

## Health Unit Offices

Almonte  
79 Spring Street  
Unit #3, Compartment #13  
Almonte, Ontario  
K0A 1A0  
(613) 256-1203

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

Kemptville  
2685 Concession Rd.  
Kemptville, Ontario  
K0G 1J0  
(613) 258-5941

Smiths Falls  
52 Abbott Street North  
Unit 2  
Smiths Falls, Ontario  
K7A 1W3  
(613) 283-2740

Gananoque  
839 Stone St. N.  
Unit #3, North Gate Plaza  
Gananoque, Ontario  
K7G 1Z7  
(613) 382-4231

Health Action Line  
1-800-660-5853

Website:  
[www.healthunit.org](http://www.healthunit.org)



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# Health Briefs

## Information for a healthy workplace

Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit - Spring 2003

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*Submitted by Lainie Taylor, Certified Dental Assistant*



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*Submitted by Erin McLean, Public Health Nurse*



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*Submitted by Louise Mes, Public Health Nurse*



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*Submitted by Heather Deegan, MSc, RD, Registered Dietitian/  
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*Submitted by Tawnya Boileau, Public Health Nurse*



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## New Dental Health Awareness Campaign Launched - "2 for 2 is what you do"

*Submitted by Lainie Taylor, Certified Dental Assistant*

The Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit participated in the province wide launch of a new Dental Health Awareness Campaign "2 for 2 is what you do" on April 2nd, 2003.



This campaign is being promoted by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care and the Ontario Association of Public Health Dentistry.

The message is simple: **brush your teeth twice a day for at least two minutes each time.**

Several activities took place during Dental Health month in April to promote the message. These included a media campaign, mall display and a visit to selected schools.

On April 2nd, 2003 grade 2 students in selected schools in the tri county area were visited by dental hygienists and dental assistants from the Health Unit. These students participated in a fun and exciting lesson to promote the toothbrushing message. Students also received hand-outs to take home to reinforce this message.

In addition, the Health Unit is urging adults to practice regular brushing and flossing routines and encourage good eating habits. Adults can play an important role in making dental care part of their child's everyday routine. Parents should set a positive example in their home, remembering that children often model their parent's behavior.

For more information on this program or other dental information please contact your local health unit office...

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## What Moves You?

*Submitted by Danielle Shewfelt, Public Health Nurse*

Are you tired of walking alone? Need motivation to walk on a regular basis? Enjoy socializing with family and friends? If you answered 'yes' to those questions then you should consider starting a walking club. All you need is a place to walk, people to walk with, and some tips on how to get started!

### Step 1: Make a Flyer

Include information about your walking club and outline the many benefits of walking. Send your flyer to individuals you think might be interested in joining, or post it in your workplace. List a contact number on the flyer so people can get in touch with you.

### Step 2: Set Up a Contact List

Ask people to record their name and phone number as well as their preferred time(s) to walk on a contact list.

### Step 3: Make Some Decisions

Decide when and where you are going to walk. Decide on a club name, pick a start date and then get moving!

### Step 4: Bring a Friend

Walking is fun and walking clubs are a great way to meet new people. Don't get discouraged if your club starts slowly at first.

If you would like more information, please contact your local health unit office. We can help you get your walking club started by offering advice, support and physical activity resources.

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## Dear Dora

*Submitted by Erin McLean, Public Health Nurse*

My wife is after me to reduce the clutter at our house so I am doing spring-cleaning in the garage. I hate to send things to the landfill site and would prefer to have a garage sale or give away whatever I can. Do you have any idea where I can send some of our old baby furniture and toys? We seem to have collected quite a bit with three kids.

*Signed,  
Trapped in the garage*

### Dear Trapped

I love to hear that people are willing to share with others and not fill up landfill sites. I also love to get a bargain at a garage sale. However, baby equipment makes me hesitate. Things like car seats, cribs, walkers, strollers, gates and playpens fall under the Hazardous Products Act, which states it is illegal to sell unsafe children's equipment.

The next obvious question you would have is 'how do you know if something is still safe to use?' The only way that you can check out used children's equipment is if you know:

- who made the equipment,
- when it was made, and
- if it has a model name or number.

Then you need to contact the manufacturer to see if there have been any recalls or consumer notices about the product. If someone else gave you the item, you probably don't know if the item has been misused or if it could be missing parts.

You may now wonder what you have gotten yourself into. If this seems like a lot of effort, you have another choice. This year, for Safe Kids Week, June 1-7, 2003 you can safely dispose of used children's equipment at a variety of locations. The goal is to get unsafe children's equipment out of circulation, in order to prevent babies and children from being injured. You may even get a little something back as an incentive. Watch the newspaper, as June gets closer.

We all want to help reduce waste by reusing items, but when it comes to the safety of our children, it is better to dispose of older children's equipment.

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## It Takes Two To Make a Healthy Baby!

