

RUSK COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH NEWSLETTER

JULY 2020

Communicable Diseases

INCLUDED TOPICS:

- COVID-19
- Tick Safety
- Well Water Safety
- Retail Licensing
- Lead Safety for Children
- Cuts & Burns



COVID-19

A virus spread mainly through person to person contact by respiratory droplets from coughing and or sneezing.

SYMPTOMS

Symptoms appear between 2-14 days after exposure. There are a wide range of symptoms including:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

An important note is that not everyone will show symptoms, but they can still spread the virus. Take preventative steps in order to protect you and your family.

PREVENTION STRATEGIES

Recommended precautions to prevent the acquisition and spread of COVID-19 are as follows:

- Wash hands often and for a minimum of 20 seconds with soap and water.
- Avoid close contact, especially with those who are sick, at a recommended distance of 6 feet.
- Where a cloth face covering when out in public.
- Cough or sneeze into a tissue or your elbow and wash up afterwards.
- Clean and disinfect commonly used or touched surfaces.

TICK SAFETY

Ticks are blood-sucking bugs that can transmit disease. Common tick species in the area include the American dog tick, Blacklegged tick, and Brown dog tick. They can spread a large variety of disease, the most common being Lyme disease.

Ticks are found commonly in bushy, grassy, or wooded areas. They can also be found on animals.

PREVENT TICK BITES

Tick exposure can occur year-round, but ticks are the most active during the warm months of April-September.

- When outside, avoid wooded or bushy areas with high grass and leaf litter, and walk in the center of paths.
- Carefully examine yourself, your clothes, belongings, and pets once you return indoors for ticks.
- Showering 2 hours after coming indoors has been shown to reduce the risk of Lyme disease, and possibly other tickborne diseases.
- Check these areas of the body for ticks after returning indoors from a potential tick infested area:
 - Under the arms
 - In and around the ears
 - In and around the hair
 - Inside the belly button
 - Back of the knees
 - Between the legs
 - Around the waist

HOW TO REMOVE TICKS

If you find a tick on your body, the best practice is to remove the tick as soon as possible. Fine-tipped tweezers are really all that is needed to remove ticks.

1. Use the tweezers and grasp the tick as close to the surface of the skin as possible.
2. Pull upwards with steady, even pressure. Do NOT twist or jerk the tick because this can cause the mouth-parts to break off and remain in the skin. If this does occur, remove the mouth-parts with tweezers; however, if you cannot remove the parts easily then leave it alone and let the skin heal.
3. After removing the tick, clean the bite area and your hands thoroughly with either rubbing alcohol or soap and water.
4. Never crush a tick with your fingers. Dispose of a live tick by putting it in alcohol, placing it in a sealed container or bag, or flushing it down the toilet.

SYMPTOMS OF TICK BITES

If you develop any of the following symptoms within several weeks of removing a tick, seek a medical professional, and be sure to inform them of the recent tick bite. Common symptoms from tick bites include:

- Fever/chills
- Aches and pains (including headaches, fatigue, muscle aches, and joint pains)
- Rash
 - Lyme Disease and STARI may have a rash that appears to be a “bulls eye” shape.
 - Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever may have a rash that begins as an onset of small, pink, non-itchy spots on the wrists, forearms, and ankles that spreads up the trunk of the limb.
 - Skin ulcers can be a common symptom of Tularemia.

Environmental Health

WELL WATER SAFETY

Private wells should be tested for contaminants including bacteria, nitrate, arsenic, and lead. All of these contaminants are hazardous to your health. It is recommended that your private well be tested annually for contaminants or if there is a change in how the water looks, tastes, or smells.

Rusk County Health Department offers testing:

- \$25 for bacteria
- \$25 for nitrate
- \$30 for lead
- \$35 for arsenic

CONTAMINATION SOURCES

Sources of contamination can be natural or man-made. The following are some examples of sources.

- Run off from fertilizer
- Naturally occurring heavy metals in the area's geology
- Well seals, conduits, or screws becoming loose allowing bugs and rodents into the well

SIGNS OF CONTAMINATION

Some contaminants have no obvious physical signs, which is why it is important to test your wells regularly. However, listed below are a few possible ways to identify contamination.

- Cloudiness of the water that remains after several minutes may mean the presence of bacteria.
- Sulfur and iron bacteria contamination can cause a rotten egg smell, and an oily sheen on the water.
- Water with a metallic taste can indicate the presence of metals such as iron, lead, or arsenic.

RETAIL LICENSING

The proper license is required in order to sell products to the public.

RETAIL FOOD LICENSING

Selling food products directly from producer to consumer requires a retail food license. There are many specific licenses that fall under retail food, so the best course of action is to call the Rusk County Public Health Department, and a licensing specialist will help you figure out the correct license you require.

Call: 715-532-2299

HOMEMADE PRODUCTS LICENSING

There are certain homemade products that do not require a license for sale. Each product has specific licensing exemption requirements.

- Homemade Baked Goods Requirements:
 - Home bakers must be baking out of their homes; commercial kitchens are not licensing exempt.
 - Home bakers must sell directly to consumer.
 - Only flour-based baked goods are exempt from licensing.

