

Mayor
Michael A. Pavia

Director of Health & Social Services
Anne Fountain, MPH



City of Stamford Department
of Health & Social Services

Sept/Oct/Nov 2011

THE HEALTH EXCHANGE

Fall into Fitness

Autumn offers the perfect outdoor workout weather—cool, crisp air, colorful scenery, and the sweet smell of fallen leaves. There is no better season to get outside and get moving. It's a great time to enjoy the outdoors, without the heat and humidity. So, take a walk on your lunch break, plan a family hike, or take an apple picking trip.

Increasing activity and regular exercise can reduce your risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, and diabetes. Exercising outdoors increases your body's production of endorphins, making you feel happier, more energetic, and revitalized. According to the American Heart Association, studies have shown that for every hour of walking, you can increase your life expectancy.

It's important to promote and encourage your children to get out and get moving too. October 5, 2011 is International Walk to School Day. If it's feasible and safe, en-

courage your children to walk or bike to school. On days off, take advantage of Cove Island Park's walking route, check out the trails at Bartlett Arboretum and the Stamford Museum and Nature Center, or enjoy the scenery of the Mianus River Preserve. Regardless of the venue, get out and enjoy!

Simple steps, like taking the stairs instead of the elevator, walking to lunch instead of driving, or taking an evening stroll after dinner all go a long way to improving your fitness levels as well as your mood.

This October, check out www.stamfordwalks.org for more information on walking routes in Stamford and upcoming walks hosted by community organizations in our area.

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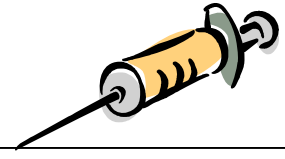
Senior Health Fair

The 40th annual Senior Health Fair will take place on Tuesday, October 11, 2011 at the Stamford Crowne Plaza Hotel at 2701 Summer Street. Entry into the event is free of charge. It will be held from 9am-1pm. The purpose of this event is to reach out to the senior population with health care services and information. Stamford Hospital partners with the City to provide attendees with important health screenings, opportunities to ask questions, and find out how best to address any health concerns. Attendees can also have blood screenings for a \$20 fee.

Colon cancer screenings are \$10. Lunch will be served.

This year, First County Bank is sponsoring the Fair as well. Senator Carlo Leone has also helped to bring additional informational sources to the Fair. Various State and local agencies will be on hand to share information with attendees

For more information, or to find out how your organization can participate, please call Kerri Hagan at 203.977.4893.



Fight the Flu!

According to the Centers for Disease Control, vaccination is the best protection against contracting influenza—the flu. This year's ***Fight the Flu*** campaign kicks off at the Stamford Government Center on September 27th at 10am. The City of Stamford and Stamford Hospital have teamed up again this year to ensure that flu shots are available to the public throughout September, October, November and into December. See below for locations and times. Please call our Flu Hotline for more information: 203-276-4948.

Government Center

888 Washington Blvd.

Tuesday, 10am-12noon

Thursday, 12noon-2pm

(No flu clinic on Oct. 11th and no flu clinic on Thanksgiving Day 11/24.)

Stamford Hospital's Tully Center

32 Strawberry Hill Court

Every Monday & Friday, 8am-2pm

Tuesday Evenings, 4pm-8pm

Saturdays, 8am-12pm (Oct. 1,8,15,22)

Optimus CHC

805 Atlantic Street

Saturdays, 9am-12pm

Oct. 22, 29, Nov. 12, 19, December 10

Optimus CHC

128 Stillwater Avenue

Tuesday-Thursday 12pm-5pm

Oct. 11-13, 18-20, 25-27

For more information on vaccinations and how to prevent the spread of influenza, go to www.flu.gov.

Letter from Anne Fountain, Director of Health & Social Services



The season is changing and glorious fall colors abound! As students return to school and the daylight hours shorten, we're reminded to keep active in new and creative ways—walk the neighborhood, take advantage of local parks and trails, or take the stairs at work. This issue of the *Health Exchange* features fall fitness ideas and information on Stamford's upcoming walk/run on Thanksgiving Day. We hope that you'll get moving!

Fall is also the time to prepare for cold and flu season by getting your flu shot. Once again, the City has partnered with Stamford Hospital to make it easier than ever to get your flu shot. I encourage everyone to talk with their doctor or other health care provider about this important preventative measure.