*Submitted by Louise Mes, Public Health Nurse*

When Bob and Judy decided it was time to try “to get pregnant”, they carefully looked at Judy’s health and her lifestyle to make sure their baby would develop normally.

The couple was aware that alcohol, tobacco and other drugs could harm a baby so Judy stayed away from them. She also took a Folic Acid Supplement to reduce the risk of her baby having spina bifida or other neural tube defects. She was careful to follow Canada’s Food guide to Healthy Eating and to have a regular exercise routine.

Bob and Judy thought they had done everything to get ready.

They forgot that Bob is the other half of the reproductive team. There are lifestyle habits that could affect Bob’s ability to reproduce and to have a normal healthy baby.

### Here are some things Bob needs to Know:

- Alcohol can change the quality of sperm
- Smoker’s sperm has a harder time getting into the woman’s egg to create pregnancy; the sperm can’t swim as fast to reach the “ready” eggs. Smoking has also been shown to make it harder for a man to get an erection.
- If your body is poorly fed, so are your sperm  
Healthy Eating = Healthy Sperm
- Cocaine, heroin and high doses of marijuana can kill sexual interest and decrease sexual performances and sperm count.
- Toxins or poisons in your environment can affect sperm. (e.g. chemicals, solvents, gases, metals)
- Some medication and diseases (cancer, mumps, diabetes, Hep B, STD’s and HIV) may cause infertility or reduced fertility.
- Heat and excessive exercise can increase scrotal temperature and decrease sperm quantity.
- He can support his partner by controlling his own alcohol, tobacco and drug use and by changing his nutritional habits.
- He can make a difference by learning about pregnancy and by being patient and supportive.

**Both men and women need to prepare actively for pregnancy.**

 Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District  
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*Information Adapted from: Preconception and Health (Research and Strategies), Best Start: Ontario’s Maternal, Newborn and Early Child Development Resource Centre 2001*

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## Meal Time is Family Time

*Submitted by Heather Deegan, MSc, RD, Registered Dietitian  
/Public Health Nutritionist*

The daily rush of different family schedules can interfere with meals, especially supper. This can have a negative impact on the eating habits of all family members. Do you want your family to eat together more often, but find it hard to make this happen? Read on for some solutions to family mealtime challenges.

### What are your family mealtime challenges?

***“We often get take-out when there are not enough groceries in the house to pull a meal together.”***

#### **Some solutions:**

- Plan a few meals for the week *before* going to the grocery store and add needed ingredients to the grocery list.
- Double the recipe so there are leftovers for the next day’s lunch or supper meal.
- Stock cupboards with some basic foods to use in a pinch. For example, pasta, canned soup and canned tuna for a tuna noodle casserole with some canned corn on the side.

***“My children are too picky. They won’t eat anything I make, except boxed macaroni & cheese.”***

#### **Some solutions:**

- There is no need to be a “short order cook”. Plan healthy meals and include at least one food that you know your children will eat. Let them select the foods (and amount of food) they want.
- Keep trying to introduce new foods, and re-introduce foods that children have rejected in the past. Sometimes children need time to “warm-up” to a new food.
- Avoid mealtime struggles by making the foods you know your children love healthier. For example, add frozen vegetables to macaroni & cheese (time saver: add them while the pasta is boiling, during the last few minutes of cooking time).

***“My family doesn’t have the time or interest in eating together.”***

#### **Some solutions:**

- Schedule activities so time is available for a family meal.
- Be flexible with mealtimes to accommodate different family schedules.
- Involve family members in meal preparation and clean-up. Children not only learn skills by washing, peeling and mixing foods, they are more likely to eat foods they have helped prepare.
- Keep family members interested by taking turns choosing meals and trying new recipes.
- Eat at the dinner table, turn off the TV and focus on family discussion.

If you would like more ideas for making time to eat together with your family, please call the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit’s Health Action Line at 1-800-660-5853 (or 345-5685) and ask to speak with a Registered Dietitian. Also, check the website at [www.healthunit.org/nutrition](http://www.healthunit.org/nutrition) for more nutrition information and web links.

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## Safe fun in the sun!

*Submitted by Tawnya Boileau, public health nurse*

After a long cold winter of being cooped up indoors, many of us are anxious to peel off some layers and enjoy the outdoors. Before rushing out, remember to protect your skin! After all, your skin is the largest organ of your body.

