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TIOGA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

OCTOBER 2015

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Emergency Drill

If there was a real world emergency would you know what to do? Where would you go to get medicine and supplies for your family? Who would you send? When? How?

Tioga County Health Department Emergency Preparedness would love for you to practice with us!

Anyone can participate!

When: Wednesday, Oct. 21st

5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Where: Waverly Senior High
1 Frederick St, Waverly, NY

For more info call

687-8618

What you should take into account when deciding whether you're too sick for work:

How well can you carry out your work duties? If you're feeling quite sick, you're going to have a hard time functioning and performing at your normal level.

Are you contagious? If you have a viral or bacterial illness, you'll expose your coworkers. They in turn can infect their family and friends. Staying home when you're sick helps to curb germs in the community. You need to contain the illness.

Will resting at home help your body to overcome the illness? Symptoms get worse because people will just not stop and rest. People want to go; they want to be able to do everything that they normally do. What they don't understand is that they're pushing themselves to the point where they're actually a lot sicker at the end of two to four days than they would have been if they had just taken that first day off and let their body fight the infection.

Are you taking medications that could impair your ability to think, work, operate machinery, or drive? Let's say, for example, that you've been prescribed Vicodin for back pain and it's causing fuzzy thinking. If you're so sick that you're using opiates or any controlled substance to control pain, you need to stay home. You shouldn't be driving as your performance will be impaired.

Lastly, use the golden rule, "treat others as you would like to be treated". Think about it: you would not like it if someone came to work and coughed on you all day.

Too Sick to Work: Colds and Flu

You wake up with a scratchy throat, followed shortly by sneezing, a runny nose, and coughing. It could be the common cold, which is most contagious during the first two days after symptoms start. The onset is most infectious because of "a high viral load," says Dr. Cummins with the Center for Disease Control, "but people can be contagious for several days or even up to a week." A cold doesn't always bring fever, but some people develop a mild one at the beginning. "Even though fever makes you feel terrible, it's actually your friend because it's your body's attempt to get rid of whatever ails you," says Linda Haynes, MD, an associate clinical professor of family medicine at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. What's a true fever? Many patients, even nurses on occasion, will report a fever to Haynes if they get a thermometer reading of 99 degrees. "That's not a fever," Haynes says. "Technically, we consider a fever anything over 100.3 degrees."

Resting at home when you have a fever or severe cold symptoms, such as lots of coughing and sneezing, will not only aid your recovery, but also spare your coworkers from infectious droplets. If you have mild coughing and sneezing and no fever -- and you feel that you need to go to work -- take measures to reduce chances of infecting others. Be sure to cover your mouth when sneezing or coughing. Wash your hands frequently to prevent transmission, or use alcohol-based hand sanitizers.

Compared to colds, flu symptoms are more severe and tend to come on abruptly. The flu also penetrates deeper into the respiratory tract. Often, the flu announces itself with chills. Fever is also common in the first few days, and a sick person's temperature may rise to 102 or 103 degrees. Other flu signs: muscle aches, headache, a runny nose, sore throat, cough, weakness, and fatigue.

The flu delivers a punch powerful enough that many people want to go to bed for a few days. Again, fever and severe symptoms are strong signs that you're too sick to work and should stay home. The flu usually goes away in seven to ten days in otherwise healthy people, although they may still have a cough and feel tired when they return to work. Although most people will need a few days off to recuperate, they can go back to the workplace 24 to 48 hours after their temperature has returned to normal.

Too Sick to Work: Sinus Infection

An acute sinus infection can cause yellow or green nasal discharge, nasal stuffiness, facial pain or pressure, headache, or aching in the upper jaw and teeth. If you feel too sick to work, stay home. You may have so much throbbing facial pain or headache that you can't concentrate on your job. Try some self-care. Use decongestants for a few days. Nasal irrigation with saline solution also helps to cleanse the sinuses. Some people get tremendous relief that way.

