

Smart Living

for a healthy workplace

Vol.1, N° 1 • April 2009



Do you work in a healthy workplace? What is a healthy workplace?

A healthy workplace is a workplace in which employers and employees collaboratively:

- work towards workplace goals.
- communicate workplace objectives, goals, and concerns effectively.
- engage in healthy workplace planning.
- respect and support one another.
- are recognized and rewarded appropriately.
- develop policies and procedures to ensure a safe, respectful, and healthy workplace.

For further information on how to make your workplace a healthy workplace, please contact Lois Dewey, Public Health Nurse at 1-613-283-2740.

From the Editor:

Welcome to *Smart Living*, our new Healthy Workplace Newsletter!

Smart Living was developed in response to the evaluation and recommendations from four focus groups of our previous workplace newsletter, Health Briefs.

You spoke and we listened!

- A new name: Smart Living - enjoying a healthy life at work, at home, and at play.
- A new look: verdant green and yellow.
- A new format: concise articles linked to more detailed information and resources.
- Improved content: timely topics, male and female health issues, parenting, balanced lifestyle, the sandwich generation, current social issues at work, home, or community, as well as a new Guest Column.
- Distribution as per your request: hardcopy, email or both.

Our aim is to provide you with a newsletter that is both informative and useful.

If you have any suggestions for future articles, or if you have a great website you would like to share with your colleagues, please contact the Editor, Ginny Ferguson RN, BScN, Public Health Nurse at 1-613-258-5941 Extension 5226, or email: ginny.ferguson@healthunit.org

**SUBSCRIBE
for FREE**

If you would like to receive the *Smart Living* workplace newsletter either in hard copy or by email, please contact Lynda Earl at 1-613- 345- 5685 ext 2215 or email: lynda.earl@healthunit.org



Colorectal cancer – reduce your risk!

Colorectal cancer is cancer of the colon and/or rectum, and develops in the large intestine.

Anyone can develop colorectal cancer, but the major risk factors are being 50 years of age and older, having a personal history of colorectal cancer, or having a family history of colorectal cancer.¹

Colorectal cancer is 90% curable when detected early.

There may be no symptoms or warning signs. That's why having a regular screening test for colorectal cancer is so important! It is recommended that persons 50 years and older are screened every two years. Persons at higher risk may need to be screened at an earlier age and more often.²

In Ontario, the two most common ways of screening for colorectal cancer include:

- **Fecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT):** a free test, done at home, that checks for blood in the stool.
- **Colonoscopy:** a test, done by a physician at the hospital, that is recommended for people with a personal or family history of the disease, and persons who have a positive FOBT result.

Speak with your health care provider about the screening method that is best for you.

For more information, check out the Ontario Ministry of Long-Term Care's website: <http://www.coloncancercheck.ca/preventionandscreening.html>

¹ Canadian Cancer Society. "Prevention Series: Colorectal Cancer - How to Reduce Your Risk." (2008).

² Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. "Colon Cancer Check." <http://www.coloncancercheck.ca/preventionandscreening.html> (February 2009).



Get Active. Eat Well ... on a budget!

Healthy eating and physical activity can be accessible and affordable. The Health Unit has free resources on healthy eating on a budget, as well as information on being physically active with your family, and where you can find free/low cost activity opportunities. Below are some websites with information on how healthy eating and physical activity can be easy and affordable.

Health Unit:

- www.healthunit.org/nutrition provides information on healthy eating, budgeting for food, cutting the cost of cooking, stretching your food dollar, and nutrition across the lifespan.
- www.healthunit.org/physact provides information on physical activity and free/low cost programs in your community.



EatRight Ontario:

Questions on healthy eating? Call 1-877-510-5102 to speak to a Registered Dietitian (for free!) from 9 am to 5 pm ET Monday to Friday, with evening hours Tuesday and Thursday to 9 pm ET.

EatRight Ontario also has a website with information on healthy eating for all ages and stages of life www.Ontario.ca/eatright

Catch-Up Vaccinations offered to Young Adults at risk for contagious Mumps

Young adults, who may be at risk of developing mumps, are being offered a chance to be protected in a Catch-Up Program organized by the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit. **College and university students are particularly at risk** because they may not have received a second dose of mumps vaccine required for full protection and they live and socialize in close proximity.

The Ontario government and the province's public health units are encouraging young adults (17 – 25 years of age) to receive their measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) vaccine. The move comes in response to mumps outbreaks in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Alberta, and British Columbia.

Most people born between 1970 and 1991 received only a single dose of the combined MMR vaccine and are at risk for mumps. People born in 1992 or after should have received two doses of the MMR vaccine. People born before 1970 are assumed to be immune to mumps through natural infection. To be fully protected from contracting mumps, two doses of the MMR vaccine are required.

The vaccination is available to all 17-25 year olds, either from their family doctors or all Health Unit immunization clinics.

For more information on the MMR Catch-Up Program or on Mumps, please visit: www.healthunit.org

Distracted at the Wheel?

Research shows that distracted driving causes eight (8) out of ten (10) vehicle collisions.¹

So just what is considered distracted driving? Distracted driving occurs when the driver is performing another task while driving such as:

- using a cell phone.
- reading a map.
- eating or drinking.
- tending to children or pets.
- adjusting music or climate control.
- feeling tired or daydreaming.
- fixing their hair or putting on make-up.
- reaching for something in the vehicle.

Many drivers feel they can multitask while behind the wheel and treat driving as a secondary activity. However, driving in itself is one of the most demanding tasks we do.

