



Public Health Bulletin

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WIC Makes Switch to Healthier Food Options in October

Starting October 1, 2009, the Women, Infants and Children Program (WIC) began offering new healthier food choices to the more than 1.4 million women, infants and young children participating in the program across the state. The new WIC foods will support both the American Academy of Pediatrics feeding guidelines and Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

The changes to the WIC food package include a greater variety of foods, more food incentives for exclusively breastfeeding women, and will allow for soy milk beverages and tofu to be substituted as a milk alternative.

The WIC program is very excited about the changes as new WIC food packages will better reinforce the common messages from WIC registered dietitians and counselors:

- “Eat more fruits and vegetables”
- “Lower saturated fat”
- “Increase whole grains and fiber”
- “Drink less sweetened beverages and juice”
- “Babies are meant to be breast-fed.”

The changes to the WIC food packages will help WIC more

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County Reaches Out to Partners to Prevent the Spread of H1N1

As of this newsletter’s print deadline, there have been over 3,000 hospitalized and nearly 250 fatal cases of H1N1 in California. Although these numbers will most likely continue to grow, the good news is that the severity of the H1N1 virus continues to be mild in the large majority of people who experience it.

As epidemiologists watch the virus closely, others interested in public health at local, state and federal levels prepare for a potential mutation that could present more harm to communities and individuals.

Across California, and the nation, local public health departments are reaching out to providers, clinics, hospitals and schools to most efficiently distribute H1N1 vaccine when it becomes available in October. San Luis Obispo is no different. There are currently a number of efforts

underway and many ways to get involved.

1) Vaccination Planning: *Order vaccine at www.calpanflu.org**

- We strongly encourage all adult primary care physicians to order vaccine to immunize their patients ages 25-64 with underlying medical conditions.
- We are working closely with obstetricians to support their efforts to immunize all pregnant women in their offices.
- We are working closely with the schools toward a massive effort to offer immunization to all children in grades K-12.
- We have commitments from many pediatricians to provide vaccine for the pre-school population, ages 6 months to 4 years and hope that all will do so.
- We are jointly planning with Cal Poly efforts to offer vaccine to students under the age of 25.

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H1N1 Influenza (cont.)

- We have commitments from all county hospitals that they will vaccinate their health care workers and are beginning to ascertain whether our community hospitals may be able to provide vaccine to other target groups, such as emergency medical responders and high-risk patients.

**Vaccine can be ordered by registering online at www.calpanflu.org and by reviewing and agreeing to terms and conditions for vaccine use.*

2) Managing Health Care Surge:

- We have recently distributed triage standard operating procedures to assist hospitals and other health care providers in handling a large patient volume.
- We have hired additional planning staff to begin to develop alternate care sites should hospitals become completely overwhelmed.
- Please consider volunteering your services, or those of your clinical staff to help provide vaccine in school or community clinics.

3) Public Information:

- We are constantly updating our Web site and information hotline with more timely, navigable guidance.
- We have developed and distributed a brochure for the public to advise when and how to manage illness at home and when to seek medical consultation or care.
- Please assist with educating staff and families by doing the following:
 - Encourage staff who are sick to stay home.
 - Waive requirements that staff provide a doctor's note if they are sick.
 - Plan for possible staff shortages if 30-40% of your staff are ill or home taking care of a family member.
 - Discourage parents with sick children from sending their children to school if they are ill.
 - Recommend vaccination to your patients who meet targeted criteria.
- We will send updated information through blast fax or e-mail to all health care providers.

If you have not received any such guidance to date or if you would like to change the method of delivery, please contact our IT representative at rhendry@co.slo.ca.us or at 788-2923.

Pregnancy and Postpartum Depression Support Line

Since 1998 the San Luis Obispo County Child Abuse Prevention Council www.slocap.org has worked with Public Health and other health service providers to offer the Postpartum Depression Support Line which offers information and referrals for new mothers, their families and other caregivers. In San Luis Obispo County, help is available on the Support Line at 549-7786.

