

A BIENNIAL
NEWSLETTER FROM
THE MORRIS COUNTY
OFFICE OF HEALTH
MANAGEMENT

HEALTH EDUCATION
SERVICES SERVING:

BOONTON TOWNSHIP,
TOWNSHIP OF
DENVER, BOROUGH
OF MORRIS PLAINS,
TOWN OF
MORRISTOWN,
MONTVILLE
TOWNSHIP

Special points of interest:

- January is Radon Action Month
- January is National Birth Defects Month
- February is American Heart Month
- March is Colorectal Cancer Month
- March is STD Awareness Month
- March is Eye Health Month
- April is Distracted Driving Month
- May is Melanoma Awareness Month

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Your Health Matters



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

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Keeping Your Heart Healthy—Reducing Salt in Your Diet

The new year is an opportunity to start fresh by making small changes. Most of us are eating more sodium than we need. More than 75 percent of the sodium we eat comes from packaged foods and restaurant foods. The recommended amount of sodium per day is 2,400 milligrams. Even better is to reduce sodium intake to 1,500 milligrams a day.

Tips for food shopping from stores include:

- Choose packaged and prepared foods carefully. Compare labels choosing the least amount of sodium.
- Choose condiments, salad dressings, mustard, olives, pickles that have reduced or lower-sodium versions.
- Many products have the American Heart Association's Heart-Check mark. These products can be part of an overall healthy diet

pattern.

When preparing foods:

- Use onions, garlic, spices, citrus juices and vinegars in place of salt to add flavor.
- Drain canned foods, such as beans and vegetables, and rinse them off before using.
- Cook pasta, rice and hot cereals without salt.
- Grilling, braising, roasting, searing and sautéing bring out the natural flavors in foods.

Salt substitutes:

- Some of these replace all or some of the salt with potassium. Many can use them freely, but if you have certain medical conditions (kidney disease) you want to talk with your healthcare provider to ask if they are right for you.

Spice tips from the American Heart Association:

- Basil—tastes somewhat sweet, earthy and goes well with Italian foods as well as stir fries. Add dried to the dish 15 minutes before serving for full flavor.
- Rosemary—tastes woody and goes well with meats, mushrooms, grain breads and butternut squash.
- Smoked paprika—tastes smoky and woody and goes well with egg dishes, rubs for meats, in fruit salsa.



Source: American Heart Association
www.heart.org/gettinghealthy

January is Cervical Health Awareness Month

There is a lot you can do to prevent cervical cancer. HPV (human papillomavirus) is the most common sexually transmitted disease. It is also a major cause of cervical cancer. About 79 million Americans currently have HPV, but many people with HPV do not know they are infected.

The good news:

- HPV can be prevented by the HPV vaccine.
- Cervical cancer can be prevented with regular screenings (called Pap tests)

- Women can begin getting the Pap test at age 21.
- Women can get the HPV vaccine before age 27.
- Parents can make sure their pre-teens are protected by getting the vaccine beginning age 11 or 12.
- Men can get the HPV vaccine under age 22.

Many health insurance companies now cover the HPV vaccine so there may be no cost.

Radon Awareness: Protect Your Health. Test Your Home.

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that can cause lung cancer. Since you can't see or smell radon, testing is the only way to know your level of exposure.

Radon is measured in picocuries per liter (pCi/L). If levels are 4 pCi/L or higher you would want to fix your home.

Even levels below this, may still pose a risk and in many cases may be reduced.

Radon comes from the natural (radioactive) breakdown of uranium in soil, rock and water and gets into the air you breathe. It is found all over the U.S. In N.J. parts of Morris County are in the "high poten-

tial" area. It can get into any type of building—homes, offices, schools—and result in a high indoor radon level.

Testing is inexpensive and easy. The N.J. Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) maintains a list of certified radon measurement companies who perform the testing. Some sell test kits the homeowner can use on their own. Test kits are often available in hardware stores or from local health departments.

Many newer homes are built to help prevent radon from coming in the home. Mitigation can range from \$500 to \$2500 depending on the characteris-

tics of your home. If you are buying a new home, ask the owner or builder if it has radon-resistant features.

The recommendation is every home in high radon potential areas should be tested, and not just when purchasing or selling a home.

More information is available through the NJDEP Radon Program's Information Line, (800) 648-0394 or web site, www.njradon.org.



