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### Inside This Issue:

- Bothered by Bed Bugs
- Did You Know?
- Cancer Screening
- Falls Among Older Adults
- Medical Reserve Corps
- Available Resources

### Did You Know?

- Reducing salt intake by 3 grams per day (half a teaspoon) can decrease the number of new cases of coronary heart disease in the US by 60,000 - 120,000 and of stroke by 32,000 – 66,000 annually.\*



\* [http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5924a4.htm?s\\_cid=mm5924a4\\_w](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5924a4.htm?s_cid=mm5924a4_w)

- Children under the age of six are at the greatest risk of poisoning. For more information visit:

<http://www.nyhealth.gov/publications/3111.pdf>



### Bothered by Bed Bugs

Bed bugs in hotels...bed bugs in high priced stores...bed bugs, bed bugs, bed bugs! So what is all the hype about these pesky creatures? Bed bugs have been around for thousands of years; however concerns about infestations seem to have escalated in recent months. Bed bugs are found throughout the United States and yes, Albany County too. While they do not pose a health problem for most people (in that they do not transmit disease) they are certainly a nuisance, and can cause considerable anxiety.

Getting rid of a bed bug infestation is not easy, but there are steps you can take to control the problem. Just remember - bed bugs are more of a nuisance than a health concern and, with vigilance, you can prevent or control the problem.

### Ways to avoid bringing bed bugs into the home

- Staying in a hotel? Place your bag on a suitcase stand. Keep the stand away from walls or furniture. Once home, wash clothes and put them in a hot dryer.
- Inspect furniture before bringing it inside. Look in seams, tufts and under cushions.

### Ways to control a bed bug problem in the home

- Clean and get rid of clutter, especially in bedrooms.
- Move your bed away from walls or furniture.
- Vacuum molding, windows and floors, sides and seams of mattresses, box springs and furniture. Empty vacuum bags immediately and dispose of outside in a sealed container or bag.
- Wash sheets, pillow cases, blankets and bed skirts and put them in a hot dryer for at least 30 minutes. Consider using mattress and box spring covers – the kind used for dust mite control – and put duct tape over the zippers.
- Seal cracks and crevices and any openings where pipes or wires come into the home.

If you decide to use pesticides, only use those registered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and make sure they are labeled to control bed bugs.



## Why Is Cancer Screening So Important?

Cancer will affect most people at some point in their lives. In the United States, approximately 1 in 2 men and 1 in 3 women will develop invasive (non-skin) cancer in their lifetime. In Albany County, approximately 1700 residents annually are diagnosed with invasive cancer, the most common types being prostate, breast, lung and colorectal cancer. Cancer is the second most common cause of death, surpassed only by heart disease. Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death, followed by breast cancer, prostate cancer, and colorectal cancer.

The good news is that we are seeing a decline in the number of people dying from cancer and people are living longer after a cancer diagnosis. In addition to significant advances in cancer treatment, this trend is due to the regular

use of screening tests done before people have any noticeable symptoms. These tests help fight cancer. They improve cancer outcomes by helping to find cancers early when they are less likely to have spread and are more likely to be curable. Screening tests for breast, cervical and colorectal cancer have all been shown to decrease the number of people who die from these cancers risks .

People without insurance, with a lower educational level, and ethnic minorities are less likely to get recommended screenings. This can result in cancers being diagnosed at a later stage that is not as easy to cure. Although screening rates in Albany County are higher than those reported nationally, we do not meet the recommended goals for finding screenable cancers at an early stage. For the best possible health outcomes, we

should all be getting screened regularly where appropriate for age and gender.

### **Where To Get Screened:**

- People with insurance or access to a primary care provider should speak with their provider about getting recommended cancer screening tests.
- **FREE breast, cervical and colorectal cancer screening** for eligible, uninsured and underinsured women and men is available through the Cancer Services Program of Albany County. Clients receiving a positive screening test also receive diagnostic testing and treatment if needed. Call (518) 454-4055 for more information.

## Cancer Screening Guidelines:

### **Breast**

- Women ages 40 and older are encouraged to speak with their doctors about when to begin getting routine mammograms.

### **Cervical**

- Women should begin having Pap tests within 3 years after the start of sexual activity or by age 21, whichever comes first and repeat testing every three years.
- Screenings are not recommended for women over the age of 65 if they have had normal Pap tests in the past.

### **Colorectal**

- Several different tests are recommended for colorectal cancer screening.
  - \* The Fecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT) detects blood in the stool which may be a sign of early cancer.
  - \* Colonoscopy and sigmoidoscopy are procedures done to visualize the inside of the colon and can

help find and remove precancerous growths and early cancers.

- Screening should begin at age 50 and continue to age 75 using either FOBT (done annually), sigmoidoscopy (done every five years in combination with FOBT every 3 years) or colonoscopy (done every 10 years).

<b>Percent of Cancers Diagnosed at an Early Stage</b>		
<b>Cancer Type</b>	<b>Albany County Rate (2003-2007)</b>	<b>New York State Goal*</b>
Colon & Rectum	43.2%	50%
Cervical	54.5%	65%
Female Breast	64.6%	75%
Prostate	84.5%	95%

\*Healthy People 2010

### **Prostate**

- The American Cancer Society and other medical organizations recommend men discuss the benefits and potential risks of prostate screening with their physician beginning at age 50.
- Men who have a higher risk of developing prostate cancer, including African American men and those with a father or brother who had prostate cancer before the age of 65, should discuss screening beginning at age 45.

