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# Health Briefs

Information on a healthy workplace

Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit •

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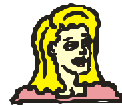
### IT IS NEVER TOO EARLY TO HAVE MY CHILD'S SPEECH CHECKED IS IT?

*Submitted by Marsha Houlahan, Speech Pathologist*



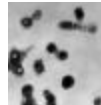
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*Submitted by Barb Guthrie, Public Health Nurse*



### HOW TO DRINK THE WATER AND ENJOY YOUR VACATION

*Submitted by Martin Moir, Public Health Inspector*



### HIV UPDATE

*Submitted by Carran Watson, Public Health Nurse*



### WANT TO BE SMOKE-FREE FOR 2002?

*Submitted by Danielle Shewfelt, Public Health Nurse*



### THE ABCS OF HEALTHY EATING

*Submitted by Heather Deegan, Public Health Nutritionist*

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## IT IS NEVER TOO EARLY TO HAVE MY CHILD'S SPEECH CHECKED IS IT?

*Submitted by Marsha Houlahan, Speech Pathologist*

This is a very common question asked by many parents. The answer is NO! It is never too early. All the research in speech and language development shows that children by 9 months of age understand words. By 13 months of age preschoolers are using their first words, and by 18 months of age should have at least 20 words that an adult can understand. Parents are always the first to be concerned. By calling the EXPRESS LINE (800) 503-8885 or 283-2742, you can get help.

Please call if the answer is yes to any of the following:

- If you are concerned about your child's speech/language/hearing development
- If your child's speech and language skills have not improved over the past six months
- If your child often repeats sounds and/or words (stuttering)
- If your child's voice sounds different to you
- If your child's play or social interaction seems inappropriate
- If your child has a diagnosis such as cleft lip/palate, hearing loss, PDD/Autism, developmental delay

### The **Express Line** of The Language Express

Preschool Speech-Language Services System of Lanark, Leeds & Grenville serves families with children birth to age 5. Children over 5 can seek assistance through their local school board.



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## PLANNING ON TANNING? GET THE FACTS ON TANNING LAMPS

*Submitted by Danielle Shewfelt, Public Health Nurse*

### MYTH #1- TANNING BEDS ARE A SAFE WAY TO TAN

FACT-Tanning beds are as dangerous, if not *more* dangerous than being exposed to the sun. Caution: Tanning beds may cause reactions to a number of medications.



### MYTH #2- A BASE TAN WILL GIVE YOU SOME PROTECTION FROM GETTING A SUNBURN

FACT-A "tan" is actually an indication that your skin has been damaged. Repeated and frequent UV radiation exposure causes your skin to wrinkle, sag, develop age spots and may lead to skin cancer.

### MYTH #3- TANNING LAMPS DON'T CAUSE SKIN CANCER

FACT- UVA radiation can be up to five times what you could be exposed to in the sunlight. You may also be exposed to UVB radiation. People tend not to wear sunscreen in tanning beds, which also increases the amount of damage. Therefore, tanning beds can cause more damage to the skin than the sun.

### **There is no such thing as a safe tan.**

For more information on preventing skin cancer contact:

- Canadian Cancer Society  
1-888-939-333  
[www.cancer.ca](http://www.cancer.ca)
- Canadian Dermatology Association  
1-800-267-3376  
[www.dermatology.ca](http://www.dermatology.ca)

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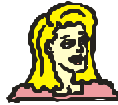
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## DEAR DORA

*Submitted by Erin Mclean, Public Health Nurse*

As a parent with very little time to surf the web, I'm looking for a shortcut. How do you find reliable information on raising healthy kids from the world wide web. Just like my in-laws, the web seems to have lots of advice, but not all of it is good advice. HELP!

Signed, *Not a Surfer*

### DEAR 'NOT A SURFER'

Good news, help is here. The Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit has recently updated their babies/children section of their web site. They recognized your need for accurate information and reliable sites to link too. They have concise information on feeding, growth and development, keeping kids healthy, keeping kids safe and a section for parents too! The pages on the site can help answer some common questions such as "When should I start my baby on solid foods?", "Where can I find out about recalls on car seats?", "What immunizations my child should receive?", and lots more!

