



THE EHS CONNECTION

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & SAFETY NEWSLETTER—OCTOBER 2015

FLU SHOT MYTHS & FACTS

MYTH: HEALTHY PEOPLE DO NOT NEED TO GET THE FLU VACCINE.

FACT: ANYONE CAN GET SICK FROM THE FLU, BUT ADULTS 65 AND OLDER, KIDS UNDER 2 AND PEOPLE WITH CHRONIC CONDITIONS ARE MORE LIKELY TO HAVE MORE SERIOUS PROBLEMS. HEALTHY PEOPLE CAN EASILY PASS THE FLU TO OTHERS, SO GET YOUR FLU SHOT.

MYTH: FLU SHOTS CAN GIVE PEOPLE THE FLU.

FACT: THE FLU SHOT IS MADE FROM DEAD VIRUSES, SO YOU CAN'T GET THE FLU FROM THE VACCINATION. BUT, YOU MAY EXPERIENCE SIDE EFFECTS INCLUDING A SORE ARM, SORE THROATS OR ACHINESS. THESE USUALLY GO AWAY WITHIN ONE OR TWO DAYS.

MYTH: THE SEASONAL FLU ISN'T SERIOUS.

FACT: THE SEASON FLU CAN BE VERY SERIOUS. IN 2006, THE FLU WAS THE 8TH LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH IN THE UNITED STATES.

SYMPTOMS INCLUDE: HIGH FEVER, HEADACHE, EXTREME TIREDNESS, DRY COUGH, SORE THROAT, RUNNY OR STUFFY NOSE, MUSCLE ACHES AND STOMACH ISSUES SUCH AS NAUSEA, VOMITING AND DIARRHEA. PROTECT YOURSELF AND THOSE AROUND YOU BY GETTING YOUR FLU SHOT.

MYTH: NEEDLES CAN HURT, SO IT'S EASIER NOT TO GET THE VACCINE.

FACT: YOU MAY FEEL A SHARP PRICK WHEN YOU GET THE VACCINE, BUT IT'S BRIEF. IF YOU ARE WORRIED, A NASAL FLU SPRAY IS AVAILABLE. THE SPRAY IS MADE FROM WEAKENED LIVE INFLUENZA VIRUSES, BUT CANNOT CAUSE THE FLU. IT IS APPROVED FOR HEALTHY PEOPLE AGES 2-49, BUT NOT FOR PREGNANT WOMEN.

MYTH: IT'S OK TO COME TO WORK WHEN YOU'RE FEELING SICK WITH FLU-LIKE SYMPTOMS.

FACT: TO PROTECT YOUR CO-WORKERS, IT'S IMPORTANT TO STAY HOME IF YOU DON'T FEEL WELL OR YOU ARE UNSURE IF YOU'RE CONTAGIOUS.

MYTH: FLU SHOTS CAN GIVE PEOPLE THE FLU.

FACT: THE FLU STRAIN CHANGES EVERY YEAR AND EVERY YEAR THE FLU VACCINE PROTECTS AGAINST NEW VIRUSES THAT ARE CIRCULATING. GET YOUR FLU VACCINE EVERY YEAR TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM THE CURRENT STRAINS

STAY SAFE WHILE RAKING LEAVES



While raking and mowing leaves are both great ways to get outside and enjoy fresh air, they can cause aches, pains, and even serious injury

Raking is an aerobic activity that uses major muscle groups and is a good way to burn calories. If you don't exercise regularly or have a medical condition, ask for help or hire someone to do the raking.

Before grabbing the rake, warm-up for about 10 minutes with some stretches and light exercise. Dress in layers to stay warm, layers can be removed as you warm-up, be mindful of hats or scarves that may obstruct your vision, and don't forget gloves to protect your hands from blisters. To keep from slipping on wet leaves, wear shoes or boots with slip-resistant soles.

