



rural spotlight

Summer offers many types of outdoor activities. In this publication learn about sun protection, electronic health records, lead in your tackle box, ticks and disease prevention, disaster planning, oral health, great posture and a quick healthy recipe.

Have a Suntastic Summer

Sunburns are more than painful; they can lead to skin cancer. Remember:

- Cover up! Cover as much skin as possible with loose fitting, tightly-woven clothing and a hat with a 2-3 inch brim or a shade cap. A hat with a brim that shades your face, ears and neck works best.
- Use a sunscreen that protects against both UV-A and UV-B sunlight spectrums with an SPF of 15 or higher. Apply sunscreen 30 minutes before going outside. Don't forget sunscreen lip balm.
- Reapply sunscreen regularly. Sunscreen, regardless of strength, should not be expected to remain effective longer than two hours without reapplication. Apply more frequently if you are in the water.
- Wear sunglasses that block UV rays and protect your eyes. Check out more tips on summer safety at health.mo.gov/atoz/pdf/summersafety.pdf or call toll free (866) 628-9891.

this issue includes:

Sun Protection

Electronic Health Records

Tackling Lead

Ticks & Disease Prevention

Flooding

Better Your Posture

Kids Health Tip

Recipe

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of Health
and Senior Services



Photo courtesy of mo.gov.

Electronic Health Records *Make a Difference* in Disaster Recovery

by Lisa Cox, media relations specialist, Mercy Springfield Communities

On May 1, 2011, just a few weeks before the tornado struck St. John's Regional Medical Center in Joplin, MO, the hospital and its physician practices began using the same electronic health record (EHR) system used by other Mercy hospitals and clinics in four states. Access to the EHR helped Mercy get the hospital back online quickly, and also helped patients who were transferred to other Mercy hospitals after the storm.

For Paul Johnson, 78, of Joplin, his focus was to get to a hospital where doctors and nurses could access his medical records. Johnson had been hospitalized with pneumonia for two days when Mercy's St. John's was hit by the tornado. As patients were transferred, Johnson expressed

his desire to go to Mercy's sister hospital in Springfield, knowing his records would be easily accessible.

"I knew that they would want to know my medications, dosages and what tests had been done, and I knew that I couldn't remember all of it," he said. "The doctors in Springfield were able to pull up my records and ask me questions. It worked out beautifully."

Along with the access to patient records, Mercy was among the first organizations in the area to re-establish communication services such as phone, network access, laptops, printers, etc., which helped provide the critical link between Mercy's command center in Joplin, the mobile

*Eight months
after an EF5
tornado
devastates
Joplin, St.
John's Regional
Medical Center
opens its new
facility.*



Photo courtesy of Mercy Springfield Communities

hospital (constructed just seven days after the tornado) and physician offices in the community, and other locations across Mercy.

"If the tornado had hit a month earlier, before installing the electronic health record system in Joplin, St. John's would not have been able to bring up our mobile hospital within a week's time," said Mike McCreary of Mercy Technology Services. "Today, patients have continuity of care across all of our physician locations and the new Mercy Hospital Joplin, and connection to the entire Mercy health system, because of our EHR and our ability to quickly re-establish communication services."

Joplin has a new hospital as of mid-April, and this one isn't tents or trailers. The new facility is offering patients

all the comforts and most services they would expect from a Mercy hospital. With steel construction that is sturdier than the old St. John's, the new Mercy building is a testament to modern technology and overtime workers coming together to build a complete hospital in eight months.

"It's remarkable that we were able to get this topnotch facility up and running within eight months," said Lynn Britton, president and CEO of Mercy. "Early in the recovery, we knew the community would need a true hospital while we build for the future. So we challenged the team to do it. We have our Sisters of Mercy to thank who came to Joplin in the late 1800s and showed us what a bias for action, determination and true grit can accomplish."

ASTHMA

Know your Asthma Triggers and Avoid Them

Air pollution, dust mites, mold, secondhand smoke and even cockroaches can trigger asthma attacks. Learn your triggers and avoid them in your home and neighborhood. For more information go to www.epa.gov/.

Tackling Lead



It is time to get out the fishing poles and head down to your favorite fishing hole. In preparation for the 2012 fishing season, the Fish Consumption Advisory for Missourians has been released. This annual report provides a variety of useful information to people who consume fish caught in Missouri waters.

This year's advisory question is, "Is there lead in your tackle box?" Lead is found in many consumer products from toys to jewelry to water hoses. However, your tackle box may have more lead than any of these consumer products. Use of these products may allow lead to enter your body. Lead affects the nervous system and can result in behavioral problems and learning difficulties, especially in children.

Sinkers, weights, shots, weighted hooks and jig heads all were made of lead. Fishing tackle is now being made with non-lead alternatives. Replacing fishing tackle made out of lead with tackle made out of less toxic materials like bismuth, tungsten, tin and ceramic will greatly reduce lead exposure to you and your family.

If you are a collector of fishing tackle you may not be willing to part with the weights and lures you have stockpiled over the years. However, exposure to lead can be reduced by not putting lead weights in your mouth and washing your hands after handling leaded tackle. Start your children's or grandchildren's tackle boxes with non-leaded fishing tackle. They will enjoy having their own tackle boxes and you will have the satisfaction of knowing you reduced your loved ones environmental exposure to lead.

REMEMBER! Melting lead is also very dangerous and shouldn't be done. The fumes from melting lead to cast your own sinkers and the dust from this process will contaminate your home, yard, garage and clothing.



