

# Your Health Matters



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Volume 1 Issue 1

January 2020

## Special points of interest:

- January is National Glaucoma Month
- February is Low Vision Awareness Month
- March is National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month
- April is National Minority Health Month
- May is Skin Cancer Prevention Month
- June is National Migraine and Headache Awareness Month

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## Beat the Winter Blues

Studies show that extreme weather changes can negatively affect mental health. During extreme cold, people stay inside more and detach from normal activities. Our bodies produce less serotonin and more melatonin with winter days being shorter and having less daylight. This means the neurotransmitter associated with happiness is decreased while the chemical associated with depression and sleepiness is increased.

It is important to be mindful of how winter can affect your mental health and be prepared for it.

1. Stay connected with family and friends: Close relationships are vital in reducing isolation
2. Exercise regularly: Regular exercise can boost serotonin and endorphins.
3. Maintain a healthy diet: Eating well-balanced meals throughout the day, with plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables, will keep your energy up and minimize mood swings.

4. Take steps to deal with stress: Practice daily relaxation techniques and do something you enjoy every day.
5. Get natural sunlight: Get outside during daylight hours. Even a small dose of sunlight can boost serotonin levels and improve your mood

For more information, visit <https://www.thekimfoundation.org/blog/winter-weather-and-mental-health/>



## Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a poisonous gas overlooked by many because it gives no warning—you can't see, smell, taste, or hear it. The gas is undetectable without a working carbon monoxide detector. It is important to know how to recognize the effects associated with CO poisoning and seek help immediately. Common symptoms of low-level poisoning include headaches, sleepiness, fatigue, confu-

sion, and irritability. At higher levels, poisoning can result in nausea, vomiting, irregular heart beat, impaired vision and coordination, brain damage and death.

Although cold weather brings increased risk, carbon monoxide exposures happen throughout the year. Lesser known exposures include portable gas generators used during severe weather, portable room heaters, fireplace/

(continued on pg. 2)

## Carbon Monoxide continued

chimney flues, and heating and dryer vents. Always check the batteries of both detectors (fire and CO) when changing the clocks twice a year for daylight savings time.

If you suspect a carbon monoxide exposure, take immediate action:

1. If someone is unconscious or unresponsive, get him or her out of the house and call 911 immediately.
2. Exit the housing/building immediately.
3. Contact your local fire department.
4. Call the NJ Poisons Control Center at 1-800-222-1222 for immediate medical advice. Do not waste time looking for information on the internet about carbon monoxide poisoning.

For more information, visit [http://www.njpies.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/CO-Poisoning-Oct2019\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.njpies.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/CO-Poisoning-Oct2019_FINAL.pdf)

## CARBON MONOXIDE (CO) POISONING



## Nutrition: Meatless Mondays



Did you know?

You can get protein easily each day without meat.

Vegetarian diets that provide sufficient calories usually contain as much or more protein needed for the day. So feel free to go meatless on Monday—or any day of the week.

Going meatless once a week may reduce your risk of chronic preventable conditions like cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and obesity. Evidence suggests that eating a diet rich in fruits and vegetables, and a limited amount of red meat can increase longevity. Going meatless encourages consumptions of plant-based sources of protein, like beans and peas. Diets high in beans and peas are associated with lower intakes of saturated fat and total fat.

Many people save money by adding meatless meals to their weekly menus. Meatless meals are built around vegetables, beans, and grains instead of grains which tend to be more expensive.

Going meatless also helps the environment by minimizing water usage, reducing greenhouse gases, and reducing fuel dependence. Did you know it takes 425 gallons of water to produce one quarter-pound beef burger, that's enough water to fill 10 bathtubs.

So why go meatless on Monday? Research shows Monday has a special significance in our culture as the beginning of the week, which influences our mood and health outcomes.

People are more likely to either start diets, exercise regimens, quit smoking or schedule doctor's appointments on Monday than on other days of the week. Also engaging in healthy behaviors on Mondays helps people sustain healthy behavior throughout the week.

Try going meatless on Monday or any day of the week. It can make a big difference in our personal health and the health of the planet.

For more information and meatless recipes, visit <https://www.meatlessmonday.com/>

## Are You Prepared for a Winter Storm?

With the winter season quickly approaching, it is important to make sure you are safe both indoors and outdoors during a storm. Winter storms are dangerous and can cause power failures, loss of communication services, icy roads, and cold temperatures. See the following tips below for staying safe during a winter storm.

### Indoor Safety

**Heat Your Home Safely:** Be careful when using a wood stove, fireplace, or space heater.

**Light Your Home Safely:** If there is a power failure, use battery-powered flashlights or lanterns rather than candles. Candles can lead to house fires.

**Use generators and other appliances safely:** Generators should be located at least 20 feet from any window, door, or vent and in a space where rain and snow will not reach them.

**Conserve heat:** Close off unneeded rooms and stuff towels or rags in cracks under doors.

**Make sure babies and older adults stay warm:** Infants less than one year should never sleep in a cold room and check on older adults as they often make less body heat.

**Keep a water supply:** Leave all water taps slightly open so they drip continuously and keep the temperature inside your home warm.

**Eat well-balanced meals and avoid alcoholic and caffeinated beverages:** Eating a balanced meal will help you stay warmer. Drink warm, sweet beverages or broth instead of alcoholic and caffeinated beverages to keep yourself warm.

### Outdoor Safety

**Dress warmly and stay dry:** Wear a hat, scarf, mittens, water-resistant coat and boots, and several layers of clothing.