Postpartum depression can be mild or severe. All women suffering from some level of postpartum depression need help and support. THERE IS HELP!

Some women with postpartum emotional disorders recover without incident. Many others need professional help. Postpartum emotional problems are physical and real. A woman cannot "pull herself out of it" any more than she can pull herself out of a heart attack.

Any woman experiencing any of the symptoms can call (800) 549-7786 for free, confidential information and referrals. All the symptoms, from the mildest to the most severe are temporary and treatable. Treatment varies, depending on the severity of the symptoms.

REMEMBER: You are not alone. You are not to blame. You will get better. There is help.

The Postpartum Depression Support Line is made possible by the generous support provided by First 5 San Luis Obispo County.

WIC Makes Switch (cont.)

actively promote and support breastfeeding. Fully breastfeeding mothers receive the most variety and largest quantity of food and will have more canned fish options (tuna, salmon and sardines). To better support partially breastfeeding women, formula amounts will now be more closely tied to feeding practices and the age of the infant.

The food packages for all women and children will now include fresh, frozen and canned fruits and vegetables and whole grain products (cereal, whole grain bread, brown rice, corn tortillas, and whole wheat tortillas). Only nonfat, reduced fat and low fat milk will be offered to women and children over the age of two. Quantities of dried beans and peanut butter have remained unchanged, but the quantities of eggs, milk, cheese and juice have been reduced.

In the infant package, juice has been eliminated, but parents will now receive baby food fruits and vegetables in addition to cereal at 6 months of age. Fully breastfed infants will also receive baby food meat.

Free Hiking Trail Guides Now Available

San Luis Obispo County has many great places you can take an easy walk or challenge yourself with a hard hike. The San Luis Obispo County Association of Parks and Recreation Administrators has developed a series of trail guides for the North County, South County, Central County or the Coast to help you get started on an exercise regimen. The guides can be found at: www.slostateparks.com/prescriptiontrails - or call Vanessa Adame at the Childhood Obesity Prevention Program (781-2718).

Before you start an exercise regimen remember to:

Get Ready...

Make sure to get your doctor's approval before you begin any exercise program. You can use the trail rating system on each trail guide to help you choose the trail that's right for your level of fitness.

Get Set..

- Wear supportive, comfortable shoes.
- Bring a water bottle.
- Dress in layers to accommodate our changing coastal conditions.
- Wear sunscreen, sunglasses and a hat.
- Bring high protein snacks and fruits and vegetables for longer hikes.
- Wear insect repellent if you are hiking in a wet or wooded area or early in the morning or in the evening.

And Go!

Get out, improve your health and have a great time doing it. Check off trails you have tried and make notes on your trail guide as you try new trails. Most of all, have fun and enjoy the scenery.

Local Hands on Health Event Slated for October 30, 31

On October 30 and 31, 2009, the first annual HANDS on Health collaborative event invites members from the entire community to join together for two days of festivities featuring health in an interactive, fun and entertaining atmosphere.

This regional event is expected to bring together more than 5,000 participants over the course of the symposium's two days. Friday's events will showcase national and local research that expands our understanding of human health for an audience of educators, medical professionals, students and scientists.

Saturday will focus on individual, family, and community health featuring a parade, games, workshops, educational booths, music, food and activities.

Participants can expect to taste new recipes, watch cooking demonstrations, check their blood pressure, get screened for risk factors and more. Organizations across the coast are committed to making this event a success.

HANDS on Health welcomes everyone of any age and location throughout the entire Central Coast.

For additional information about this new event for our community, please check the Web site at <http://stride.calpoly.edu/>

Have you ever wanted to easily look up your patient's vaccine records? There is no cost. Simply call the Public Health Department at 226-3219 for a free demonstration or pamphlet.

Tobacco-Free Outdoor Areas Increasing in SLO County

Tobacco-free outdoor areas are growing in popularity across the country and San Luis Obispo County is no different. Many cities, counties, organizations and businesses in California are working to protect people from secondhand smoke exposure by creating policies that restrict smoking in outdoor areas, especially recreation areas and other places where people congregate. These policies ban smoking in areas ranging from city parks to building entry ways to ATM lines. In recent months San Luis Obispo County has seen a bevy of new second-hand smoke polices passed to protect residents, employees, patients and visitors.