USE A RAKE COMFORTABLE FOR YOUR HEIGHT AND STRENGTH

Use a rake that is comfortable for your height and strength. A rake handle that is too short may strain your back, if it is too heavy it will put added strain on your neck and shoulders, and one that is too long will decrease leverage. Ergonomic rakes are available, which are designed for comfort, easy to use, and prevent injury.



RAKE USING PROPER TECHNIQUE

While raking, keep the rake handle close to your body to promote a straight back, turn with your whole body and use the legs to shift your weight. Alternating leg and arm positions frequently will reduce stress on muscles. Be watchful of holes in the ground, or other tripping hazards and of critters that may be nesting in the leaves. Pace yourself and take regular breaks, get a drink of water and do some light stretching.

FOLLOW MOWING SAFETY WHEN MOWING LEAVES

When mowing leaves the safety tips are the same as when you mowed the yard this summer. Give the yard a once over to remove toys and other objects that may become projectiles. Wear protective gear such as safety glasses, ear plugs, gloves, boots and long pants to protect eyes, ears and limbs. Use a stick or broom handle to clear debris that gets caught under the mower, not your hands or feet. (This goes for the snow blower as well this winter). Never remove the safety devices; they are there for a reason, and never leave a lawn mower unattended. To keep your children safe, never let them ride on the lawn mower and keep them out of the area being mowed.

MULCH YOUR GARDEN WITH YOUR LEAVES

Now that the leaves are raked or mowed, put the leaves to good use in your gardens. Use shredded or chopped leaves as mulch in the garden.



SAFE TRICK OR TREATING!

- Plan costumes that are bright and reflective. Make sure that shoes fit well and that costumes are short enough to prevent tripping, entanglement or contact with flame.
- Consider adding reflective tape or striping to costumes and trick-or-treat bags for greater visibility.
- Because masks can limit or block eyesight, consider non-toxic makeup and decorative hats as safer alternatives. Hats should fit properly to prevent them from sliding over eyes.
- When shopping for costumes, wigs and accessories look for and purchase those with a label clearly indicating they are flame resistant.
- If a sword, cane, or stick is a part of your child's costume, make sure it is not sharp or too long. A child may be easily hurt by these accessories if he stumbles or trips.
- Obtain flashlights with fresh batteries for all children and their escorts.
- Do not use decorative contact lenses without an eye examination and a prescription from an eye care professional. While the packaging on decorative lenses will often make claims such as "one size fits all," or "no need to see an eye specialist," obtaining decorative contact lenses without a prescription is both dangerous and illegal. This can cause pain, inflammation, and serious eye disorders and infections, which may lead to permanent vision loss.
- Teach children how to call 9-1-1 (or their local emergency number) if they have an emergency or become lost.
- Small children should never carve pumpkins. Children can draw a face with markers. Then parents can do the cutting.
- Consider using a flashlight or glow stick instead of a candle to light your pumpkin. If you do use a candle, a votive candle is safest.
- Candlelit pumpkins should be placed on a sturdy table, away from curtains and other flammable objects, and should never be left unattended.

HOME SAFE HOME:

- To keep homes safe for visiting trick-or-treaters, parents should remove from the porch and front yard anything a child could trip over such as garden hoses, toys, bikes and lawn decorations.
- Parents should check outdoor lights and replace burned-out bulbs.
- Wet leaves or snow should be swept from sidewalks and steps.
- Restrain pets so they do not inadvertently jump on or bite a trick-or-treater.

Continued...

HEALTHY HALLOWEEN:

- A good meal prior to parties and trick-or-treating will discourage youngsters from filling up on Halloween treats.
- Consider purchasing non-food treats for those who visit your home, such as coloring books or pens and pencils.
- Wait until children are home to sort and check treats. Though tampering is rare, a responsible adult should closely examine all treats and throw away any spoiled, unwrapped or suspicious items.
- Try to ration treats for the days following Halloween.



