



# Health Matters

A newsletter from the Leeds, Grenville, and Lanark District Health Unit

Spring 2005

<http://www.healthunit.org>

## WHAT'S INSIDE

Reliable Nutrition Information	2
Is There a Baby In Your Future? Plan For It!	3
Save those Baby Teeth!	4
Keep Safe This Summer in Your Backyard Pool	5
Proper Fencing Can Make Your Backyard Pool Safer	5
Take a Break with your Kid	6
Could You Take the Challenge?	6
What You Should Know About PERSONAL SERVICES	7
Meningococcal Clinics 2005	8

## Free Meningitis C Vaccine Available

*Submitted by Margaret Hendricks, BScN, RN, Public Health Nurse*

Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit in partnership with the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care is pleased to announce that free Meningitis Type C Conjugate Vaccine is now available to all Grade 7 students and youth aged 15 to 19 years. The vaccine will be administered at schools and community clinics throughout 2005.

Meningococcal Type C Conjugate Vaccine protects against disease caused by a strain of Neisserian Meningitidis Bacteria. The meningococcal C-Conjugate Vaccine provides protection against the type that is called "Serogroup C". Serogroup C accounts for approximately 30% of cases of meningococcal disease in Canada.

Meningococcal disease is a very serious illness. The Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit is pleased to be offering the Meningococcal Type C Conjugate Vaccine in schools and community clinics. We encourage those in this target group to participate in this vaccine campaign. It is also important to note that many colleges and universities require students attending these institutions to be immunized for meningococcal disease. Enclosed is a schedule of community clinics that will begin in April 2005. (See back page)

Students who are unable to receive this vaccination at a community clinic can also by:

- Schedule an appointment with the Health Unit
- Make an appointment with their doctor
- Go to a Walk-in clinic

If you have any questions regarding the Meningitis C Vaccine Program please feel free to contact our Vaccine Preventable Disease Program at (613) 345-5685 or 1-800-660-5853

## Reliable Nutrition Information

*Submitted by Dianne Oickle, MSc, RD, Registered Dietitian/Public Health Nutritionist*

Messages about nutrition come from many sources, making people unsure about which advice to follow. Much of what we hear comes from the diet industry. In 2002, a U.S. Federal Trade Commission review reported that the diet industry in North America has an estimated annual revenue of \$35 to \$50 billion dollars. As well, 95% of weight loss diet product ads made claims that were either “almost certainly false” or “likely to be false.”

### When to Question a Health Message

Think about these points when trying to decide if the nutrition information you hear is correct.

#### “A promise for a quick fix or instant cure”

A claim is often made that all health problems will be fixed with one product or one diet. The truth is that there are no magic cures for disease, weight, or health. If the promise sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Healthy eating and healthy lifestyles over time will play a role in good health, not one product in the short term.

#### “Buy special products”

Sometimes advertising is disguised as information. Any diet or nutrition program that tells you to buy special products or supplements in order to achieve the end result is really just trying to make money. Most people can achieve a healthy weight and get all

the nutrients they need by eating a variety of food and having a lifestyle that includes daily physical activity.

#### “Recommendations based on stories of personal success”

Accurate nutrition information should be based on research done by qualified professionals. If success stories cannot be backed up by research, and if the company cannot or will not provide the research behind the health claims, then the “proof” could be “made-up” or false. As a consumer, you have the right to ask where the health advice comes from.

#### “Replace food with supplements”

Any weight loss program that excludes one of the food groups in Canada’s Food Guide to Healthy Eating is not healthy. Each one of the four food groups supplies vital nutrients needed for health. Foods not only provide vitamins and minerals, but also many other nutrients that enhance health, such as fibre. Pills simply cannot offer the “package” of nutrients that are available from foods in a way that allows the nutrients to work best in the body. (Note: People with food allergies and some medical conditions, for example, may need a supplement under medical supervision. Any woman who could become pregnant needs to take 0.4 mg of folic acid to prevent certain birth defects).