**For more information on screening:**  
 CDC: <http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/dcpc/prevention/screening.htm>

ACS: <http://www.cancer.org/healthy/FindCancerEarly/index>

National Cancer Institute: <http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/screening>

NYS Cancer Services: <http://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/cancer/services/>

## Falls Among Older Adults

Did you know that falls are a leading cause of deaths, hospitalizations and emergency department visits among adults 65 and older in Albany County?

- Every day, because of a fall:
  - 3 elderly residents of Albany County are hospitalized
  - 5 elderly residents of Albany County are seen in emergency departments
- Falls account for \$ 24.3 million in annual hospitalization charges and \$ 3.6 million in annual outpatient emergency department charges for Albany County residents

Falls can result in long lasting, serious consequences, affecting mobility, independence and mental health.

### **There are many things you can do to prevent a fall:**

- Be careful. With winter upon us and ice and snow everywhere, it is important to be extra careful when walking outside
- Exercise. Regular exercise improves your balance and coordination.



- Review your medications. Some medicines can cause you to feel dizzy or drowsy, so it's important to have your health care provider review medications with you.

- Get an annual vision exam. Poor vision or changes in the eye can increase your risk of falling.
- Create a safer home with modifications (e.g. remove clutter, place grab bars in the bathroom, use double-sided tape to keep rugs in place).

To receive falls prevention information, contact the Albany County Department of Health or click on the following links below:

New York State Department of Health,  
Bureau of Injury Prevention  
[http://www.health.state.ny.us/prevention/injury\\_prevention/falls.htm](http://www.health.state.ny.us/prevention/injury_prevention/falls.htm)

Albany County Office for the Aging:  
Listing of Caregiver Resources  
<http://www.albanycounty.com/aging/caregiverresources.asp>

## **The Albany County Medical Reserve Corps is Looking for Volunteers!**

Did you know that only 19% of New Yorkers volunteer in their communities? What can you do to change that? Join the Albany County Medical Reserve Corps!

The Albany County Medical Reserve Corps is a group of medical and non-medical volunteers that are trained to assist the County in responding to a public health emergency. Last year, 120 MRC volunteers assisted in Albany County's response to the H1N1 pandemic. Medical volunteers worked side-by-side with clinical Health Department staff to screen and vaccinate county residents. Non-medical volunteers assisted with registration, interpretation, crowd control, clinic set-up and break-down, and helping special needs residents.

The Albany County Medical Reserve Corps is looking for active and retired licensed medical professionals as well as non-medical community members.

Members receive quarterly newsletters, training invitations and the opportunity to participate in drills to test Albany County's emergency plans.

Think you don't have time to volunteer? You choose your level of participation! Attendance at trainings and drills is encouraged but not required.



For additional information or to register, visit our website at [www.albanycounty.com/health/mrc](http://www.albanycounty.com/health/mrc). Or contact Sue Riedy at [susan.riedy@albanycounty.com](mailto:susan.riedy@albanycounty.com) or 518-447-4590.



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**Mission Statement**

*“The Mission of the Department of Health is to prevent diseases, epidemics, and injuries; to protect against hazards that affect health and safety; and to promote the healthy development of children and the wellness of all Albany County residents.”*

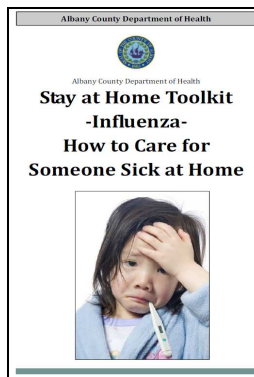


**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

**Available Resources:**

1) The Albany County Department of Health’s Influenza Stay at Home Toolkit: How to Care for Someone Sick at Home is now available in **Spanish and Burmese**.

This free booklet provides essential information to assist caretakers in identifying flu symptoms, making a “sick room”, preventing dehydration, medicine safety, treating symptoms of the flu and documenting personal care information.



To request free copies, please call (518) 447-4505 or email [BeReady@albanycounty.com](mailto:BeReady@albanycounty.com)

2) Tick removal kits are available for free to Albany County residents. These kits include a tick identification card, a magnifier, an alcohol wipe, and a pair of fine point tweezers. To request a kit, go to [www.albanycounty.com/health](http://www.albanycounty.com/health). One request per household please.

**Services Available at Albany County Health Department**

**Adult Care Services**

Home visiting programs for adults

**Clinical Services**

Immunizations, Tuberculosis, STD and Children’s Dental Services

**Communicable Disease Program**

Information and education for health care providers and county residents

**Environmental Health Services**

Regulation of public food service, pools/beaches. Children’s camps, hotel/motels, tattoo/piercing, private/public water and septic, rabies, lead and tobacco

**Health Education and Wellness**

Information and education for individuals, businesses, schools, and community groups

**Maternal and Child Health Programs**

Home visiting for pregnant women, parenting families, and children

**Public Health Preparedness**

Emergency planning, Pandemic Flu and bioterrorism awareness

**HIV/AIDS/STD Education**

**HIV Testing and Counseling**



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