Atascadero residents will be breathing a little easier, thanks to a recent decision by the City Council to ban tobacco use at parks, athletic fields, trails and other outdoor recreation areas. On September 11, the City of Atascadero became the fourth city in the county to enact a local ordinance restricting outdoor tobacco use, joining Morro Bay, Pismo Beach and Arroyo Grande. To date, more than 200 laws in California have been passed to protect people from secondhand smoke in outdoor areas, such as parks, sports fields and outdoor dining to name a few...

Plus summer festival goers in San Luis Obispo may have been pleasantly surprised by even fresher air. A growing number of events and festivals are also limiting tobacco use and enacting smoke-free policies, such as the SLO Waterfest, the Stone Soup Music Faire, the Mid-State Fair, the Paso Robles Wine Festival, Morro Bay Farmer's Market and Pride in the Plaza. Look forward to more smoke-free festivals and events in the future and take advantage of the clean and healthy surroundings, listen to some great music and enjoy the fresh air!

In 2009, four of the five hospitals in the county - Atascadero State Hospital, French Hospital, Sierra Vista Regional Medical Center and Arroyo Grande Community Center - banned smoking anywhere on hospital-owned property, including buildings, gardens and parking lots. The policies offered the hospitals an opportunity to lead by example and increase their credibility as an advocate for healthy lifestyles. Additionally, the bans presented a chance to educate patients about smoking cessation strategies and support patients in avoiding tobacco by providing a smoke-free environment.

Why are tobacco-free outdoor areas becoming the norm? There is no question that secondhand smoke is harmful. The California Air Resources Board declared secondhand smoke a toxic air contaminant in January 2006 and the U.S. Surgeon General stated that there is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke in June 2006.

A recent study conducted by researchers with Stanford University* further shows the public health need for restricting smoking in outdoor areas. This research measured air pollution levels at outdoor places, such as dining areas and parks where people were smoking, and found that levels of exposure to secondhand smoke outdoors can be comparable to secondhand smoke exposure indoors. In addition, when an individual is near a smoker outdoors, they are exposed to air pollution levels significantly higher than normal background air pollution levels. Finally, the study indicates that there is a compelling health basis for outdoor smoking bans in commercial and non-commercial settings.

In addition to the health risks associated with outdoor smoking, there are other reasons to restrict smoking in outdoor areas. Cigarette butts are the number one litter item found along beaches. Cigarette litter damages the environment and poses a hazard to children, pets and wildlife that may pick up or swallow these cigarette butts. Outdoor parks suffer not only from cigarette trash but also from the risk of fire. In May 2007, a fire started by a discarded cigarette butt in Griffith Park in Los Angeles burned over 800 acres.

Would you like to see your favorite park, festival, outdoor dining or workplace be tobacco-free? Call the San Luis Obispo County Tobacco Control Program at 781-5564 and we can help by telling you how to get started.

* Klepeis NE, Ott WR, Switzer P (2007) Real-time measurement of outdoor tobacco smoke particles. *Journal of the Air and Waste Management Association*, 57:522-534

Local Food Facility Inspection Reports Are Now Online

The San Luis Obispo County Environmental Health Services Web site contains the most recent inspection information for all food facilities that have a permit to operate in San Luis Obispo County. These include restaurants, bars, grocery stores, convenience stores, schools and most facilities that dispense food to the public.

You can find the name and address of the food facility, identification of any violations, date of the most recent inspection or re-inspection and how they compare to other facilities in the county. The search criteria can be the name, the specific address, the general vicinity, and a “sounds like” feature all to help you locate the food facility.