## Sources of Accurate Nutrition Information

The best source of current nutrition information is a Registered Dietitian. A Registered Dietitian has at least 4 years of university nutrition education plus one year of applied practical internship and/or a Master’s degree in nutrition. Dietitians are regulated by provincial colleges, associations, and registration boards, which monitor dietitians and protect consumers from unsafe and unethical practice. You can tell when a professional is a dietitian by the letters that appear after their name, Pdt, RDt, RDN, or DtP-RD. The title “nutritionist” is not protected by law in all provinces. This means that people with high or low levels of knowledge can use the title “nutritionist”. The best advice is to check credentials to be sure that you are getting information from a credible source.

### Check out these reliable Canadian websites for food and nutrition information.

- Dietitians of Canada [www.dietitians.ca/eatwell](http://www.dietitians.ca/eatwell)
- Canadian Health Network [www.canadian-health-network.ca](http://www.canadian-health-network.ca)
- Health Canada [www.hc-gc.ca](http://www.hc-gc.ca)
- Medline Plus for Consumers [www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus)

### Check out these websites to get to the bottom of nutrition claims.

- Quackwatch [www.quackwatch.com](http://www.quackwatch.com)
- Diet Fraud [www.dietfraud.com](http://www.dietfraud.com)

For more about reliable nutrition information, contact the Leeds, Grenville, and Lanark District Health Unit’s Health Action Line at 1-800-660-5853 (345-5685) and ask to speak with a Registered Dietitian.

## Is There a Baby In Your Future? Plan For It!

*Submitted by Cathy Millard PHN, BNSc Reproductive Health Committee Member*



Most people know that it is important to the health of your baby to have prenatal care during pregnancy. But this care often begins too late to prevent some risks to the baby's health.

Babies begin to develop before women know they are pregnant. This means that the time to prepare for pregnancy is before a woman gets pregnant. You plan for school, work, holidays and retirement. What about your baby?

There are things both men and women can do to improve the health of their future children. Begin planning for your pregnancy three months in advance. Since both a healthy sperm and egg are required for a healthy baby, there are things that both men and women can do.

### Consider the following:

- Am I ready to be a parent?
- Do I have support and get the help I need when I feel stressed or depressed?
- Do I exercise regularly?
- Do I eat healthy meals and snacks?
- Do I take a folic acid supplement of 0.4mg every day?
- Is my home smoke free?
- Do I consume less caffeine than would be in one cup of coffee?
- Do I avoid alcohol?
- Do I avoid recreational drugs?
- Have I discussed over the counter and prescription drugs with my doctor or pharmacist?
- Do I feel safe physically and emotionally?
- Have I thought about biological, physical and chemical hazards in my life?
- Do I know my family's health history?
- Have I been tested for Sexually Transmitted Infections?
- Are my immunizations up to date?



If you answered "no" to any of the above questions, there could be risks to your future child's health. We can give you information on how to improve your lifestyle habits now. Your children will thank you.

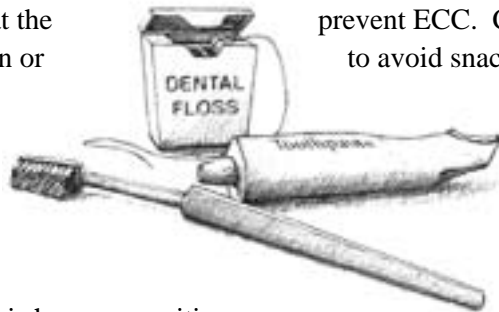
Call the Health Action Line at 1-800-660-5853  
or visit [www.healthbeforepregnancy.ca](http://www.healthbeforepregnancy.ca) or [www.healthunit.org](http://www.healthunit.org)

Adapted from Best Start Resource Centre

## Save those Baby Teeth!

*Submitted by Robin Cleary, RDH, Registered Dental Hygienist*

Tooth decay in infants and children can be a very serious and painful disease and if left untreated can result in infection and premature loss of the baby teeth. Early Childhood Caries (ECC) has been more widely known as Nursing Bottle Syndrome (NBS), Baby Bottle Tooth Decay or Nursing Caries is a disease that affects the teeth of young children. ECC can affect both breast and bottle fed babies and is most commonly found on the upper front teeth. We often hear parents say, "my child's teeth look like they are rotting". At first the disease may appear as brown spots on or between the teeth. If the disease becomes advanced it could affect the whole tooth and it may appear that the teeth are rotting. At this stage pain or infection could be present and if the child has not already seen a dentist an appointment must be made as soon as possible.