As part of the Stamford Cancer Awareness Campaign, the City of Stamford is supporting Stamford Hospital's *Paint the Town Pink* campaign. We commend the Hospital's Bennett Cancer Center for its community outreach and tremendous efforts to

get the word out about breast cancer awareness. More information on events in our area can be found at www.paintthetownpink.org or by calling the Bennett Cancer Center. We hope that you take advantage of the many informative and festive programs organized by the Bennett Cancer Center team.

Finally, a heartfelt thank you to all the members of the Health and Social Services team who contributed to the successful response to Hurricane Irene. It was a difficult time for many of the residents and families in our City. Our employees worked tirelessly to ensure that the needs of those seeking shelter were met. I would especially like to recognize Marge Kappas, a City of Stamford Public Health nurse, who volunteered her time that weekend. I would also like to thank our community partners including the American Red Cross and Salvation Army who supported our shelter.

State of Connecticut's HUSKY Program

Each week, the Department of Health and Social Services receives numerous inquiries about health insurance and Medicaid. The Healthcare for Uninsured Kids and Youth (HUSKY) program is Connecticut's health insurance plan for children and teenagers (up to age nineteen) and their eligible caregivers. Depending on income, eligible caregivers may be parents, relatives, and pregnant women. We are able to assist residents with determining their eligibility. If eligible, our Department's bi-lingual Outreach Coordinator will then help apply for HUSKY. Husky is either low or no cost health insurance coverage. Presumptive Eligibility for children and pregnant women can be granted the same day if all required information is provided.

HUSKY covers the following services:

- Preventative & Emergency Care
- Outpatient physician visits
- Prescription medicines
- Inpatient hospital & physician services

- Outpatient & surgical facility services
- Inpatient & outpatient mental health and substance abuse services
- Rehabilitation & physical therapy
- Diagnostic x-ray and laboratory services
- Durable medical equipment
- Vision and hearing exams
- Dental care

For more information on eligibility requirements or to schedule an appointment to apply for the HUSKY program (Monday-Friday 8am to 4pm), please contact, Maria Millan, at 203.9775676 or by email at mmillan@ci.stamford.ct.us.

Turkey Trot—Save the Date!

Would you like to burn some calories before sitting down to your Thanksgiving table this holiday? Then come out and join us for **Stamford's first "Turkey Trot"**. The City of Stamford, along with our co-sponsors Building and Land Technology, Pacific Swim Bike Run, and Fairway Market are planning to host a 5K fitness walk/run on November 24th. Whether you're an experienced runner or a family looking to enjoy the fresh air, the Turkey Trot is a fun and healthy way to kick off your holiday celebration.

The route will take you through Stamford's South End and highlight the exciting new development

taking place downtown. Look for detailed information about the event, including the route and how to register, on the City's website (www.cityofstamford.org) and the Stamford Walks website (www.stamfordwalks.org) this November.

We hope you'll join us for this festive and healthy event!



West Nile Virus

West Nile Virus is a potentially serious illness that is commonly caused by a bite by a mosquito infected with the virus. This year in Connecticut, the City of Stamford, as well as other municipalities, have reported human cases of West Nile Virus, which is generally seen in late summer and early fall.

Precautions to avoid mosquito bites include:

- Minimize time outdoors at dusk and dawn.
- Be sure door and window screens are tight fitting and in good repair.
- Wear shoes, socks, long pants, and long-sleeved shirts. Clothing material should be tightly woven. Use mosquito netting when sleeping outdoors.
- Consider using a mosquito repellent when it is necessary to be outdoors and always use them according to label instructions.
- When using DEET (the most widely used insect re-

pellent), use the lowest concentration effective for the time spent outdoors (for example, 6% lasts approximately 2 hours and 20% for 4 hours) and wash treated skin when returning indoors. Do not apply under clothing, to wounds or irritated skin, the hands of children, or to infants less than 2 months.

Measures to reduce mosquitoes around the home:

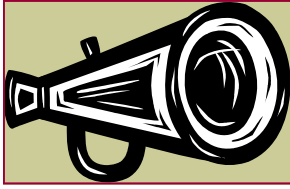
- Dispose of water-holding containers, such as ceramic pots, used tires, tire swings.
- Drill holes in the bottom of containers such as those used for recycling.
- Clean clogged roof gutters
- Change water in bird baths on a weekly basis
- Clean and chlorinate swimming pools, and When not in use, pool covers.
- Use landscaping to eliminate areas where water can collect on your property.