Some of the national sites they have links to include the Canadian Pediatric Society, the Canadian Childcare Federation, and Transport Canada. Local links include The Language Express for any speech and communication concerns, and Children's Resources on Wheels, a Family Resource Program in Lanark County. Other Health Units in the province have great web sites too, so some of the links guide you to their resources.

If the answer to your questions can't be found on the Health Unit site or by following their links, you can either email your question in to the Health Unit for an answer, or call the Health Unit's Health Action Line, Monday to Friday, 8:30 to 4:30 at 1-800-660-5853 or call 613-345-5685.

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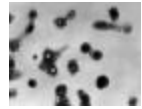
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## LET'S NOT BE RASH ABOUT CHICKENPOX!

Submitted by Barb Guthrie, Public Health Nurse



	T	F
1 Adults cannot get chickenpox. It is a disease of childhood.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 The same virus that causes chickenpox causes shingles.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 You can only get chickenpox once.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 A mother who has already had chickenpox before pregnancy can pass on protection against chickenpox to her baby during pregnancy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 If a woman gets chickenpox during her pregnancy she can pass it on to her unborn child.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 There is no risk to the baby if a mother gets chickenpox during pregnancy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 Chickenpox can be very severe, even life threatening to newborns.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 Breast milk contains protective factors against chickenpox.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9 Chickenpox can be prevented.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 Pregnant women and mothers of new babies, who are in contact with someone with chickenpox, should contact their health care provider as soon as possible for individual management of their situation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11 People who have never had chickenpox and whose jobs involve contact	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Answers:**

(1) F. (2) T. (3) T. (4) T – The protection from the mother lasts about 6 months. Furthermore, the breast milk, in addition to other protective factors, will contain antibodies against chickenpox. (5) T. (6) F. The baby can be affected. Risk to the baby is greatest early or very late in pregnancy (around the time of delivery).

(7) T. (8) T. (9) T – There is now a vaccine against chickenpox.

(10) T – Chickenpox in pregnant women and the newborn is a complicated issue that needs knowledgeable management. (11) T. This is a way we can protect ourselves and others.

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## HOW TO DRINK THE WATER AND ENJOY YOUR VACATION

*Submitted by Martin Moir, Public Health Inspector*

Every year, thousands of vacationers suffer illness caused by contaminated drinking water. As many campers and wilderness travelers in Canada have discovered, this is not only a Third World problem. While our mothers' advice to not drink the water has never been more timely, modern portable water purifiers can virtually eliminate this hazard.

No one should consume untreated surface water from any source. No matter how remote, surface water is open to contamination from animals and other travelers. While tap water is generally safe in developed countries one should be cautious in most other parts of the world.

In response, outdoor equipment manufacturers market a bewildering variety of portable treatment devices intended to provide a traveler with safe drinking water. The intent of this article is to assist you in choosing the right unit for your trip.

Almost all current portable water purifiers are filters. These can be made of a variety of materials each with their individual advantages. Durability, ease of use, cleanability, capacity and replacement cost are important considerations that will affect the use of the product. However, the safety of the water produced relies mainly on the pore size of the filter.

Filter pore size must be small enough to trap bacteria, parasites and cysts and prevent them from passing through the filter. A maximum pore size of 0.2 microns is required for this basic level of protection. A filter of this type will be adequate for wilderness travel in North America and to filter municipal tap water in countries where sanitation and consistent water treatment are unreliable. Unfortunately this type of filter will not remove viruses which are a major problem in Third World travel and in heavily developed tourist areas in the developing world.

Generally, virus removal systems are accessories to regular filter purifiers. They usually involve an iodine impregnated resin with a carbon filter to remove objectionable taste. Some filters claim to have a small enough pore size to remove viruses by filtration alone which is an advantage. Devices that rely on iodine as a disinfectant should only be used in conjunction with a 0.2 micron filter. Iodine alone is not effective in killing Giardia or Cryptosporidium. Whatever system you choose should meet the virus removal standard of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

As in all technologies, follow the manufacturer's instructions, carry a spare filter and practice with the unit at home before you leave. That way, you can drink the water and have a healthy adventure.

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## HIV UPDATE

*Submitted by Carran Watson, Public Health Nurse*

At the 9<sup>th</sup> annual Opening Doors Conference in Gananoque last April, Dr. Peter Ford gave the keynote address entitled "Update on Treatment and Social Issues Related to HIV".