Visit www.health.mo.gov/living/environment/fishadvisory/index.php or call the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services at (573) 751-6102 for more information.

Ticks & Disease Prevention

Whether you decide to go hiking, camping, or are just playing in your yard with your family pet, don't forget about ticks. In the United States, these little critters are responsible for more human disease than any other insect. Ticks can carry infectious zoonotic diseases that can be transmitted between animals and humans.

Most ticks take blood from a large variety of small and large mammals, birds, and even reptiles. Before a tick is able to move on to the next stage in their life cycle they must ingest a "blood meal" so that molting or egg-laying can take place. If a tick feeds on an infected mammal or bird, they are then able to pass bacteria or viruses on to the next mammal, bird or reptile they attach to, which may be your household pet or even you.

The most frequently encountered tick-borne diseases in Missouri are the tick-borne spotted fevers. This includes Rocky Mountain spotted fever, ehrlichiosis and tularemia. The bacteria that cause Lyme disease and human anaplasmosis are carried by a type of tick that does not tolerate Missouri's hot, humid summers which is why those diseases are uncommon here.

Whether you are enjoying the great outdoors in Missouri or some other part of the country, be aware of the possibility of diseases transmitted by ticks. To avoid tick bites, apply insect repellents with 20-50 percent DEET to exposed skin and clothing.

For more information on zoonotic diseases go to: www.cdc.gov/ticks/index.html.



Tick Removal

**Prompt removal of ticks can help prevent disease.
Ticks can infect in 10 hours or less.**



- 1 Using tweezers, grasp tick near the mouthparts, as close to skin as possible.
- 2 Pull tick firmly, straight out, away from skin. Do not jerk or twist the tick.
- 3 Do NOT use alcohol, matches, or petroleum jelly to remove tick.
- 4 Wash your hands and the bite site with soap and water after the tick is removed. Apply an antiseptic to the bite site.
- 5 Tell your doctor you had a tick bite if you develop symptoms such as fever, headache, fatigue or rash.

For more information visit the Department of Health and Senior Services at health.mo.gov/living/healthcondiseases/communicable/tickscarrydisease/index.php or contact your local health department.



DANGER!

Are You Prepared?

Photo courtesy of the Missouri Department of Public Safety

Flooding in Missouri is a common hazard. Floods can happen over a period of time giving individuals time to prepare or floods can occur within minutes with little or no warning. Either way, one should know the dangers and be alert to weather conditions where you live, or where you will be travelling to help ward off potentially life threatening circumstances.

Tips to help you prepare for a flood:

- Build an emergency kit and make a family communications plan.
- Avoid building in a floodplain unless you elevate and reinforce your home.
- Elevate the furnace, water heater and electric panel in your home if you live in an area that has a high flood risk.
- Consider installing “check valves” to prevent flood water from backing up into the drains of your home.
- If feasible, construct barriers to stop floodwater from entering the building and seal walls in basements with waterproofing compounds.

Disaster Supply Kit

Following is a list of emergency supplies to keep on hand in case of floods and other emergencies.

- Water, one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation
- Food, at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food
- Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert and extra batteries for both
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Whistle to signal for help
- Dust mask to help filter contaminated air and plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Manual can opener for food
- Local maps
- Cell phone with charger, inverter or solar charger
- Prescription medications and glasses
- Infant formula and diapers
- Cash or traveler’s checks and change
- Important family documents such as copies of insurance policies, identification and bank account records in waterproof, portable container
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person
- Complete change of clothing and shoes
- Household chlorine bleach and medicine dropper. When diluted, nine parts water to one part bleach can be used as a disinfectant. You can also use it to treat water by using 16 drops of regular household liquid bleach per gallon of water. Do not use scented, color safe or bleaches with added cleaners.
- Fire extinguisher
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Feminine supplies and personal hygiene items
- Mess kits, paper cups, plates, paper towels and plastic utensils.

Find a sample family plan at www.ready.gov/sites/default/files/documents/files/Family_Emergency_Plan.pdf.

Source: FEMA at www.ready.gov/floodawareness



Better Your POSTURE

- 1 Pad Your Chair** – Add lumbar support to your office chair. This will mean less room on your chair but better posture.
- 2 Sit Toward the Back of Chair** – When sitting, shift butt towards back of chair.
- 3 Use a Timer/Take A Break** – If you sit a lot, set a timer and get up every 30-40 minutes and stretch. Alternate this with taking a short walk.
- 4 Exercise Ball** – Replace your office chair with an exercise ball. This can be used for stretching out your back while you are taking a break.



Healthy Smiles...Healthy Teeth

Good oral health is necessary for better overall health. Taking proper care of your mouth, teeth and gums is important in preventing tooth decay, gum disease and bad breath.

5 Tips for Daily Oral Care

- 1.** Brush your teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste.
- 2.** Floss daily.
- 3.** Drink fluoridated water to prevent tooth decay.
- 4.** Eat a balanced diet and limit sugary drinks and snacks.
- 5.** Visit your dentist regularly for professional cleanings and oral exams.

For more information, go to health.mo.gov/living/families/oralhealth/index.php or www.ada.org.

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Summer

A HEALTHY RECIPE FOR

4 Easy Steps to a Campfire Peach Cobbler

You will need one clean ripe peach for each person.

- Cut peach in half and remove pit.
- Place ground cinnamon where pit was removed and place both halves together again, and wrap in foil.
- Place foil wrapped peaches in campfire coals until soft on the outside.
- Peel off the foil and remove the peach. Enjoy your campfire peach cobbler!!!