**Know the signs of frostbite and hypothermia:**

- Hypothermia is when a person is exposed to extremely cold temperatures. Symptoms include shivering, confusion, fumbling hands, memory loss, and slurred speech.
- Frostbite is an injury caused by freezing. It can lead to loss of feeling and usually effects the nose, ears, cheeks, chin, fingers, and toes.

**Stay off the ice:** Keep your steps and walkway free of ice by using salt or sand.

**Be safe during outdoor activities:** Do not leave areas of your skin exposed.

**Be careful while traveling:** Do not travel in low visibility conditions and listen for radio reports of travel advisories.

**If you get stranded:** Tie a brightly colored cloth to the antenna as a signal to rescuers and stay in your car to keep warm.

For more information visit, <https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/winter/duringstorm/indoorsafety.html>

When going outside be sure to wear:



When going outside in winter make sure body parts most often affected by frostbite are covered in warm, dry clothing.



## Kids Getting Too Much Screen Time

Kids ages 8-18 spend about 7.5 hours in front a screen for entertainment each day and 4.5 of which are spent watching TV. That adds up to 114 full days watching a screen for fun and does not include time spent on the computer at school for educational purposes. Studies have shown that too much screen has negative effects on children including violent and aggressive behavior, poor body concept and self-image, obesity, substance use, and early sexual activity.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends children get at least 60 minutes of physical activity each day. The time kids spend watching TV, playing video games, and surfing the web is time they could be physically active. Below are tips for parents and

guardians to help keep your children healthy and active:

1. Ensure kids have 1 hour of physical activity each day.
2. Limit kids' total screen time to no more than 1-2 hours per day.
3. Remove TV sets from your child's bedroom.
4. Encourage other types of fun that include both physical and social activities, like joining a sports team or club.

For more information visit, <https://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/multimedia/infographics/getmoving.html>

**SCREEN TIME**  
**vs**  
**LEAN TIME**



More than 150 million Americans use corrective eyewear to compensate for refractive errors like nearsightedness and farsightedness.

Source: American Academy of Ophthalmology

## Asthma

Asthma is very common among children, teens and adults. It is a disease that causes the airways of lungs to tighten. An asthma attack is when your lungs are not getting enough air to breathe. Symptoms include: trouble breathing, wheezing, coughing chest pain, and chest tightness.

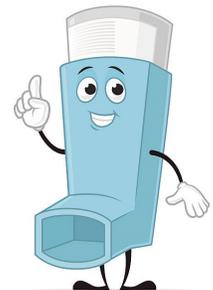
Asthma attacks are caused by triggers which are everywhere. Common asthma triggers include:

- Tobacco Smoke
- Dust Mites
- Pets
- Mold

- Smoke from burning wood or grass
- Chemical irritants
- Other triggers

Reduce common asthma triggers by not smoking in the house, washing bed sheets and blankets once a week, using cleaning that contain strong chemicals less often and when your child not around, and vacuuming carpets, rugs, and furniture often.

For more information, visit <http://www.noattacks.org/>



## Snacking and Tooth Decay

Did you know February is National Children's Dental Health month. This month promotes the benefits of good oral health to children, their caregivers, teachers, and many others.

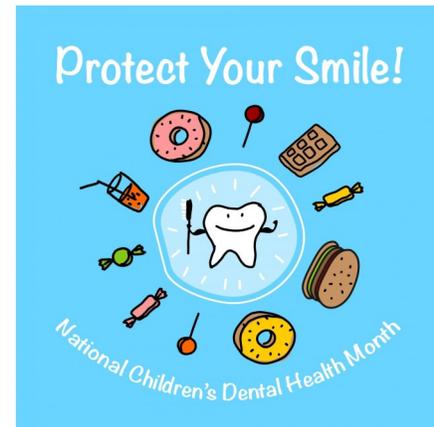
Americans are consuming food and drinks high in sugar and starches more often and in larger portions than ever before. In the U.S. individuals consume about 50 gallons of sugary beverages per year! A steady diet of sugary foods and drinks can ruin teeth, especially those who snack throughout the day.

When sugar is consumed over and over again in large amounts, the harmful effect on teeth can be dramatic. Sugar on teeth provides food for bacteria, which produce acid. The acid in turn can eat away the enamel on teeth.

Reduce your children's risk of tooth decay:

- Sugary foods and drinks should be consumed with meals. Saliva production increase during meals and helps neutralize acid production and rinse food particles from the mouth.
- Limit between-meal snacks. If kids crave a snack, offer a nutritious snack.
- If your kids chew gum, make it sugarless gum.
- Monitor beverage consumption. Children should make health beverage choices such as water and low-fat milk.
- Help your children develop good brushing and flossing habits.
- Schedule regular dental visits.

For more information, visit <https://www.ada.org>




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## June is National Migraine and Headache Awareness Month

Migraines affect 39 million people in the United States. Migraines are much more than a bad headache. A migraine is a neurological disease with extremely incapacitating neurological symptoms. A migraine attack usually lasts between 4 and 72 hours.

For more information visit, <https://migraineresearchfoundation.org/about-migraine/migraine-facts/>

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## 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](http://www.njmrc.nj.gov).

**A BIENNIAL  
NEWSLETTER FROM  
THE MORRIS  
COUNTY OFFICE OF  
HEALTH  
MANAGEMENT**

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  
State Police

Address

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

[www.morrishealth.org](http://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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