According to the Canadian Automobile Association, driving involves both the driver's physical and cognitive (mental) attention 100% of the time.²



Safe and Attentive Driving Tips include:

- Always keep your eyes on the road and your hands on the wheel.
- Ensure all children are properly buckled up.
- Review navigational directions before you start.
- Use a hands-free device with your cell phone, and keep conversations short.³

For more tips and information, please contact:
www.safety-council.org/info/traffic/distract1.html
www.caa.ca/driventodistraction/how/index.html

¹ Canadian Automobile Association. "Driven to Distraction." www.caa.ca/driventodistraction/how/index/html (20 February 2009).

² Ibid

³ Canada's Safety Council. "Eyes on the road, hands on the wheel." <http://safety-council.org/info/traffic/distract.html> (20 February 2009).

Equipment for a New Baby:

You can save money if you buy what you really 'need'.

The costs of planning for a baby can seem overwhelming. How can you keep your budget intact? Make a list of what you really 'need'. Ask for what you really 'want' as shower or baby gifts.

If you have access to a washer and dryer, you can buy less clothing. Save money by buying cloth diapers or buy disposable diapers in bulk using coupons. Buying clothing in at least 3-6 months sizes, using hand-me-downs, and buying from consignment stores or yard sales can save you money. Make sure clothing does not have drawstrings.

Breastfeeding for as long as possible reduces costs. A breast pump is not necessary. If you are not breastfeeding, use glass bottles that can be re-used for the next baby.

For baby items, start out with essentials: a car seat and a crib. Wait before buying other items. Make sure new models, second-hand or borrowed items comply with current Canadian Safety Standards.

To buy or borrow second hand equipment safely, visit Health Canada at:
www.healthcanada.gc.ca/cps

For information on buying or selling second hand equipment, visit our website at:
www.healthunit.org/children/kidssafe/furnitureequip.htm

Safe Barbecuing

Follow these tips this barbecue season to ensure the food you serve is safe:

1. Clean

- Wash hands after handling raw meats, and before eating.
- Use clean dishes and utensils.

2. Chill

- Keep hazardous foods cold (4°C or below) until ready to serve or cook to prevent harmful bacteria from multiplying. Marinate meats in the refrigerator.
- If using coolers, stock with ice packs.
- Keep drinks in a separate cooler - this one is likely to be opened and closed more often.
- Refrigerate leftovers within one hour.

3. Cook

- Undercooked meats can cause foodborne illness. Use a probe thermometer to check cooking temperatures.
- Cook ground chicken/chicken pieces and meat mixtures to 74°C (165°F), whole poultry to 82°C (180°F), ground meats and pork to 71°C (160°F), and fish and seafood to 70°C (158°F). Beef/veal steaks and roasts can be cooked to your preferred doneness provided the outside surface has been cooked.

4. Separate

- Be careful not to contaminate ready-to-eat foods with raw foods.
- Never use the same plate or utensils for raw and cooked food as meat juices contain harmful bacteria.



For more BBQing tips, please visit this website:

<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/fssa/concen/tipcon/barbece.shtml>

Sun Safety for Outdoor Workers

Benefits of a Sun Safety Program

Prevention behaviours will lessen the risk of developing skin cancer and improve the rate of early detection. This will result in a decrease in the need for surgery or other treatments.

For the individual worker, benefits include:

- Avoidance of pain and disfiguration associated with treatment.
- Avoidance of stress for the family dealing with this life situation.
- Maintenance of income and meaningful contributions at work, home, and community.

For the employer, benefits include:

- Improved health of their employees.
- Decrease in time lost from the workplace.
- Maintenance of productivity.
- No increased burden to health benefits programs.

Why develop a Sun Safety Policy?

A Sun Safety Policy gives direction to all in the workplace. The message is clear to the employees that the employer is sincere in its wishes to protect its employees. Responsibilities will be clear for all in the workplace.

To get a copy of a Sun Safety kit to develop your company's Sun Safety Policy, please contact the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit's Health ACTION Line at 1-800-660-5853, or view on line at: http://www.healthunit.org/workplace/sun_guidelines.htm

What an Opportunity!!!!

The Health Unit's Workplace Team is ready to launch its new Health Unit Workplace program. We are looking for workplaces to participate in a **pilot evaluation of the program**.

What's in it for you?

- ✓ Improved employee health, satisfaction and productivity.
- ✓ An assigned Public Health Nurse consultant for your workplace.
- ✓ Tools, resources and support to guide you through "comprehensive workplace health".

What's in it for us?

- ✓ An opportunity to evaluate the tools, resources and programs developed, and to inform our practice.

For further details or to apply to participate in our pilot evaluation, please contact :

Lois Dewey, Public Health Nurse
613-283-2740
Lois.Dewey@healthunit.org

Deadline: June 1st, 2009



**NEW
DATES**

RABIES VACCINATION CLINICS MOVED TO SEPTEMBER

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Beginning this year, the Rabies Vaccination Clinics will be moving to the second and third Wednesday in the month of September.

Sept. 9, 2009, and **Sept. 16, 2009** are the new dates.

Did you know that a person dies from Rabies every 10 minutes throughout the world? This disease is 100% preventable.

Help prevent the spread of rabies by vaccinating your pet dog or cat.

See you in September!

Is your well water safe to drink?

If you live in a rural area or own a cottage, chances are your family's daily water supply comes from a well. Well water can be contaminated with bacteria that can make you and your family sick. To ensure that your water is safe, you should regularly sample your well water for bacteria.

- Water quality can change over time and the only way to know if your water is safe is to have your water tested regularly. We recommend that you sample your well at least 3 times a year.
- Drinking water sample bottles are available free of charge at all Public Health Unit offices and some municipal offices.
- Drop off your completed sample at your Health Unit office and we will send it to the Public Health Lab for you.
- Testing your drinking water is free and easy to do. It's a simple way to protect your family's health. If you want more information about your well water, give us a call. Your Public Health Inspector is a great source of information and is here to serve you.
- For more info, see our website at: www.healthunit.org