- Potentially hazardous baked goods are NOT exempt.
 - Defined as any goods that require temperature control because it is in a form that can support rapid growth of infectious or toxicogenic microorganisms.
- **Homemade Canned Goods Requirements:**
 - Fruits and vegetables are acidic either naturally or through pickling process (pH of 4.6 or lower).
 - No more than \$5,000.00 in sales per year.
 - Sale is directly from producer to consumer, and only sold at community or social events.
 - Signs at sale event stating that products are homemade and not subject to state inspection.
 - Product label must include the following:
 - Name and address of the person who canned the product
 - Date of canning
 - Statement on the how the product is homemade and not subject to state inspection
 - All ingredients in descending order or prominence

EGG SALES LICENSING

Small-scale production of eggs (less than 150 birds) no longer requires a food processing license. HOWEVER, a mobile retail food establishment license is still required to sell eggs directly to consumers at farmers' markets and egg sale routes. call the Rusk County Public Health Department at 715-532-2299, and a licensing specialist will get you the information you will need and explain the process steps.

General Information:

- Eggs must be sold directly from producer to consumer.
- Eggs must be packaged in a carton labeled with the producer's name, address, the date the eggs were packaged, a sell-by date within 30 days, and a statement indicating that the eggs in the package are ungraded and uninspected.
- Packaged eggs must be kept at a temperature no higher than 41°F at all times.
- Registration is required for egg producers.

RESTAURANT LICENSING

A restaurant license is required if you prepare, sell, or serve meals to the public. A restaurant is defined as any building, room, or place where meals are prepared, served, or sold. Like the retail food license above, call the Rusk County Public Health Department at 715-532-2299, and a licensing specialist will get you the information you will need and explain the process steps.

General Information:

- Each license issued by the department expires on June 30 of each year. (Example: License issues on April 1, 2017 expires June 30, 2018)
- Renewal fees for existing establishments must be submitted to the department before June 30 of each year.

Child Safety

LEAD SAFETY FOR CHILDREN

Lead exposure for children is a serious health hazard. Exposure can damage a child's brain and nervous system, slow their growth and development, and cause learning and behavior problems. Lead poisoning is preventable.

COMMON LEAD EXPOSURES

Often children will play and place their fingers, toys, or other objects in their mouths. This is a common way that lead contact occurs. Below is a list of common household items that may contain lead.

- Chips from old lead paint in buildings (usually in homes built before 1978)
- Tiny bits of lead dust from lead paint in the soil and dust in and around the home
- Imported candies or candy wrappers
- Imported toys and toy jewelry
- Pottery and ceramics
- Drinking water contamination through lead leaching from lead pipes, solder, brass fixtures, and valves
- Consumer products

REDUCE EXPOSURE

Lead in the environment that a child will be in should be identified and controlled or removed safely.

Most children with lead in their blood show no symptoms. If you think your child has been exposed to lead, contact a healthcare professional, and they will help you decide if a blood lead test is necessary. Blood lead tests are the only way to identify if a child has high lead exposure.

Safety

CUTS AND BURNS

Proper treatment of cuts and burns will prevent infection of the site of injury.

There are different types of burns that require slightly different approaches when treating in order to be the most effective. The types of burns are 1st degree, 2nd degree, and 3rd degree.

IDENTIFYING BURN TYPE

1st degree burns:

- Red
- Painful to touch
- Skin will have some swelling

2nd degree burns:

- Deep reddening of skin
- Pain
- Blisters
- Possible loss of skin
- Gloss appearance from leaking fluid

3rd degree burns:

- Loss of skin layers
- Often painless
- Skin is dry and leathery
- Skin may appear charred or have patches of white, brown, or black

TREATMENT OF BURNS

Be sure to wash your hands before treating burns.

1st Degree Burns:

1. Apply a cold compress to site of burn or submerge under cool, fresh water until pain subsides.
2. Apply a clean cloth bandage.

2nd Degree Burns:

1. Apply a cold compress or submerge under cool, fresh water for 10 to 15 minutes.
2. Apply a clean cloth bandage.
3. Do NOT break any blisters.
4. Elevate burned arms or legs and watch for signs of shock*.
5. Further medical treatment should be sought after stabilizing victim.

3rd Degree Burns:

1. Cover with a clean cloth bandage.
2. Elevate burned area(s) higher than victim's head when applicable or have them sit upright if burn is on the face.
3. Keep the victim warm and comfortable and watch for signs of shock*.
4. Immediate medical attention is required.

***SIGNS OF SHOCK:**

- Cool, clammy skin
- Pale or ashen skin
- Nausea or vomiting
- Weakness, fatigue, dizziness, or fainting
- Bluish tinge to lips or fingernails
- Rapid pulse or breathing
- Enlarged pupils
- Changes in behavior or attitude such as anxiousness or agitation

TREATMENT OF CUTS

Be sure to wash your hands before treating cuts.

1. Stop the bleeding by applying gentle, even pressure to the wound. Usually minor cuts will stop bleeding on their own.
2. Clean the wound under running water and wash the area surrounding the wound with soap. This is to minimize infection.
3. Apply a clean bandage or gauze to the wound to keep it clean.