



# “Dedicated to Promoting the Public’s Health”

**New Britain:  
A City for All  
People**

Volume 1 Issue 2

Summer, 2007

## Get Serious About Summer Sun Safety



Sunshine feels good, but also soaks unprotected skin in ultraviolet (UV) radiation. Over time, this invisible carcinogen causes premature skin aging and wrinkling, eye damage and a greater risk of skin cancer. Sunburn has increased for all groups of adults from 31.8% in 1999 to 33.7% in 2004. All skin colors are affected. Whites have a higher rate of Melanoma. Non-whites have more advanced disease at diagnosis and higher death rate

Everyone should see a doctor for a skin cancer screening once a year. Spring or early summer is a great time to go, to get advice on sun protection and to have your skin examined before the beach and outdoor weather begins.

Set a good example for your children—always use sunscreen and sunglasses when you go out. Buy at least SP 15 sunscreen and reapply it every two hours when you are outside.

Don’t forget to apply sunscreen to the ears, nape of the neck, chin, lips, tops of the feet, backs of the hands, part in the hair, and any sparse spots on the scalp.

### **Explain to your kids that too much sun is bad for their skin.**

Just like you tell them about the dangers of smoking and the importance of eating healthy foods, talk to them about risks from the sun. If your young children are going to be outside, put sunscreen on when you dress them in the morning so you don’t miss areas and then again as needed during the day.

Sunscreen alone is usually not enough protection. A mix of methods—such as finding shade, limiting time in the sun between 10 A.M. and 4 P.M., wearing wide-brimmed hats, wrap-around sunglasses, and protective clothing—are needed to shield your skin from the sun.

You can check the daily UV index at EPA’s Sunwise Web Page: [www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/stratosphere/uv\\_index](http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/stratosphere/uv_index).

## **Regular walking can improve energy, help you feel better and doesn’t take much time.**

Walking just 10 minutes twice a day can make changes in your health.

### **New Britain Health Department**

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EUGENE M. CICCONE, M.D.  
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

**Hours of Operation**  
M-F 8:15AM-4:00PM  
(860) 612-2771

**Immunization Clinic**  
Monday and Friday  
9AM-11AM  
Wednesday 1PM-3PM

**STD Clinic**  
Tuesday and Thursday  
2PM-3:30PM

**Tuberculosis Clinic**  
First Wednesday of every month. For New Britain residents only. Call for information.  
TB skin tests are performed during the immunization clinics.

## **Senior Happenings**

The New Britain Health Department provides city residents age 60+ with the opportunity to visit with a nurse to discuss any health-related issues. The nurse can give blood pressure and glucose checks and information and counseling on diabetes, fall prevention, exercise, stress management, cholesterol, medication concerns and weight management. Visit the nurse at the Senior Center at 55 Pearl Street Monday, Tuesday and Friday between 8:30 and noon.

## Swimming/Water Safety

Drowning is most common during the summer months. Between 2001 and 2003, at least 87 Connecticut residents drowned. Children are especially at risk, with drowning the second leading cause of injury-related death among children ages 1-14, both in Connecticut and the nation. Approximately 25% of all Connecticut drowning deaths were children less than 15 years of age.

“Vigilance is the key to keeping people safe in or near water, whether they are swimming or boating. Adults in particular need to constantly and vigilantly watch over the children in their care when they are swimming or playing in or near the water,” Commissioner Galvin stated.

Whether you are with children or adults, DPH recommends these precautions while swimming:

1. Supervise children with vigilance near water. Remember that children can drown in just a few inches of water in sources such as wading pools or buckets.
2. Never swim alone.
3. Swim only in designated swimming areas.
4. Choose swimming sites that employ trained and certified lifeguards whenever possible.
5. Avoid alcohol use before and during aquatic activities, or when supervising children in or near water.
6. Teach children over four to swim, but remember that constant supervision is still key.