ON THE TRICK-OR-TREAT TRAIL:

- A parent or responsible adult should always accompany young children on their neighborhood rounds.
- If your older children are going alone, plan and review the route that is acceptable to you. Agree on a specific time when they should return home.
- Only go to homes with a porch light on and never enter a home or car for a treat.
- Because pedestrian injuries are the most common injuries to children on Halloween, remind Trick-or-Treaters to:
 - ⇒ Stay in a group and communicate where they will be going.
 - ⇒ Remember reflective tape for costumes and trick-or-treat bags.
 - ⇒ Carry a cellphone for quick communication.
 - ⇒ Remain on well-lit streets and always use the sidewalk.
 - ⇒ If no sidewalk is available, walk at the far edge of the roadway facing traffic.
 - ⇒ Never cut across yards or use alleys.
 - ⇒ Only cross the street as a group in established crosswalks (as recognized by local custom). Never cross between parked cars or out driveways.
 - ⇒ Don't assume the right of way. Motorists may have trouble seeing Trick-or-Treaters. Just because one car stops, doesn't mean others will!

LAW ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITIES SHOULD BE NOTIFIED IMMEDIATELY OF ANY SUSPICIOUS OR UNLAWFUL ACTIVITY!

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WE ALL WISH **BECKY KEMPNEY** SMOOTH SAILING THROUGH HER DIFFICULT ROAD AHEAD. HER FRIENDS HAVE SET UP A **MEAL TRAIN** PAGE IF ANYONE IS INTERESTED IN DONATING A MEAL OR CASH TO HELP BECKY AND HER FAMILY. THEY HAVE ALSO SET UP A **BRAVELETS BRAVERY FOR BECKY** PAGE WITH \$10 FROM EACH PURCHASE GOING TOWARD BECKY'S MEDICAL EXPENSES.

PLEASE SEE THE LINKS BELOW FOR MORE INFORMATION:

<https://www.mealtrain.com/trains/39q0my>

<https://www.bravelets.com/bravepage/bravery-for-becky>

FALL BACK

Daylight Saving Time ends on Sunday, November 1st so don't forget set your clocks an hour earlier. When you change your clocks, it's also a great time to change the batteries in your smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors.

FLU VACCINE CLINICS

Where: Mary Walker Health Center

When: Wednesday, October 7, 2015 11 am - 3 pm
Thursday, October 8, 2015 11 am - 3 pm

Students FREE

Faculty/Staff: \$30.00

Credit, cash and check are accepted. Cash and check are preferred.

No appointment necessary.

SUSTAINABILITY

Electric-vehicle charging stations available! In the south parking lot of the Shineman Center, 6 electric cars can charge at a time thanks to newly installed charging stations. This is another great step towards reducing our carbon footprint on campus, and it can be a great convenience for electric car owners. The first four hours of charging are also free! After this free period there is a \$3 per hour charge.

Ergonomic Assessment: Christine Body has been doing ergonomic assessments since 1996 and is available to do them here on campus. She can be reached at 312-2770 and would be happy to assist you with any questions or issues.

OCTOBER WORD SEARCH

For a chance to win a great prize (more like an OK prize, but-hey, it's a PRIZE!), complete the Word Search and send it via e-mail to lisa.drake@oswego.edu OR through Campus Mail: Lisa Drake, 110 Lee Hall. Make sure to put your name on it! The winner for September was Linda Paris. Look for: Flu Vaccine, Virus, Seasonal Flu, Sick, High Fever, Sore Throat, Headache, Influenza, Symptoms, Raking, Mowing, Leaves, Fresh Air, Ergonomic, Safety Glasses, Ear Plugs, Gloves, Boots, Mulch, Flame Resistant, Reflective, Costumes, Pumpkins, Injuries, Pedestrian, Halloween.

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CALVIN'S "HOWL"OWEEN TIP... If you want to have your dog near the door to greet trick-or-treaters, keep him on leash. Pets may become stressed by holiday activities and unwelcome interruptions in routine. A nervous dog might feel threatened and growl, lunge or bite.