

PRINCETON

HEALTH MATTERS

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Red, Itchy, Watery Eyes? How to Overcome Seasonal Allergies

Hay Fever or Allergic Rhinitis known as Seasonal allergies is caused by the amount of tree pollen in the air early spring, grass pollen in the late spring and early summer and even mold. When a person is allergic to pollen or mold the body's immune system treats those particles as allergens (invaders). Then the body releases chemicals, one of them being Histamine, which enters the bloodstream to fight off those invaders and it is the release of those chemicals that cause symptoms.

Most Common Symptoms include:

- Sneezing
- Runny/ Stuffy Nose
- Red, puffy, watery and itchy eyes

Other symptoms include: Throat irritation, Coughing, Fatigue, headaches, loss of smell, congestion, breathing through the mouth or wheezing and even pain in the ear.

Seasonal allergies are typically self-diagnosable and self-treatable. Over-the-counter medication that can help to ease the symptoms include Oral Antihistamines, Decongestants, and Nasal Spray. Other treatment and management solutions include knowing your triggers, keeping windows and doors shut at home and while in your car, remove clothes, shower and wash your hair as soon as you get home, do not hang your laundry outside, let someone else mow the grass, wear sunglasses, check the dog, and wash your hands before touching your face.

As we know, allergies tend to flare when there is a lot of pollen in the air. Checking the pollen count and air quality on the weather channel or local TV or radio station is useful in preparing for the day.



According to the CDC, allergies are the 6th leading cause of chronic illness in the United States and more than 50 million Americans suffer from allergies each year.

Public Health Term of the Month:

Preparedness: It is a state of readiness and preparation.

According to HealthyPeople 2020, it improves one's ability to prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from any health incidents. The overarching goal of the National Health Security Strategy is to build community resilience and to strengthen and sustain health and emergency response system.

Emergency Preparedness is crucial to reducing the effects of an incident. One can be prepared by having enough foods especially nonperishable, medical supplies, and other emergency supplies to prepare for any situation.

The Princeton Health Department's goal is to educate and prepare the community with the necessary knowledge and tools to be prepared to make informed health decisions. PHD is an active participant of local, regional and statewide preparedness exercises to ensure readiness for public health related emergencies. For more information visit, <http://www.princetonnj.gov/health/public-health-preparedness.html>



Mosquitos and West Nile Virus

West Nile virus (WNV) infection can cause serious disease. WNV is established as a seasonal epidemic in North America that flares up in the summer and continues into the fall.

The easiest and best way to avoid WNV is to prevent mosquito bites. When outdoors, use repellents containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, some oil of lemon eucalyptus or paramenthane-diol and follow the directions on the package. Since many mosquitoes are most active from dusk to dawn, be sure to use insect repellent and wear long sleeves and pants at these times or consider staying indoors during these hours. Also, make sure you have good screens on your windows and doors to keep mosquitoes out and get rid of mosquito breeding sites by emptying standing water from flower pots, buckets and barrels. In addition to that, drilling holes in tire swings so water drains out and keeping children's wading pools empty and on their sides when they aren't being used can help minimize mosquito breeding sites as well. Changing the water in pet dishes and replacing the water in bird baths weekly is recommended.

The way WNV spreads is by infected mosquitoes. WNV is spread by the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes become infected when they feed on infected birds. Infected mosquitoes can then spread WNV to humans and other animals when they bite. In a very small number of cases, WNV also has been spread directly from an infected person through blood transfusions, organ transplants, breastfeeding and during pregnancy from mother to baby. However, WNV does not spread through touching. WNV is not spread through casual contact such as touching or kissing a person with the virus.

People typically develop symptoms between 3 and 14 days after they are bitten by the infected mosquito. People over 50 are at higher risk to get severe illness. People over the age of 50 are more likely to develop serious symptoms of WNV if they do get sick and should take special care to avoid mosquito bites. There is no specific treatment for WNV infection. In cases with milder symptoms, people experience symptoms such as fever and aches that pass on their own, although illness may last weeks to months. In more severe cases, people usually need to go to the hospital where they can receive supportive treatment including intravenous fluids, help with breathing, and nursing care. Milder WNV illness improves on its own, and people do not need to seek medical attention for this infection though they may choose to do so. If you develop symptoms of severe WNV illness, such as unusually severe headaches or confusion, seek medical attention immediately. Severe WNV illness usually requires hospitalization. Pregnant women and nursing mothers are encouraged to talk to their doctor if they develop symptoms that could be WNV.

Some of the things the Center of Disease Control (CDC) is working on are the following: coordinating a nation-wide electronic database where states share information about WNV, helping states develop and carry out improved mosquito prevention and control programs, developing better, faster tests to detect and diagnose WNV, creating new education tools and programs for the media, the public, and health professionals, and working with partners to develop vaccines.

Health Officer's Message:

Safe Travelling with Zika

Zika Virus is transmitted through the *Aedes* mosquito bites that could be found in tropical Africa, Southwest Asia, the Pacific Islands and now many areas in the United States. It is transmitted from a pregnant women to her fetus, through sex (even if the person doesn't have symptoms), through blood, saliva and other shared fluids.

According to the Center of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the best ways to prevent Zika is to use insect repellents. When searching for the best repellent, use the EPA-registered insect repellent website (<https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents/find-repellent-right-you>) to search what works best for you. Other ways to prevent Zika is to wear long sleeve shirts and long pants, staying in places that have air conditioning and/or window and door screens, and removing standing water from where you stay.

