



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Princeton Health Department

# Princeton Health Matters

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 6

FALL 2015

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## Home Food Safety Mythbusters



Did you know that the most common source of foodborne illness is from your kitchen? To help you protect yourself and your family from foodborne illness, the Partnership for Food Safety Education has created new materials for consumers that debunk common home food safety myths.



Bacteria that cause illness grow rapidly in the "danger zone" between 40°F and 140°F. Keeping a constant home refrigerator temperature of 40°F is one of the most effective ways to reduce cases of listeriosis and other foodborne diseases. There are many "myths" around temperature control, including that people can know the temperature of their refrigerator even without measuring it.

**Myth 1:** I know my refrigerator is cold enough - I can feel it when I open it! And besides, I have a dial to adjust the temperature.

**Fact 1:** Unless you have thermometers built into your fingers, you need to use a thermometer to ensure your refrigerator is at or below 40°F. And that dial? Important, but it is not a thermometer. Use the dial to adjust the temperature so it will be colder. Then, use your refrigerator thermometer to measure again.

**Myth 2:** Cross-contamination doesn't happen in the refrigerator - it's too cold in there for bacteria to survive!

**Fact 2:** Bacteria can survive and some even grow in cool, moist environments like the refrigerator. In fact, Listeria bacteria can grow in temperatures below 40°F! A recent study showed that the refrigerator produce compartment was one of the "germiest" places in the kitchen, containing Salmonella and Listeria. Keep fresh fruits and vegetables separate from raw meat, poultry, seafood and eggs. Clean up food and beverage spills immediately and clean your refrigerator regularly with hot water and liquid soap. Don't forget to clean the refrigerator walls and the underside of shelves!

## Back to School - Be Prepared

As school supplies are packed in backpacks, school bus schedules are double-checked, and the finishing touches are put on your kids first day of school outfit, make sure your emergency plans are in place. Did you know that emergency preparedness plays a major role in school life? Through the year, schools actively prepare for natural disasters, outbreaks, and other emergency situations. Students and parents need to be aware and learn what to do during an emergency.

From school supply shopping to re-acclimating your kids to that early morning routine, there is a lot of preparing that goes into the start of the new school year. While getting prepared to send your kids back to school this year, take the time to build an emergency kit, make a family disaster plan, and know how you will reunite with your kids if there is an emergency during the school day. We have compiled a few tips below to prepare your kids to back to school:

**Have a plan on how to reunite with your child:** How would you reunite with your child if there were an emergency during the school day? Talk to the school and find out how the school would notify you in the event of an emergency. Talk to your kids about what to do in situations where they may have to use alternative means to get home or may have to be picked-up early by a neighbor or family friend. Know who you would contact if your child needed to be picked up early or if you were unable to get to the school, and let your child know the people who would pick them up in these situations. Create a password or line with your child that an emergency contact can use to let your child know it is safe to ride home with them.

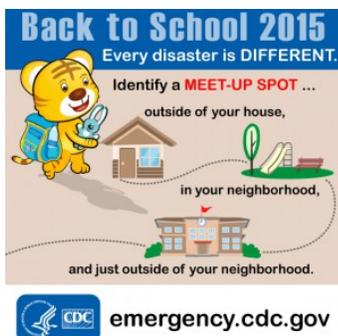
### Update Emergency Contact Information:

Schools often collect parent and emergency contact information when a student first enrolls at the school. Even one year later this contact information may no longer be accurate and up-to-date. Changes to your office, name, address or phone number should be reported to the school to ensure that they have the most accurate information to reach you during an emergency. Have your child memorize important addresses and at least two emergency contact numbers they can call.



### Backpack Emergency Card:

Make an emergency card for your child to keep in their backpack. Include important personal information about your child, like their name, school, contact information, date of birth, and any medical conditions, such as allergies.



On the backside of the card, include contact information for yourself and an additional emergency contact. You know how easily books and papers get lost or destroyed in your child's backpack, so make sure that their emergency card can withstand the wear and tear. Consider laminating and picking a secure place in their backpack where their card can be quickly and easily located. Print a pre-made emergency card from CDC or visit Save the Children for a digital version.

