

Did you know . . .

December 1st 2008 is World AIDS Day



Many people in the United States have HIV and new infections continue. HIV is a long term condition and people living with HIV continue to face discrimination. Whatever your HIV status, there is a role you can play in ending prejudice and stopping the spread.

Know **your** status. Get tested and stay informed!

- HIV is the Human Immunodeficiency Virus that attacks the body's immune system.
- HIV causes **Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS)** when the immune system is too weak to fight diseases
- There is no cure for HIV
- You do not get HIV from toilet seats, hugging, kissing, or sharing cups and spoons
- HIV is transmitted through blood contact and through unprotected sex.

For more information visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/>

Toy safety tips for the holidays

- Make sure the toys are age appropriate
- Avoid buying toys with sharp edges or with parts that fly off
- Look for the letters "ASTM". This means the product meets national safety standards set by the American Society for Testing and Materials
- Read all warnings and instructions on the box
- Show the children how to properly use the toy
- Always watch children while they play
- Fix or throw away broken toys.

For more information visit: <http://preventblindness.org/children/safetoys.html>

Take the risks of shoveling to heart

The number of people who have heart attacks increases during snow shoveling season. Shoveling is hard work on your heart. Consider the following before you grab your shovel:

- If you are inactive or have a family history of heart disease talk to your doctor before shoveling snow
- Drink plenty of water
- Dress in layers
- Warm up before shoveling and stretch your muscles
- Begin shoveling slowly, pace yourself, and take breaks as needed
- Avoid caffeine or nicotine before shoveling
- Listen to your body.
- Stop if you feel pain.

Know the signs and symptoms of a heart attack

Heart attack warning signs:

- Pain or discomfort in the jaw, neck or back
- Feeling weak, lightheaded or faint
- Chest pain or discomfort
- Pain or discomfort in arms or shoulders
- Shortness of breath

Women often experience discomfort rather than pain



For more information visit: <http://healthymainepartnerships.org/mcvhp/>

No flu for you

Protect yourself and others from the flu and other illnesses this winter. Cough or sneeze into your arm or a tissue rather than your bare hand and follow these tips:

- If you are sick, stay home
- Avoid close contact with others who are sick
- Wash hands frequently
- Do not put your fingers in your eyes, nose, or mouth
- Get a flu shot.

Practicing good hygiene and making sure you and your family receive flu shots are the two best ways to prevent getting sick this flu season.

To find a flu clinic near you please visit:

www.flucliniclocator.org

For more information please visit: <http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/boh/Influenza.htm>

Y fit tip of the month. . .

Walking is one of the best ways to keep fit. Don't let the weather stop you!

- Wear proper footwear (wide sole, good tread, well insulated)
- Layer clothing to preserve body heat
- A hat, scarf, mittens or gloves, are essential accessories for preventing heat loss
- Wear bright colors and add reflective material so others can see you
- Protect exposed skin with sunscreen and lip balm, SPF 15 or more
- Remove snow and ice and put sand or salt in areas where you walk.

Avoid walking in dangerous conditions such as high wind and severe snow storms. Instead, walk on a treadmill or buy a walking DVD.

Dog Waste Pollutes

- Roundworms, E. Coli, and Giardia are just a few of the many harmful microorganisms that can be transmitted from pet waste to humans
- Some microorganisms can last in your yard for as long as four years if not cleaned up
- Children who play outside and adults who garden are at the greatest risk
- Pet waste is also one of the leading causes of bacterial contamination of streams
- Pet waste should not be composted, buried, or used as a fertilizer.



Be a responsible pet owner and scoop the poop, bag it, and throw it in the trash!

For more information please visit: http://www1.co.snohomish.wa.us/Departments/Public_Works/Divisions/SWM/Services/Water_Pollution/Pet_Waste.htm

Living with acid reflux?

Here are seven tips to make you more comfortable:

- Avoid trigger foods (common trigger foods include tomato products, spicy food, chocolate, alcohol, fried foods, and caffeine)
- Eat smaller meals
- Avoid tight fitting clothes
- Manage stress
- Avoid laying down for 2-3 hours after a meal
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Raise bed 4- 6" off the ground to keep your upper body raised at night.

For more information visit: <http://www.webmd.com/heartburn-gerd/reflux-disease>