### Did you know? :

- The number of cases of skin cancer in Canada has increased by more than 60% over the past 10 years
- In Leeds Grenville and Lanark, the number of cases of skin cancer has increased steadily over the past 30 years
- By simply protecting your skin, almost all skin cancers can be prevented

With this in mind, I'm sure you would agree that sun safety is a **M-U-S-T!**

Here are some tips:

### **M** Minimize sun exposure

- Especially between 11am and 4pm, when the sun's UV rays are the strongest
- Remember even on cloudy days, 80% of the sun's rays can still reach us

### **U** UV index- know your risk

- UV index measures the strength of the sun's UV rays. The higher the UV index number, the stronger the sun.
- Low (0-3.9) – 1 hour or longer to burn
- Caution (4.0-6.9) – 30 minutes to burn
- High Caution (7.0-8.9) – 20 minutes to burn
- Extreme Caution (9.0 and up) – 15 minutes to burn

### **S** Seek Shade/ cover up

- Umbrellas, tents, canopies and trees provide shade
- Wear tightly woven, loose fitting, cotton clothing and wide brimmed hats (brim at least 7.5 cm)

### **Sunglasses**

- Protect your eyes with UVA and UVB treated lenses

### **Sunscreen**

- Use a sunscreen that protects against both UVA and UVB rays
- Keep children under 1 year out of the sun and begin using sunscreen at 6 months (SPF 30 or greater)
- Adults should use a sunscreen with a SPF of 15 or greater
- Apply 15-30 minutes before going out in the sun to allow skin penetration. Reapply every 2 hours (apply more often if swimming or sweating)

### **T** Tell a health professional

- Examine your moles and freckles every month and report changes such as: any new growth, moles or discoloration that appears suddenly or begins to change, or a sore that does not heal.

### Avoid **Tanning** beds

- UVA rays can be 5 times higher than from the sun
- **No tan is a safe tan!**

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## Chlamydia

*Submitted by Sara Craig, Public Health Nurse*

Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI's) are spread during sexual relations, usually intercourse but also include touching, oral and anal sex, and are relatively common in society today. It is difficult to tell how many people have chlamydia, due to the fear and embarrassment around STI's. Unfortunately, anyone who has had sex could have an STI, like chlamydia. Risk increases with multiple partners and with unprotected sex. Being in a monogamous relationship doesn't protect you; your partner may have unknowingly brought an asymptomatic infection (a disease without signs) to the relationship.

Chlamydia is caused by bacteria. In men it may cause watery or cloudy discharge from the penis and may make it hurt while you pee. Many people don't have signs, making routine STI testing important. In women, peeing may hurt and there may be a discharge from the vagina.

The infection can lead to PID (pelvic inflammatory disease) in women. PID infects the uterus and fallopian tubes. Symptoms may include abdominal pain and can lead to infertility and increased chances of a tubal pregnancy. Moms can pass it to their babies at birth. Men may develop an infection in the epididymis, the coiled up sperm tube on the back of the testicle. If the infection becomes generalized, people can have problems with their appendix, heart and liver.

Tests can be done to check for chlamydia. To test males, a urine test can be done or a sample taken from swab inserted into the penis. Women need the cervix swabbed, in a test like a pap smear. Chlamydia is reportable to the Health Unit. The Health Unit's role is to educate, test, treat and contact partners who may have contracted the infection in the last three months prior to diagnosis. The Health Unit can talk to prior partners confidentially if necessary.

The treatment is simple, antibiotics. The antibiotics can be given in a single dose, free of charge, at the Health Unit. Sexual Health Clinics offer CONFIDENTIAL testing for sexually transmitted infections and some other services such as, pregnancy tests, pap smears, birth control, pregnancy counseling and health education. Most of our services are free or low cost. Please contact the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark Health Unit for more information or clinic times and locations, 1-800-660-5853.

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## Mosquito Proofing Your Home

*Submitted by Kim McCann, Public Health Inspector*

### *Helpful hints for around your home*

Here are some things you can do around your house to prevent mosquitos from breeding:

*Fight the Bite  
— Protect Yourself from  
West Nile Virus*



#### In standing water

- Don't allow any outside water to stand for more than four days.
- Cover rainwater barrels with mesh or screen.
- Drill holes in the bottom on any unused containers so water can't collect. Remove or drain any standing water from birdbaths, discarded tires, flowerpots, wheelbarrows, barrels, tin cans that are left outdoors.

#### Swimming or wading pools

- Immediately remove any water that collects on pool covers.
- Make sure the pool's pump is circulating water properly.
- Turn over wading pools when not in use.

#### In your eaves and drains

- Clear leaves and twigs from eaves troughs, storm and roof gutters throughout the summer.
- Make sure that drainage ditches are not clogged.
- Check flat roofs frequently for any standing water.

#### Around your yard and lawn

- Immediately throw away lawn cuttings, raked leaves and other decaying items such as apples or berries that fall from trees. Place them in sealed garbage bags.
- Fill in any low depression areas in lawns.
- Remove areas such as dense shrubbery where mosquitos breed and rest.
- Let your neighbours know about potential mosquito breeding grounds on their property.

#### Try to keep mosquitos out of the house

- Make certain that door and window screens fit tightly and do not have holes.
- If there are no screens, keep doors and windows closed from early evening to dawn.