### The following points were made:

- Since '95/'96, the number of AIDS diagnoses has decreased, as has the number of AIDS deaths. This is the result of the use of protease inhibitors to treat HIV. The number of new HIV positive cases has NOT decreased.
- Ten years after infection, 50% of HIV positive people are still well.
- Question arose regarding when to start treatment. Answer: "When the patient is ready". If the CD4 count is less than 350 and the viral load is greater than 30,000, the person will more likely be motivated to take medication for the rest of his/her life. This person would deteriorate quickly without treatment.
- The new medication schedules make it easier for people to incorporate the treatment into their lives (no more rigid scheduling).
- The HIV may mutate if drugs are missed or not enough drug is taken. Thus, it is important that the person want to be on treatment.
- Protease inhibitors are very effective in reducing viral load in most people (some carry a drug resistant virus). They reach the virus in cells that divide but don't reach the virus in cells that don't divide, providing a hidden reservoir of disease in these non-dividing cells.
- The ability to pass on the virus is contingent on the amount of virus in the body: the higher the viral load (especially just after infection and as death approaches) the greater the risk.
- There is a 25% chance that an HIV positive mother will pass the virus on to her baby. This drops to 8% if the mother is being treated.
- If co-infected with Hep C and HIV, the Hep C would be treated in the first 12 months, then treat HIV (unless HIV viral load is extremely high). To treat both at the same time would be too much to tolerate.

Most treatment failures are due to the medication not being taken properly.

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## WANT TO BE SMOKE-FREE FOR 2002?

*Submitted by Danielle Shewfelt, Public Health Nurse*



Planning a New Year's resolution this year? Want to break free of your tobacco addiction? If so, try doing a little planning first. The Canadian Cancer Society has some great resources out there to show you how. The "One Step At A Time" series helps those people who don't want to quit look at how tobacco is affecting them and the people around them. The second book helps smokers who want to quit get prepared, set a quit date and quit.

One big problem smokers have when they attempt to quit is GUILT. If they do slip up and have a cigarette they think they have failed. That is not the case. Every time someone quits they are just one step closer to being smoke-free for good. Relapse is normal, so "forget the guilt" and just keep trying! It takes smokers an average of seven times before they quit for good.

For more information, a booklet on "How To Quit", or support, and information on how to support someone who is trying to quit, call the Canadian Cancer Society at (1-877-513-5333).

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## THE ABCS OF HEALTHY EATING

*Submitted by Heather Deegan, Public Health Nutritionist*

March is National Nutrition Month and to highlight the importance of nutrition in your healthy lifestyle, Dietitians across Canada would like to help you learn the ABCs of Healthy Eating.

### THE BASICS

Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating will help you select foods that support your healthy lifestyle. It provides a reference to help you choose the types and amounts of foods that you need to eat each day to get vitamins, minerals and other nutrients so you can achieve and maintain good health.

### 3 KEY PRINCIPLES

Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating is founded on three key principles:

#### BALANCE

Your food intake should be balanced with your activity level, age and gender. Eating the right *amount* of food is as important as the *types* of foods you choose. Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating gives a range of the number of servings that are needed from each food group. The Food Guide also shows what a serving size looks like. Eating the proper amount of food, in combination with being physically active every day, will help you achieve and maintain a healthy weight.

#### VARIETY

Eating a wide variety of foods from each of the four food groups as well as eating a variety of foods within each food group will help you get all the nutrients you need each day to support health. Variety in your eating is essential, not only to keep your eating interesting, but also to supply the fifty-or-so nutrients that your body needs to function each day.

#### MODERATION

The principle of moderation indicates that there is room for all types of foods in your pattern of eating. There are many foods that do not fit in the four food groups, but are still important. Foods like chocolate, candy, jam and butter contribute flavour and pleasure to eating and can be part of your healthy eating.

As you can see, Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating is a useful tool to assist with your food selection. By using the Food Guide and the three principles listed above, healthy eating is within your reach. Watch your local newspaper for more information on the ABCs of Healthy Eating throughout Nutrition Month.

If you would like a copy of Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating, contact your Occupational Health Nurse. If you would like more information on nutrition and healthy eating, contact your Community Dietitians at the Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit.



**YOU KNOW YOUR  
ABCs...BUT DO  
YOU KNOW THE  
ABC'S OF  
HEALTHY  
EATING??**