**THINK SAFE
ACT SAFE
BE SAFE**

Distracted Driving

Each day in the United States, more than 9 people are killed and more than 1,153 people are injured in crashes that are reported to involve a distracted driver. Distracted driving is driving while doing another activity that takes your attention away from driving.

There are three main types of distraction:

- Visual: taking your eyes off the road
- Manual: taking your hands off the wheel; and
- Cognitive: taking your mind off of driving

Some activities include things like using a cell phone, texting, and eating. Using in-vehicle technologies (such as navigation systems) can also be a source of distraction. Texting is considered to be especially dangerous when driving because it combines all three types of distraction.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) analyzed 2011 data on distracted driving. They compared the United States to European countries: Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom. This is what they found:

- 69% of drivers in the U.S. ages 18—64 reported they had talked on their cell phone while driving.
- In Europe, the percentage ranged from 21% in the U.K. to 59% in Portugal.
- 31% of U.S. drivers reported they had read or sent text messages or emails while driving.
- In Europe, this percentage ranged from 15% in Spain to 31% in Portugal.

Another study revealed that:

- Nearly half of all U.S. high school students aged 16 years or older text or email while driving.

- Students who text while driving are nearly twice as likely to ride with a driver who has been drinking and five times as likely to drink and drive than students who don't text while driving.

Many states are enacting laws—such as banning texting while driving, or using graduated driver licensing systems for teen drivers to help raise awareness about the dangers of distracted driving and to keep it from occurring. However the effectiveness of these laws still needs to be evaluated with further study.

One of the first lessons new drivers learn is to keep their eyes on the road. It is a good reminder for more experienced drivers as well.



Prepare Your Car for Winter

You can avoid many dangerous winter travel problems by planning ahead. Have maintenance on your vehicle as often as recommended by the manufacturer.

A car and emergency checklist include:

- Cell phone, portable charger, extra batteries
- Shovel
- Windshield scraper
- Water
- Snack food
- Extra hats, coats and mittens
- Blankets
- Emergency flares
- Bright colored flags or help signs
- Compass
- Road map
- Paper towels
- Waterproof matches and a can to melt snow for water
- Hand warmers

Finding A Balance

When it comes to maintaining a healthy weight for a lifetime, the bottom line is—CALORIES COUNT! Weight management is about balance—the number of calories you consume with the number of calories your body uses or “burns off”.

A calorie is defined as a unit of energy supplied by food. A calorie is a calorie regardless of source. Carbohydrates, proteins, sugars or fats, all of them contain calories.

Caloric balance is like a scale. The calories consumed (from food) must be balanced by the calories used (in normal daily functions, daily activities and exercise).

To maintain your weight, you eat roughly the same number of calories that your body is using. Your weight, then, remains stable.

When you are eating more calories than your body is using you are “in caloric excess.” You store these extra calories as fat and gain weight.

In “caloric deficit” you are eating fewer calories than you are using. Your body pulls from its fat storage cells for energy, so you are losing weight.

One of the best ways to learn how many calories you are currently eating is by writing down what you eat or drink. You become more aware of everything you are putting in your mouth. Also, writing down your daily activities and the length of time you do an activity will give you an idea of calories used.

Online resources include :

[My Food Diary](#)

[My Physical Activity Diary](#)

from cdc.gov/healthyweight

Available from the USDA is an online [SuperTracker](#)

which helps with a personalized nutrition and physical activity plan. The site also gives tips and support to help you make healthier choices and plan ahead.



You can cut calories by eating food higher in fiber, and adding more fruits and vegetables to your eating plan

Winter Safety

More than 200,000 people are treated in emergency rooms, doctor's offices, and clinics for injuries that happened while shoveling snow each winter. More than 25,000 people are injured using snow blowers.

The most common injuries with snow removal include sprains and strains, particularly in the back and shoulders.

This snow season general tips include dressing appropriately, clearing snow early and often before it accumulates in large amounts.

Tips for snow shoveling include:

- Warm-up your muscles first for 10-minutes with light exercise.
- Pace yourself, take frequent breaks.
- Use a shovel that is comfortable for your height and strength.
- Push the snow instead of lifting it.
- Do not throw snow over your shoulder.





Dental Health for All Ages

Oral health is essential to general health and well-being. Tooth decay (cavities) is one of the most common chronic conditions of childhood in the U.S. Untreated tooth decay can cause pain and infections that may lead to problems with eating, speaking, playing and learning.

About 20% of children aged 5 to 11 years have at least one untreated decayed tooth. One in seven adults aged 35 to 44 years has gum disease and this increases to one in four adults aged 65 years and older.