As you may know, Zika is linked to birth defects and women who are pregnant should refrain from travelling to areas with risk of Zika. Zika can cause a serious birth defect called microcephaly which is a sign of incomplete brain development. According to the CDC, "If you are pregnant and have a partner who lives in or has traveled to an area with risk of Zika, use condoms or do not have sex during your pregnancy. To be effective, condoms should be used from start to finish, every time during vaginal, anal, and oral sex." If a pregnant women must travel to an area with risk of Zika, be sure to talk to your healthcare provider first and strictly follow the steps to prevent mosquito bites and sexual transmission during your trip.

Returning travelers from an area with risk of Zika should continue to wear insect repellent for 3 weeks so they do not spread Zika to uninfected mosquitos and other people. Be sure to practice safe, sex, use condoms or abstain for at least 6 months. Many people who become infected with Zika Virus will not have symptoms or will only have mild symptoms. Visit your healthcare provider if you develop symptoms of Zika, only a blood or urine test can confirm a Zika infection.

Things to remember to bring when travelling: insect repellent, bed nets, condoms, long sleeves and long pants.

Update on Princeton's Health Department Accreditation Process

The Princeton Health Department has entered the inactive status phase which grants them with the opportunity to review and thoroughly respond to the feedback received from the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB).

This inactive status is scheduled to end on June 26, 2017.

After they will respond to the feedback by participating in the 2nd addition document submission phase where they only need to fulfill 26 out of the 100 standards and measures required.

Further, Princeton Health Department will be assigned a site visit date for an official accreditation audit by PHAB.

Stay tuned for more exciting Public Health Accreditation updates in the Summer 2017 edition!



Princeton Health Department:


Did you know?



RESIDENTIAL TRASH AND ORGANICS FAQs

Trash Collection

Central Jersey Waste & Recycling will collect and dispose of Princeton's residential trash and bulky items for 2015-2018.

- ✓ Residential trash must be placed curbside **BEFORE 6:00 am** on the day of collection or **AFTER 6:00 pm** the night prior to collection (off the road surface).
- ✓ Residents shall provide their own lidded containers for trash collection. You are allowed a maximum of four plastic or metal lidded containers (with or without wheels), which are 32 gallons or under. **DO NOT PUT TRASH IN PLASTIC BAGS OR RECYCLE BUCKETS.** 
- ✓ Empty containers shall be removed from the curb by 12:00 midnight after collection.
- ✓ There is a limit of two (2) large bulky items per week in addition to normal household trash. Examples of bulky items include: a mattress, a box spring, a small (2 seat) couch, a desk, a chair. Mattresses and box springs must be wrapped in plastic for disposal. Each bulky item must weigh no more than 50 lbs.
- ✓ Bulky materials shall be placed curbside (off the road surface and sidewalks) in an area no larger than 6' long x 3' wide, each bulky item must weigh no more than 50 lbs.

This collection DOES NOT INCLUDE:

- | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Recyclables | • Building materials | • Computer monitors |
| • Leaves, brush / yard debris, dirt | • Broken concrete, bricks/pavers | • Electronics & Televisions |
| • Hot Tubs, Spas & covers | • Ashes | • Swing Sets |
| • Construction debris | • Tires | • Automotive parts |
| • Appliances (washers, dryers, refrigerators, etc.) | • Propane Tanks | • Fences/Fencing |

For questions regarding disposal of common household items, please review pages 2, 3 & 4 of this newsletter.

HOLIDAYS

There will be no trash collection on New Year's Day, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. **If your trash collection falls on a listed Holiday it will be collected the next day.**

Regular collection occurs on all other holidays.

MISSED COLLECTION

AFTER 7 PM on the day of missed collection, please contact the Public Works Department at 609-688-2566 or jpellichero@princetonnj.gov and provide the following information:

- | | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| ✓ Date | ✓ Time left at Curb | ✓ Email Address |
| ✓ Name | ✓ Address | ✓ Telephone No. |
| ✓ # of Containers | | |

Please leave your missed containers at the curb for collection, unless notified otherwise by the Public Works staff.

Health Department Announcements and Upcoming Events

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Princeton WIC clinic operates on the 3rd Friday of every month and is located in the Community Room of the Princeton Municipal Building (Witherspoon Hall), 400 Witherspoon Street. WIC provides supplemental nutritious foods to pregnant, breastfeeding, and postpartum women, infants, and children up the age of five. For appointments and to see if you are eligible, please call (609) 498-7755.



Cornerstone *Community* Kitchen

On June 21 from 5-6:30 Cornerstone Kitchen will be having a Dog Bite Prevention Lesson at the United Methodist Church. At this event there will be Lyme disease and mosquito prevention material and a short emergency preparation survey will be conducted.

The Breast Cancer Health Fair will take place on June 24th from 9am-3pm. This event will be held at the D & R Greenway on 2 Preservation Place Princeton, NJ.



On June 29 from 9:30-3:00, PHD nurses will be present at the Princeton Farmers Market on 55 Witherspoon Street Princeton, NJ. Our nurses will be on site to answer health related questions, specifically on sun safety.

Public Health Matters... In Princeton

A publication of the Princeton Health Department, written in collaboration with Princeton employees and health department staff.

Sources: www.cdc.gov, www.healthypeople.gov

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