Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission

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December Newsletter 2025

Latest in Public Health and Upcoming Events

Protect your plans and your people, get your flu shot.

Did you know - it is not too late to get your flu shot? The Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission and the New Jersey Department of Health recommends that everyone six months and older should get an annual flu vaccination, especially those at high-risk for severe complications from the flu, including young children, pregnant women, people with certain chronic health conditions (asthma, diabetes, or heart disease), and people 65 years and older.

Shine like holiday lights & keep your hands sparkling clean.

Washing your hands is the best way to prevent the spread of germs. Research shows washing your hands for 20 seconds with soap and water is the most effective way to remove harmful germs and chemicals. For more information, click here.

Healthy Holidays Start With You

In case you missed it! Last month we shared, *Your Guide to a Safe and Healthy Holiday Season*. Topics covered the importance of vaccination and respiratory illness prevention, mental health during the winter season, food safety best practices, and more! Read more here.

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Stay Active

Moving Matters! Taking care of yourself is one of the most important things you can do for you and your family. One way to do that is to get regular physical activity. Increased physical activity can improve your sleep, reduce stress, and lower your risk of heart disease, stroke, some cancers, and type 2 diabetes.

Tips for Getting Active Indoors:

- Monitor the weather and plan ahead
- Wear layers when outdoors
- Take standing or walking-in-place breaks while watching TV
- Explore online workouts at any level
- Do some chores
- Take a nature walk or walk in the mall

The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommends:

- **Adults:** 150 minutes per week of moderate-intensity aerobic activity. That's only 22 minutes each day. At least 2 days a week do activities that make your muscles work harder.
- **Kids:** At least 60 minutes of activity everyday. 3 days per week include muscle and bone strengthening activity like jumping rope, playing a sport, and dancing.

If that's more than you can do right now, do what you can. Seek medical clearance before starting an exercise program if you have a history or signs and symptoms of cardiovascular, metabolic, or kidney disease. For more information, visit: cdc.gov/movingmatters

Preparedness Corner

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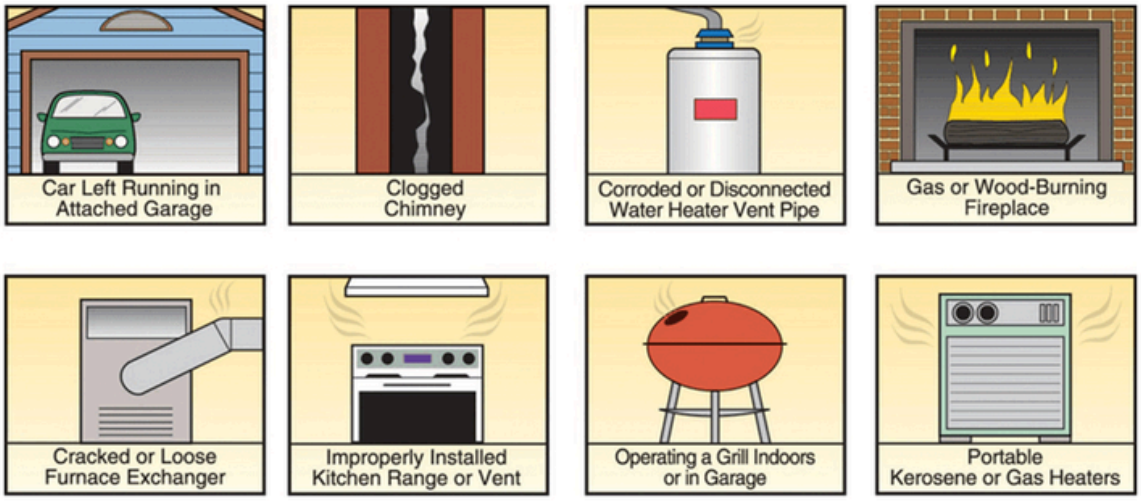
SOURCES OF CARBON MONOXIDE IN A HOME



The following information is courtesy of the New Jersey Poison Control Center
Website: njpies.org | Phone: 1-800-222-1222

Exposure to Carbon Monoxide (CO) can cause CO poisoning which can result in sudden illness and death. CO poisoning gives no warning since you cannot detect it through sight, smell, or taste. That means buildup of dangerous CO levels can happen quickly – harming anyone, including pets who breathe in the fumes. Early signs and symptoms of CO poisoning may include headache, dizziness, weakness, tiredness, upset stomach, vomiting, chest pain, and confusion. CO poisoning is a medical emergency that requires you to act quickly. If you're feeling sick, everyone, including pets, should leave the area immediately and contact emergency medical services.

Common sources of accidental CO poisoning include heating appliances and other equipment that use carbon-based fuel in private residences, guest homes, or lodging and rental facilities. Accidental CO poisoning is preventable when functional carbon monoxide detectors are in use. We especially need to be careful in commercial facilities like resorts or hotels and even in residential-type rentals and Airbnb rentals. When planning your next gateway, ask the commercial facilities or rentals about their carbon monoxide detector policy. Consider bringing a portable carbon monoxide detector when traveling to prevent CO poisoning.

Call the NJ Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222.
If someone is not breathing, hard to wake up, or having a seizure call 9-1-1

Recipe of the Month

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MUSHROOM BARLEY SOUP

Ingredients

(4 Servings)

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil (or cooking oil of choice)
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 medium celery stalks, sliced thin
- 2 medium carrots, peeled and sliced thin
- 2 cups mushrooms, sliced
- 1 cup potatoes, cut into pieces
- 1/2 cup quick cooking barley
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon ground thyme
- 3 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 2 cups water
- 1 tablespoon fresh parsley, chopped

Directions

1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Heat oil in large soup pot over high heat. Sauté onion, celery, carrots, and mushrooms until golden, about 4 minutes.
3. Add the rest of the ingredients except for the parsley and bring to a boil.
4. Lower heat to a simmer and cook until the barley is tender, about 20 minutes.
5. Sprinkle parsley on top of soup and serve hot.

For more recipes, visit: myplate.gov