You can access the information at: www.slocounty.ca.gov/health/publichealth/ehs.htm

Cut Calories by Reducing Soda Consumption

Thirsty? Rethink your drink. The average person eats almost 175 pounds of sugar a year or a half pound a day! The single biggest source is sugary drinks, especially soda. It's no wonder that two out of three Americans are overweight or obese. On average, 30% of all calories consumed daily are from sweetened beverages. Extra calories lead to weight gain, putting people at risk for lifelong health problems such as type 2 diabetes and heart disease.

Make one small change and drink fewer calories by choosing water first.

Consider challenging yourself, your family or your co-workers to do one or more of the following:

1. Drink more water. 75% of Americans are chronically dehydrated. Symptoms other than thirst can include muscle cramps, headaches, nausea and vomiting.
2. Consider healthy drink alternatives:
 - Make water fun by adding sliced fruit like kiwi, strawberries, pineapple, cucumbers and lemons or even mint leaves.
 - If you like carbonation, try club soda mixed with a tad of 100% fruit juice (with no added sugar).
 - Try unsweetened iced or green tea. If you like sweetened, add sliced fruit. Remember, caffeine is a diuretic so drink more water.
3. Drink soda only on occasion, even diet soda, not every day. When you do, make it a small size. Drinking just one 20 oz. Coke each day for a year can result in gaining 25 extra pounds if it is not burned off. For more information, please call the Childhood Obesity Prevention Program at 788-2718.

Childhood Obesity on the Rise in San Luis Obispo County

As reported this July by the California Center for Public Health Advocacy, California's increasing girth is crippling the state's economy, according to a study of the economic cost of obesity in California. In just six years, reported economic costs of overweight adults have nearly doubled and are now costing California an estimated \$41 billion a year.

San Luis Obispo County is a contributor to this statewide multi-billion dollar problem. Our county is responsible for more than \$4.5 million. It is a statewide and local crisis.

Unfortunately, it is not only our adult residents who are overweight. Our children are also affected by this crisis. A recent measurement of heights and weights of three- to four-year-olds completed in area preschools reflects a similar escalation of body “girth.”

More than 500 children were measured this spring. The findings were alarming. Of the children measured, 37% met the classification of overweight (85th % BMI for age) and 17% were considered obese (95th % BMI for age).

The percentage of children who met the classification of overweight has increased in the last three years compared to similar data collection completed in 2006. In that data set, the overweight prevalence was at 29%.

San Luis Obispo County Reported Cases of Selected Communicable Diseases - Fall 2009

Disease	Jan.-June	July	August	September	Total 2009	Total 2008
Amebiasis	0	0	0	0	0	1
Brucellosis	0	0	0	0	0	0
Campylobacteriosis	39	14	10	13	76	45
Chlamydial Infections	339	47	44	55	485	634
Coccidioidomycosis	45	1	8	7	61	88
Cryptosporidiosis	12	1	1	5	19	8
E. Coli	1	0	0	2	3	6
Giardiasis	3	0	1	2	6	9
Gonorrhea	18	2	4	9	33	33
Hepatitis A	0	0	1	0	1	13
Hepatitis B	39	3	5	3	50	43
Hepatitis C Acute	0	0	0	0	0	13
Hepatitis, Unspecified	0	0	0	0	0	0
Listeriosis	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lyme Disease	4	0	0	0	4	2*
Measles (Rubeola)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Meningitis - Total	13	2	3	4	22	27
Meningitis - Viral	11	2	3	4	20	22
Meningitis, H-Flu	0	0	0	0	0	0
Meningococcal Disease	0	0	0	0	0	1
MRSA	0	0	0	0	0	2
Pertussis	0	0	0	0	0	17
Rubella	0	0	0	0	0	0
Salmonellosis	7	0	1	3	11	26
Shigellosis	1	0	0	0	1	8
Syphilis - Total	6	0	2	0	8	41
Tuberculosis	1	1	0	0	2	1
West Nile Fever	0	0	0	0	0	0
W. Nile Virus Neuroinvasive	0	0	0	0	0	0

* Cases of Lyme disease are under review using a case definition algorithm supplied by the California Department of Public Health



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