When speaking with parents of young children, a general concern is how are cavities caused, and can they be prevented? There are many factors that can contribute to this disease and prevention is the key!

Frequency and length of time that teeth are exposed to sugary liquids are important. These sugary liquids include breast or bottle milk, formula, fruit juices or any other sweetened beverages. When giving your child fruit juices diluting them with water helps to cut back on sugar intake. Allowing a child to fall asleep at the breast or with a bottle can be harmful to the teeth and as well could cause choking. The bottle is not best used as a means of comforting your child (daytime or night), because the continuous flow of a sugary liquid over the teeth is a main factor in causing ECC. When necessary, water is the best choice of liquid to use in a bottle when it is not feeding time.

When giving your child a pacifier or soother it is important not to dip them in honey, corn syrup or any other types of sweeteners. As well, introduction of a cup to an infant between 12-15 months of age is recommended, especially when fruit juices are given.

SNACKING is another area in which our choices will help to prevent decay. How much sugar is not as important as when and how often the sugar is being given. If you choose to give your child a sweet snack it is best given with a meal. Between meals, offering snacks with out high sugar content such as fresh fruits and vegetables or cheese and crackers will help to prevent ECC. Consistency is also important! It is best to avoid snacks that are sticky such as raisins, taffy, licorice and fruit chewies because they will stick to the teeth for a longer period of time, and this can increase the chance of tooth decay.

Keeping your child's mouth clean is a key factor in preventing tooth decay. Wiping the teeth and inside of your child's mouth with a damp gauze or using the corner of a clean damp washcloth will work effectively until you are comfortable using a toothbrush. Developing a daily routine of cleaning your child's teeth and gums, even before the teeth are present, will help to prevent decay and will also help to begin a positive oral care habit for your child.

If you feel that your child may have ECC you should make an appointment with your family dentist as soon as possible. You may also contact a Dental Hygienist at the Dental Services Department of the Health Unit, 1-800-660-5853, if you have any questions about this article or for any other dental inquiry.

## Keep Safe This Summer in Your Backyard Pool

*Submitted by Rebecca Kavanagh, RN, B.Sc.N,  
Public Health Nurse*

Swimming is a great way to keep cool and have fun, but the statistics tell us that it can also be dangerous. Nearly 500 Canadians die by drowning and many more are seen in emergency rooms each year (Canadian Red Cross, 2003). You can help keep yourself and your family safe when swimming by following these simple guidelines.

### **Stay Sober:**

- Swim and/or supervise children only when you are free from impairment. Drugs, alcohol, drowsiness and distractions can all affect ones alertness and ability to react to a situation.

### **Look First:**

- Always supervise children when they are swimming or playing near the water.
- Check your fence yearly for damages and wear.
- Keep safety equipment and a phone near the pool.
- Ensure the pool area is clear of clutter and that the pool cover is completely off before swimming.

### **Buckle Up:**

- Enclose the pool on all sides with a fence that is at least four feet high and has a self-closing and self-locking gate.

### **Get Trained:**

- Take lessons and know your swimming and lifesaving abilities and limitations.
- Learn CPR and First Aid and know how to use the lifesaving equipment.
- Learn about your municipality's by-law regarding pools and fencing.

### **Wear the Gear:**

- Ensure that weaker swimmers wear a Personal Flotation Device or Life Jacket while in or around water.
- Keep a phone handy for emergencies.
- Cover up, seek shade and wear sunscreen with UVA and UVB protection of SPF 15 or greater.