For more information on West Nile Virus symptoms and testing, visit www.cdc.gov/westnile/

Plan Ahead— September is Hurricane Preparedness Month

To ensure that you and your family are prepared in the event of an emergency, it is important to *plan ahead!* Whether you are planning to “shelter in” for a hurricane or an influenza pandemic, there are steps you can take to protect yourself and your family. The following are some items you may need to have on hand in an emergency:

- Store a two week supply of non-perishable food and fresh water (one gallon of water per person per day).
- Prepare contact lists including family and business contacts and email distribution lists.
- Make sure you have emergency supplies (i.e., flashlights, portable radio with extra batteries, first aid kit, can opener, etc.).
- Keep cash or traveler's checks in small denominations for easy use. There may be widespread illness or power outages resulting in a shut down of banks and ATMs.
- If you have chronic disease (i.e., heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, etc.), make sure you have a supply of prescribed medications. Make sure you have a supply of necessary medical and pharmaceutical items for your needs (i.e., glasses/contacts, glucose test strips, blood pressure monitoring systems, acetaminophen, cold and flu medications, vitamins and fluids with electrolytes, etc.).
- Store health and cleaning supplies, such as bleach, tissues, a thermometer, disposable gloves, soap and alcohol based hand sanitizers.
- Plan home learning activities and entertainment/recreational activities for children.



APHA Presentations

The Department of Health & Social Services would like to recognize and congratulate two of our public health nurses who will be presenting their research papers at the upcoming American Public Health Association convention in October 2011.

Myrtle Nunn, RN, will present, "New Vision Screening Technique Called Vision Care".

Sandra Morano, RN, will present, "Promoting a Tuberculosis Free Community: One Referral at a Time".

Congratulations and best of luck to them both!

Smoking Stinks Because...



November 17th is Great American Smoke Out Day! In an effort to educate Stamford's school age children about the harmful effects of smoking and tobacco products, the City of Stamford, Stamford Hospital, and the American Cancer Society are sponsoring a poster contest for children in the Stamford's elementary schools. Design a 11/17 inch poster encouraging kids and adults to stay away from tobacco and to stop smoking. Posters should be brought into school and they will be sent to the Government Center for judging. Posters will be hung up in the Government Center lobby and the winners will be recognized on November 17th. For more information on smoking cessation and support in our area, go to www.cancer.org.

Well Water Ordinance

This September, the Well Water Ordinance was passed by the City of Stamford's Board of Representatives and signed by Mayor Michael Pavia. This Ordinance allows for subsidized testing of Stamford wells. We hope to begin testing in January 2012. Homeowner cost will be \$100. All non-medical record information (including water results) are public record and therefore subject to freedom of information statutes. More information will be noted in future newsletter issues. In the meantime, if you have any immediate questions, please call the City of Stamford's Laboratory at 203.977.4378.

Know your Numbers!

September is National Cholesterol Education Month. High cholesterol does not present with noticeable symptoms, so many people are unaware that their cholesterol is too high. High cholesterol increases your chance of developing heart disease or having a heart attack. By regularly monitoring your cholesterol, and if necessary, reducing your levels, it is possible to reduce those risks. Talk with your health care provider about the recommended guidelines for testing. More information about this important topic can be found at www.cdc.gov/features/cholesterolawareness/

If you are interested in contributing to the newsletter or have suggestions for upcoming issues, please contact Kerri Hagan, Public Health Educator, at 203-977-4893 or at khagan@ci.stamford.ct.us.

The City of Stamford supports our Stamford Cancer Awareness Campaign partner, Stamford Hospital, in their *Paint the Town Pink* campaign. Please join us as we show our support for breast cancer survivors and promote awareness.


paint the town pink
KNOW
PREVENT
CURE
MILE OF PINK

*Saturday, October 1st, 10:30 a.m. – noon
Veterans Park, Atlantic Street, Stamford*

Stand side by side with Stamford Mayor Michael Pavia and WABC-TV's Bill Evans in our most visible display to promote breast cancer awareness. Support local breast cancer survivors as we line the streets and literally "Paint the Town Pink."



Mayor Michael Pavia



Bill Evans

To purchase your \$10 Paint the Town Pink t-shirt, visit one of the following locations:

- Bennett Cancer Center, 30 Shelburne Rd., Stamford
- Darien Imaging Center, 6 Thorndal Cir., Suite 104, Darien
- New Wave Seafood, 81 Camp Ave., Stamford
- Women's Breast Center at the Tully Health Center
32 Strawberry Hill Ct., Stamford

For more information, call 203.276.6143
or visit paintthetownpink.org



Paint the Town Pink is a registered trademark of Breast Cancer Network of Strength and is being used under license.