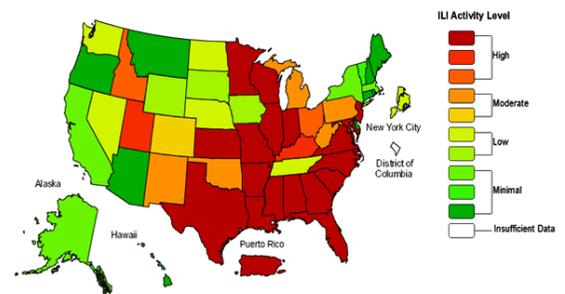
## *Health Officer's Message: RECAP: 2014-2015 Flu Season*

The 2014-2015 influenza season took us on a wild ride. It started early, ended late, and caused a higher number of deaths and facility outbreaks than any other season since 2004. In addition, the predominant strain of influenza that circulated last season was not represented in the vaccine. The challenges of last season and the unpredictability of influenza in general underscore the importance of preparation, paying attention to current surveillance information and staying abreast of vaccine and treatment recommendations.

### **RECAP of 2014-2015 Season**

The 2014-2015 season was the most severe influenza season in several years. Influenza A-H3N2 was the predominant virus to circulate, representing over 99% of influenza A viruses sub-typed at CDC reporting laboratories. Nationally and locally, persons age 65 and older accounted for the majority of hospitalization and deaths. The most common underlying conditions for persons that were hospitalized were cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

Influenza-Like Illness (ILI) Activity Level Indicator Determined by Data Reported to ILINet  
2014-15 Influenza Season Week 51 ending Dec 20, 2014



Flu vaccines are designed to protect against the main flu viruses that research suggests will be the most common during the upcoming season. Three kinds of flu viruses commonly circulate among people today: (influenza A (H1N1), influenza A(H3N2), and influenza B viruses. The 2015-2016 influenza vaccine is made to protect against the following three viruses: an A/California/7/2009 (H1N1) pdm09-like virus; an A/Switzerland/9715293/2013 (H3N2)-like virus; and a B/Phuket/3073/2013-like virus. The 2015-2016 quadrivalent flu vaccine also protects against an additional B virus (B/Brisbane/60/2008-like virus). Flu viruses change constantly (called drift). It is not possible to predict with certainty what viruses will circulate during the upcoming season. However, antibodies made in response to vaccination with one flu virus can sometimes provide protection against different but related viruses. For this reason, even during seasons when there is a less than ideal match, the CDC continues to recommend flu vaccination for everyone 6 months and older.

The influenza vaccine is one of the most underutilized vaccines. Last season at the end of November, coverage for adults was 39.7% , 42% among children and 44% among pregnant women in the U.S. Vaccination to prevent influenza is particularly important for people who are at increased risk for severe complications from the flu. People in the high-risk groups include: children 6 months of age to 4 years; people aged 50 years and older; adults and children who have chronic pulmonary (including asthma), cardiovascular, kidney, liver, neurological or metabolic disorders (including diabetes); people with compromised immune systems; and women who are or will be pregnant during the flu season.

**The best way to protect yourself and loved ones, is to get a flu shot this fall or winter.**

# Announcements and Upcoming Events



**World  
COPD  
Day  
2015**

**November 18, 2015**

November is COPD Awareness Month. COPD, or Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, is a progressive disease that makes it hard to breathe. Cigarette smoking is the leading cause of COPD while COPD is the third leading cause of death in the United States. The best way to prevent COPD is to not start smoking or to quit smoking. If you have trouble quitting smoking on your own, consider joining a support group or talk with your doctor about programs and products that can help you quit. You can also contact the Princeton Health Department. Princeton Health Department collaborates with the NJ Department of Health on providing smoking cessation programs.

Princeton WIC clinic operates the 3rd Friday of every month and is located in the Community Room of the Princeton Municipal Building, 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. WIC's 2015 calendar is posted on the Princeton website: [www.princetonnj.gov/health](http://www.princetonnj.gov/health)



Princeton Health Department in partnership with Princeton Community Housing is offering a FREE Stanford University's 6-week Chronic Disease Self-Management Program to Princeton residents. The program will be offered for 6 Wednesdays, from October 7- November 18, except for November 11) from 4:30pm-7:00pm. Please call (609) 497-7608 to register.

Princeton Health Department has teamed up with the Princeton Senior Resource Center and Rite Aid to provide a flu clinic. The clinic will take place at PSRC (45 Stockton St.) on Tuesday, October 13th, 1:00-4:30p.m. Additional flu clinics will be offered and can be found on the Princeton Health Department website: [www.princetonnj.gov/health](http://www.princetonnj.gov/health)



## Public Health Matters...in Princeton!

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A publication of the Princeton Health Department written in collaboration with Princeton employees and Health Department staff

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