## Proper Fencing Can Make Your Backyard Pool Safer

*Submitted by Rebecca Kavanagh, RN, B.Sc.N,  
Public Health Nurse*

Having a backyard pool is fun for everyone, especially children. Tragically, these pools are also a common location for drownings, near drownings and other injuries. In fact, 38% of all toddler drownings occur in the home swimming pool. (Red Cross, National Drowning Report 2001 Edition).

The best way to prevent injuries and drownings from occurring is to never swim alone. Always ensure that children (or any weak swimmers) are supervised by an adult swimmer and have proper fencing to restrict access when the pool is not being used.

Any artificial body of water that can be used for swimming and wading such as hot tubs, inflatable, in ground, above ground and some fish ponds are all considered pools.

Safe Kids Canada recommends the following specifications for your fence.

- It should be four sided. Having your house act as one side is not suggested, especially if there is access to the pool via a patio door.
- The fence should be at least 1.2 metres (four feet) high.
- The gate must close and latch by itself (called self-closing, self-latching gates).

\*\*Each municipality has their own bylaws with consequences for not abiding by them. Please contact your municipality for more information.

If all home pools were equipped with self-closing and self-latching gates, nearly all toddler pool drownings and about one-third of all toddler drownings could be eliminated.

(Red Cross, National Drowning Report 2001 Edition).



**Getting more involved with your child will help you stay connected. Not only that, it will help your child make better decisions about all sorts of things, like eating well, avoiding alcohol and substance use and postponing sexual activity.**

1. Schedule time for you and your child, make an appointment and hold yourself to it.
2. Catch your child doing something right, offer a compliment, it will encourage positive behaviour and keep the lines of communication open.
3. Prove you are listening: ask questions.
4. Post a family calendar, it is a good way of keeping the family connected.
5. Create rules then enforce them, every kid needs boundaries and only rules that you enforce will matter.
6. Stay connected over family meals, eating together models healthy eating patterns.
7. Share your day, one way to help your children open up is to share a brief story about your day first, especially of you saw something funny.
8. Write your child a thank you note, to show you care and appreciate what they do. It doesn't have to be for anything big, it can be for setting the table, helping a friend or for saying something nice.
9. Ask him/her for advice, to show that you value their opinion.
10. Give your preteen family responsibilities, assign chores that help the whole family, by giving responsibilities you are saying that you trust their competence and help them to feel more 'adult' - the same benefit cigarettes, alcohol, substance and early sexuality falsely offer teens.

## Could You Take the Challenge?

*Submitted by Julie Bolton, BNSc, RN Public Health Nurse*

Television has become a large part of our lives. It can be educational and a source of entertainment however, it can also create problems when it takes the place of physical activity and/or social interaction. Research has shown that children over the age of two spend on average, 21 hours per week watching television (Statistic Canada, 2002). This startling statistic does not include the amount of time spent using the computer or playing video games. All of this sedentary activity in combination with unhealthy eating habits leads to an increase in the rate of obesity and puts them at a higher risk of chronic health concerns such as heart disease, diabetes and some types of cancer.

Children and youth are not the only segment of our population who are less physically active. Half of all adults in Ontario are considered to be inactive (Healthy Weights, Healthy Lives, 2004). Combine this with poor food choices and larger portion sizes adults who are inactive are at a higher risk for obesity and chronic disease.

To help combat these alarming statistics the Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit has been inviting schools to participate in the TV Turnoff Challenge for the past five years. This year we broadened the campaign to include schools, families and the community. The Challenge ran from April 4<sup>th</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup>. A total of 21 schools participated for a total of 3753 students. The Health Unit website ([www.healthunit.org](http://www.healthunit.org)) contained resources for the community and families that could be downloaded and used to help make the week fun while increasing their physical activity and healthy eating.

Taking small steps towards decreasing our screen time and increasing our physical activity and healthy eating habits will go a long way to improving our overall health. Congratulations to all of the students, teachers, families and community members who took the Challenge and made a move towards better health!