## Lyme Disease

Lyme disease is caused by a bacterium and is [transmitted](#) to humans by the bite of infected ticks. Typical symptoms include fever, headache, fatigue, and a characteristic skin rash. If left untreated, infection can spread to joints, the heart, and the nervous system.

Lyme disease is [diagnosed](#) based on physical findings (e.g., rash), symptoms, and the possibility of exposure to infected ticks.

Most cases of Lyme disease can be [treated](#) successfully with a few weeks of antibiotics. Steps to [prevent](#) Lyme disease include using insect repellent, removing ticks promptly, landscaping, and integrated pest management.

## Seniors, Keep Your Independence!

Prevent falls in your home. **About half of older people who are hospitalized due to a fall do not ever return to independent living** and many of them require long-term care or nursing home admission.

Visually inspect your house. What fall hazards are there? Loose scatter rugs? Things left on the stairs? Electric cords across floors? No mats in your tub or shower? Objects on the floor where you walk? No grab-bars by the tub or toilet?

Are you taking medications that make you light-headed? Ask your doctor or pharmacist to review your medicines – including over the counter ones—for possible interactions that can lead to falls.

Take an exercise class to help improve your strength and balance. Free classes are offered at the Senior Center at 55 Pearl Street. Call 826-3553 for information.



**Heart-Healthy Tip: Hate the taste of no-fat cheese? Try 50% or 75% fat reduced instead.**

## Treating a Sprain at Home

Now that school is out, your kids may be more prone to backyard injuries. It's standard advice to put an ice pack on a sprained ankle to reduce swelling. But how long should you keep it there?

A schedule of 10 minutes on, 10 minutes off, then 10 minutes on again works better than continuous icing. Applying the cold compress for too long can burn skin and cause nerve injury. The on and off approach allows deep tissue to stay cold without damaging skin. For the best relief, repeat every two hours.

Don't have an ice pack? A plastic bag of frozen peas or corn works just as well.

**Keep important numbers — doctors, poison control, etc. — near your phone**

## Don't Become a Prune This Summer!



Summer is here and temperatures are soaring. Our bodies need an increase of water this time of the year. Have you ever felt weak, shaky or had a headache? These could be signs of **dehydration**. Here are some

simple tips to increase your water intake during the summer months.

**\*Wake up to water.** Drink a 16 ounce glass of water upon waking to hydrate your body. Hydration improves digestion, facilitates muscular and nervous activity and regulates body temperature.

**\*Use a straw.** A simple trick, but it works!!!! Sipping through a straw makes it easier \_ and more fun \_ to drink more.

**\*Enhance the flavor.** A slice of lemon, lime, orange or any citrus fruit adds a refreshing hint of flavor.

**\*Mix it up with juice.** Fill half your glass of juice, coffee or tea with water and plenty of ice.

**\*Drink seltzer or carbonated water** for a more refreshing taste.

## Quitting Smoking Pays in More than Good Health

Want a vacation? A new dress? Concert tickets?

Can't afford them?

If you smoke, you can save money for these special things by quitting. If you smoke \_ a pack a day, you will save \$16.00 in a week if you stop smoking.

That's \$68.00 in a month. \$820.00 in a year. Double these numbers if you smoke a pack a day. That's a lot of money going up in smoke.

**What dreams can you make come true by quitting?**



## Booster Shots & the Connecticut Immunization Registry Tracking System

It's summertime again \_ time to get ready for school!!! Believe it or not, that's what most pediatricians and health departments are already thinking. Each year, there is a rush to get children's immunization up-to-date so that they can attend school in the fall. Immunizations are required by the State of Connecticut to protect the health of students and staff. Vaccines are available through your doctor's office and at some health departments (including New Britain's!).

It is important to keep track of your child's shot history \_ your child will need this record to play team sports, go to camp, start college, or transfer to another school system.