If symptoms don't improve in a few days or get worse, it's time to see a medical provider, who may prescribe you with antibiotics. What about flying for business? "If you're really sick, I wouldn't travel anyway," Dr. Haynes says. "But if you have a mild sinus infection and you have to travel, take a decongestant and/or antihistamine before you get on the plane." In rare cases, flying with a sinus infection could cause a ruptured eardrum, "It's a very sudden, painful event, often followed by a bit of blood that may come out of the ear." "That sounds like a horrible thing," Haynes says, "but most of the time, it would heal itself." A ruptured eardrum typically repairs within two months; any hearing loss is usually temporary. When ever in doubt, just go home. Get supervisor approval first-of course! For more info go to www.webmd.com

Oral Health Challenge: 5 Tricks for Dealing With Halloween Treats

1. **Halloween Candy vs. Cavities: Don't Make Kids Choose:** Don't deny your children the Halloween experience, but after the experience help them select a number of treats to keep, depending on age. Donate or freeze the rest.
2. **Preventing Cavities in Children: Set a Treat Time.** Children learn that eating sweets shouldn't be an all-day feast. Moderation is key.
3. **Set Up a Teeth Brushing Schedule:** No matter when treat time is, it's crucial to brush soon after. Fluoride mouth rinses also help prevent tooth decay. Until a child is 7 or 8 years old, a parent should help with teeth brushing, not simply supervise.
4. **Use Disclosing Tablets, Swabs, or Solution:** Parents can also use disclosing tablets, solution, or swabs to show children how well they are brushing or flossing their teeth -- especially if they already have a cavity or two. A 12-pack of disclosing tablets is available over the counter and online for about \$5 (Once a week should keep your child on his or her toes).



5. **Keep Teeth Brushing Fun:** You should replace toothbrushes every three or four months anyway, so make Halloween an occasion for getting your child a new brush. Children like to pick out their tooth brushes and paste. Make sure it contains fluoride. More info at webmd.com

What is Community Immunity?

Community Immunity is when the immunized community helps protect those who are unprotected. When most people are immunized, diseases can't spread as easily. This protects the few among us who are not immune. Depending on the disease, about 80% to 94% of people in your community need to be immunized to protect those most at risk. Your child or community could be at risk.

Who needs our help?

Lots of people! Unprotected kids or adults we pass at the supermarket, the playground, and those we know and love.

- ⇒ **Babies too young to be immunized** (whooping cough can be life-threatening)
- ⇒ **People with weak immune systems** (due to disease or medical treatments—like cancer or chemotherapy)
- ⇒ **Unimmunized pregnant women** (chickenpox, rubella and flu can harm the baby)
- ⇒ **Seniors** (flu and pneumonia can be deadly. 3,000 to 49,000 people die every year from the flu!)
- ⇒ **Anyone allergic to an immunization(s)**

**NOW is the time to get your
flu immunization for 2015!**

**It is recommended for
everyone ages 6 months
and older. Contact your
medical provider or
pharmacist for a flu
immunization now.**



**OCTOBER 25th-31st
IS NATIONAL
LEAD POISONING
PREVENTION WEEK**

If your house or apartment building was built before 1978, there may be old leaded paint

under the newer coats of paint. Around 80% of Tioga County's housing stock was built before 1978. When the new paint chips, flakes, or peels off, the old paint is still there and flakes off with the new paint, especially from windows, doors, and baseboards. It can also become leaded dust.

When swallowed or breathed in, lead can cause serious health issues for children. Even low levels of lead exposure can cause problems with a child's growth, behavior, and ability to learn. It may be hard for a child who has lead poisoning to sit still, pay attention, and follow directions. Children under 6 years of age are at risk because they are growing quickly and because they tend to put their hands or other objects which may be contaminated with lead dust into their mouths. A child with lead poisoning usually does not look or feel sick. The only sure way to know if a child is lead poisoned is to get a blood lead test. **All children are to be tested for lead at 1 and 2 years of age.** What else can you do to protect your children now that they are inside for the colder weather?

- ⇒ *Keep paint in good shape. Peeling, chipping, and flaking paint can be a source of lead.*
- ⇒ *Regularly wet-mop floors and wet-wipe window areas. Keep your child from chewing on painted surfaces, such as windowsills, cribs, or playpens.*
- ⇒ *Wash your child's hands frequently and regularly wash your child's toys, bottles, pacifiers, and stuffed animals.*
- ⇒ *Keep play areas clean. Make sure your child does not have access to peeling paint or chewable surfaces painted with lead-based paint.*
- ⇒ *Some jobs and hobbies have lead! Don't bring lead home with you. Shower and change work clothes and shoes before going home. Take off shoes when entering the house to prevent bringing lead-contaminated soil in from outside.*
- ⇒ *Serve foods rich in iron, calcium, and Vitamin C.*
- ⇒ *Don't do the remodeling yourself. Get a person who has been trained to make repairs safely.*

If you have any questions or concerns, talk to your child's health care provider or call Tioga County Health Department at 687-8600 and ask to speak to a lead poisoning prevention staff member.