### Sources:

Healthy Weights, Healthy Lives. 2004 Chief Medical Officer of Health Report. [http://health.gov.on.ca/english/public/pub/ministry\\_reports/cmoh04\\_04.html](http://health.gov.on.ca/english/public/pub/ministry_reports/cmoh04_04.html) Accessed December 2004. Statistics Canada. Television Viewing 2002. They Daily. November 21 2003.



## What You Should Know About PERSONAL SERVICES

*Submitted by Piotr Oglaza, BSc (med), BAsC, CPHI(C)*

**This handout is not meant to address every issue, but is a guide to help you choose the right establishment for you. Make an informed decision before your procedure.**

### *Protect yourself.*

**When considering personal services such as:**

- Body Piercing
- Micropigmentation
- Tattooing
- Electrolysis
- Pedicures
- Aesthetics
- Ear Piercing
- Manicures
- Waxing

Your own awareness of the risks is your best protection against serious health risks.

Many procedures in Personal Service Settings have the potential to transmit blood borne diseases such as HIV, Hepatitis B and C if proper precautions are not taken.

### **For more information contact a Public Health Inspector**

458 Laurier Blvd  
Brockville, Ontario K6V 7A3  
(613) 345-5685  
FAX (613) 345-2879

52 Abbott Street N., Unit 2  
Smiths Falls, Ontario K7A 1W3  
(613) 283-2740  
FAX (613) 283-1679

*Ask for other available materials  
on personal services*



### **Some indicators that proper precautions are being taken:**

- The operator freely discusses the procedure and associated risks and is willing to answer all your questions.
- Operator provides written aftercare for invasive procedures.
- Establishment is visibly clean and cleaning occurs between clients.
- Personal service worker (PSW) washes hands often and in between clients.
- PSW uses gloves for invasive procedures.
- Instruments that directly contact clients are disposable **or** properly disinfected after contact.
- Surfaces such as chairs, tables, beds and counter tops are disinfected often and between clients.
- Customers with visible wounds, rashes, cuts and fungi are not treated.
- Clean and dirty/used equipment are stored separately.
- Skin is disinfected before procedure.
- Piercing guns are used only for ear lobe and pieces of gun that contact ear are disposable - look for a pre-loaded cartridge).
- Reusable instruments are disinfected between clients. Sponges, Emery Boards and Instruments that cannot be immersed in water, cannot be disinfected and should not be reused.
- Footbaths are cleaned and disinfected between clients.



**Your choice may affect you  
for the rest of your life!**

# Meningococcal Clinics 2005

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Time</b>
<b>April 25, 2005</b>	<b>Naismith Elementary School</b> 260 King Street Almonte, Ontario	<b>4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.</b>
<b>April 26, 2005</b>	<b>Carambeck Public School</b> 351 Bridge Street Carleton Place, Ontario	<b>4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.</b>
<b>April 27, 2005</b>	<b>Queen Elizabeth Elementary School</b> 80 Wilson Street Perth, Ontario	<b>4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.</b>
<b>April 28, 2005</b>	<b>Rideau District High School</b> 251 Main Street Elgin, Ontario	<b>3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.</b>
<b>May 2, 2005</b>	<b>Brockville Health Unit</b> 458 Laurier Blvd. Brockville, Ontario	<b>4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.</b>
<b>May 4, 2005</b>	<b>South Branch Public School</b> 2649 Concession Road Kemptville, Ontario	<b>4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.</b>
<b>May 16, 2005</b>	<b>Smiths Falls Health Unit</b> 52 Abbott Street Smiths Falls, Ontario	<b>4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.</b>
<b>May 24, 2005</b>	<b>Gananoque High School</b> 175 William Street South Gananoque, Ontario	<b>4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.</b>
<b>May 25, 2005</b>	<b>South Grenville District High School</b> 1000 Edward Street North Prescott, Ontario	<b>2:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.</b>