The Connecticut Department of Public Health has established a computerized immunization registry and beginning in 1998, all children in Connecticut had the opportunity to enroll in this confidential statewide registry called **CIRTS**. Essentially, the registry is a large database of most of Connecticut children's immunization records. The immunization schedule gets more complicated each year as new vaccines are introduced to the childhood schedule. The registry stores this data.

How many of you know where *your* immunization history is? How many of you have needed your child's immunization record for day care, camp, or school? Did your family ever move and change medical providers? Is your family doctor retired and his records unavailable?

These are just a few of the situations the registry addresses. So if your children need immunizations this summer, remember to collect all their previous shot records to bring with you to the doctor or clinic, make appointments as early as possible, and ask if your child's records are stored in CIRTS.

Together we can make sure New Britain's children stay healthy, enjoy their summer vacation, and are prepared to start the new school year right.

## Food Protection Program

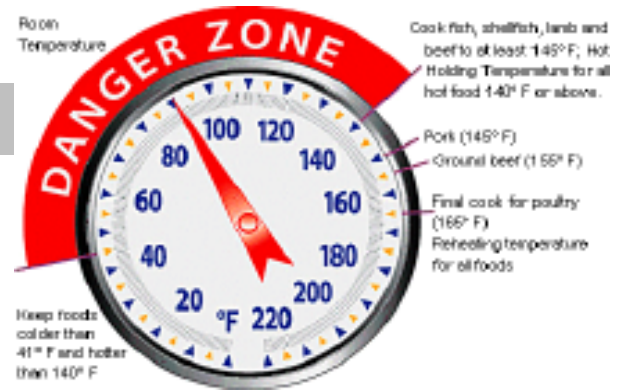
### Picnic food safety tips

When summer is in full swing, a top summer activity is picnicking and entertaining outdoors. The bacteria that cause illness grow on moist, usually protein-based foods that are between 41° F and 140° F, so minimize the time you allow these foods to stay at these temperatures. For better peace of mind that you're serving safe food to your family and friends, keep the following food safety guidelines in mind:

**Wash your hands thoroughly before cooking,** after touching raw meat, fish, or chicken, and especially after visiting the bathroom. Most food borne illnesses are related to improper handwashing after going to the bathroom. If handwashing facilities are not available, wet napkins or sanitizers will reduce the germs on your hands, but won't eliminate them.

#### Be mindful of temperature control:

- **Cook thoroughly.** Use a food thermometer to check that meats and poultry are hot enough to kill any harmful bacteria. Minimum safe internal temperatures are:
  - hamburgers (ground meats and sausages, including pork sausages): 155° F;
  - steaks and other beef, veal, lamb, fish and shellfish: 145° F;
  - poultry: 165° F;
  - pork (except pork sausage): 145° F.
- **Keep hot foods hot.** After cooking meat or chicken on the grill, keep it at 140° F or warmer until serving. If reheating fully cooked items such as baked beans or hot potato salad, heat to 165° F.
- **Do not partially cook meat or poultry and finish cooking later.**



- **Keep cold food cold.** If you are using a cooler, keep it out of the sun and avoid opening it too often so it stays as cool as possible inside. Keep cold foods at 41° F or colder at all times. Use an insulated cooler with icepacks.

#### Don't cross-contaminate:

- **Don't cut vegetables or other ready-to-eat foods on the same cutting board as chicken or meat without thoroughly cleaning the knife and the cutting board first.** Our recommendation for picnics, where proper washing facilities are not available, is to bring two separate cutting boards - one for meat, chicken, and fish, and the other for vegetables and other ready-to-eat foods.
- **Don't put cooked meat or poultry on the same platter that held the raw food.**

#### Be careful with melons

Be sure to wash the melon rind before you cut into it to minimize pushing bacteria that is often associated with melons down into the flesh. Keep cantaloupe and other melons cold 41° F or colder.

#### Leftovers

Refrigerate food as soon as possible in shallow containers. Discard any food that has been out of the refrigerator for 4 or more hours.