30.

Also remember that tightly woven fabric offers the best sun protection, and that darker colors may be better than lighter colors. A typical T-shirt has an SPF rating lower than 15, and a wet T-shirt offers even less protection than a dry one.

When choosing a hat, you’ll get the most protection from one made of a tightly woven fabric such as canvas with a brim that goes all the way around your head and shades your face, ears, and back of your neck. Avoid straw hats because the holes allow UV rays to reach your scalp and face. If you wear a baseball cap, remember to protect your ears and back of your neck with sunscreen that has an SPF rating of at least 30.

(Cont. on back page)
How to Protect Your Eyes

The same UV-A and UV-B rays that can damage your skin can also damage your eyes. Although UV light is at strongest between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., and is especially dangerous when it is intensified after reflecting off of water, snow, and pavement, it’s important to protect your eyes whenever you’re outside for a prolonged period, even during gray and overcast days.

Even one episode of prolonged exposure to sunlight can cause photokeratitis, a sunburn-like condition that causes pain, redness, and tearing. Although eye surface burns usually disappear within a couple of days, they can lead to further complications later in life. Over time, repeated exposure to sunlight can cause potentially blinding eye conditions such as cataracts and macular degeneration.

You can protect your eyes from the sun’s rays with sunglasses and a wide-brimmed hat. When buying sunglasses, make sure they block 99-100 percent of the sun’s UV-A and UV-B rays. Darker colors and higher cost don’t make sunglasses any more protective, so cheap sunglasses are just fine as long as they’re rated 99-100 effective at blocking UV rays.

If you spend time on the water or in the snow, you’ll get maximum eye protection from UV-blocking goggles or sunglasses that wrap around your temples and prevent the sun’s rays from entering through the sides. Find additional information about UV Safety Month at: [http://www.aao.org/aaoesite/eyemd/uv.cfm](http://www.aao.org/aaoesite/eyemd/uv.cfm).