

MCRHC

Monmouth County Regional Health Commission NO. 1

Fall 2011

KEEPING YOUR FAMILY FED If the Power Goes Out

This is what you will need to keep your family fed:

- Canned or shelf-stable foods
- Water
- Paper or plastic plates, cups and eating utensils
- A manual can opener

To keep your food safe and healthy:

- A food thermometer
- An insulated cooler
- Freezer packs
- Moist towelettes or alcohol-based hand sanitizer

DON'T FORGET

- Batteries
- Flashlight
- A first aid kit
- Family medications

- Pet food
- A battery-operated clock or watch

Plan for a 3-day supply of foods that need no cooking or refrigeration.

- Choose from foods your family enjoys, plus favorite treats
- Include foods needed for special diets

Check food labels:

- Storage requirements
- Use-by or expiration dates
- Plan on single servings or one-meal size portions to avoid leftovers

If you CANNOT BOIL WATER, DO NOT include instant foods.

STORE FOODS SAFELY

- Store foods in a clean, dry area, off the floor and away from electrical appliances.
- Keep foods covered at all times.
- Check all foods for signs of spoilage.
- Check cans for dents and rust. If they become damaged throw them out.

IF THE POWER GOES OUT

- FIRST—Use perishable foods and foods from the refrigerator
- SECOND—Use foods from the freezer
- THIRD—Use canned foods and shelf-stable foods

PREVENT UNINTENTIONAL POISONING

Now that hurricane cleanup has begun, the NJ poison experts want to remind residents how to stay safe and prevent accidental poisonings.

THE CLEANUP PROCESS:

- ◆ Do not use gasoline powered washers or generators in the basement, home, or garage. Gasoline powered equipment releases large amounts of car-

bon monoxide, increasing the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.

- ◆ NEVER MIX cleaning products such as ammonia and bleach or other disinfectants.
- ◆ Use bleach to clean mold off hard things (like floors, stoves, sinks, certain toys, countertops, flatware, plates, and tools). Mix no more than 1 cup of bleach in 1 gallon of water.
- ◆ When working with cleaning products, wear rubber boots, rub-

ber gloves, goggles and when necessary, a mask to prevent skin and respiratory irritation.

- ◆ Open windows and doors to get fresh air when using cleaning products.
- ◆ Wash hands routinely and thoroughly to prevent infection.
- ◆ Wash all clothing worn during cleanup in hot water separate from the laundering of routine clothing.

Packing a Safe School Lunch

A recent study published in the journal *Pediatrics*, found less than two percent of the perishable food packed in lunch bags for children ages 3-5 years old were safe to eat. Even when refrigerated or packed with cold packs, "more than 95 percent of them were in the danger zone," says the study's author. The average temperature was 62 degrees. Hot food should be held at 135°F or warmer. Cold food should be held at 41 °F or colder.

Most foodborne illnesses that happen in schools are not from the school cafeteria, rather from food brought from home or other sources. Here's some food safety

tips when packing a safe lunch:

Keep everything clean when you make your lunch.

- Wash your hands before handling food.
- Wash fruits and vegetables.
- Wash utensils and containers thoroughly with soap and warm water, and rinse after each use.

Keep foods cold so germs won't grow.

- The best way to keep food cold is with an insulated box. When packing lunches, include either freezer gel packs or cold food items such as



small frozen juice packs.

- Nestle perishable meat, poultry or egg sandwiches between these cold items.
- Sandwiches can also be made ahead of time and kept refrigerated or frozen before placing in the lunch box.
- Keep lunch boxes and bags away from heat sources, such as direct sunlight or room radiators

Reheat foods thoroughly.

- If you use leftovers, make sure that you pack and keep them cold. Cook foods thoroughly.
- If you use a microwave, use microwave-safe containers.

Fall Health Tips

- **Flu Shots** - Getting a flu shot is the best way to protect yourself from the flu. You may also want to get a pneumonia shot if you're 65 or over. Remember that the flu shot is recommended for all adults, especially those with a health condition such as diabetes or heart disease that makes them more at risk for the serious complications of the flu.
- **Exercise** - Exercise is important all through the year, but can help you get in shape for the colder months. Indoor shopping

malls are great places to walk and often have walkers clubs that offer discounts. With the days getting colder, take a few extra minutes to warm up your body and stretch your muscles before you exercise.

- **Be Aware of Fall Allergies.** Late summer and early fall bring on another season that can trigger allergic reactions. Outdoor molds become plentiful in the fall in gutters, soil, vegetation, rotting wood and fallen leaves. You can reduce your exposure to fall allergens.

Avoid being outdoors in the morning hours between 5:00 - 10:00 a.m. when pollen dispersal is peaking. Avoid lots and fields where ragweed grows; shower and wash hair immediately after coming in from outside activities, and especially before going to bed.

- **Hats and Gloves** - Wear a hat and gloves when you go outside. The hat keeps warmth from escaping through the top of your head—a major source of body heat loss.

Vaccination Clinics

The Monmouth County Regional Health Commission will be holding seasonal flu/pneumonia clinics from September – October 2011 at various time & locations. The cost for Non-Medicare eligible participants will be \$23.00 for flu shots and \$45.00 for pneumonia shot. Vaccine will also be given in our office.

For dates & locations please see our website:

www.mcrhc.org

For more info call 732-493-9520.

Rabies Clinic for Cats & Dogs

The Monmouth County Regional Health Commission will sponsor free rabies clinics for cats and dogs during the fall season.

For dates & locations please see our website:

www.mcrhc.org

Please have dogs on a leash and cats in a carrier. Animals must be supervised by an adult. For more info call 732-493-9520.