The good news is that tooth decay is preventable. Children who have fluoride applied topically or live in communities with fluoridated water have fewer cavities than children who live outside commu-

nities with fluoridated water. Similarly children who brush with fluoridated toothpaste will have less tooth decay.

Applying sealants to the chewing surfaces of the back teeth is another way to prevent tooth decay. Sealants may reduce decay in permanent molars by 81% for 2 years after they are placed on the teeth and continue to be effective for 4 years after placement.

Periodontal diseases are mainly the results of infections and inflammation of the gums and bone that surround and support the teeth. In early stages the gums can become swollen and red and they may bleed. A more serious form causes the gums to pull away from the teeth, bone can be lost and teeth may loosen or even fall

out. Periodontal disease is mostly seen in adults. Periodontal disease and tooth decay are the two biggest threats to dental health.

Inflammation of the gums can be controlled and treated with good oral hygiene and regular professional cleaning. To help prevent or control periodontal disease it is important to:

- Floss and brush every day to remove the bacteria that cause gum disease
- See a dentist at least once a year for checkups, or more frequently if you have warning signs or risk factors mentioned below.

If you can't afford dental care, you may be able to find help through Human Resources and Services Administration service line: 1-888-275-4772.



Warning Signs and Risk Factors—Periodontal Disease

Warning signs include:

- Bad breath or bad taste that won't go away
- Red or swollen gums
- Tender or bleeding gums
- Painful chewing
- Loose teeth
- Changes in the way your teeth fit together

Risk factors include:

- Smoking
- Diabetes
- Poor oral hygiene
- Stress
- Heredity
- Fillings that have become defective
- Medications that cause dry

mouth.

- Bridges that no longer fit properly



Skin Cancer—A Serious Public Health Concern

Skin cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in the U.S, with 5 million people treated each year. Anyone can get skin cancer. Although those with lighter skin are at higher risk of getting skin cancer, people with darker skin may often be diagnosed with skin cancer at a later stage, making it difficult to treat.

- More than 1 out of every 3 Americans report getting sunburned each year. Sunburn is a clear sign of overexposure to UV rays, a major cause of skin cancer.
- More than 400,000 cases of skin cancer, about 6,000 of which are melanomas, are estimated to be related to indoor tanning in the U.S. every year.
- Tanned skin is damaged skin.

Most skin cancers can be prevented by choosing sun protection strategies that work:

- Wear a hat, sunglasses, and other protective clothing that covers your arms and legs.
- Seek shade, especially during midday hours.
- Use broad spectrum sunscreen with SPF 15+ to protect any exposed skin. Sunscreen is most effective when used in combination with other methods, and when reapplied as directed.
- Avoid indoor tanning.

Fewer than 15% of men and fewer than 30% of women reported using sunscreen regularly on their face and other exposed areas when outside for more than 1 hour.

Every year there are more than 63,000 new cases of melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer resulting in 9,000 deaths.



Rabies Vaccination

What is Rabies? According to the CDC, it is a disease, mainly of animals, that humans get when they are bitten by animals who are infected. Rabies can cause pain, fatigue, headaches, fever, and irritability. These symptoms are often followed by seizures, hallucinations, and paralysis. An animal is considered immunized 28 days after the vaccination. Rabies control of domestic animals is through vaccination. All dogs should be vaccinated against rabies, and in some municipalities cats also.

For information on free rabies clinics and vaccinations offered in your area, visit

www.morrishealth.org.



Medical Reserve Corps

The Morris County Medical Reserve Corps is a well-prepared and trained workforce of volunteers to help public health protect the community in the event of a public health emergency.

To learn more about the MRC, or to fill out a volunteer application, visit www.njmrc.nj.gov.

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Important Numbers

GENERAL

NJ211
2-1-1
North Jersey Red Cross
(973) 538-2160
Poison Information
1-800-222-1222
Mental Health Hotline
1-877-294-4357

MORRIS COUNTY

Health Management
973-631-5484
Emergency Management
973-829-8600
Sheriff's Office
973-285-6600
Prosecutor's Office
973-285-6200

NEW JERSEY

Communicable Disease Service
1-609-826-5964

Address

Morris County Office of Health
Management
PO Box 900
634 West Hanover Avenue
Morristown NJ 07961

www.morrishealth.org

The mission of the Morris County Office of Health Management is to promote public health, to prevent the spread of disease, and to protect the environment through awareness, compliance, education, training, and emergency response.

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