

Wellness Articles

Attached are weekly health and wellness articles provided by Alberta Health Services. As a way to help all Albertans live a healthy life, we welcome and encourage weekly newspapers, community newsletters and other publications to reproduce this information free of charge. Credit to Alberta Health Services or the identified content provider would be appreciated.

If you would like to be added to the distribution list for these articles, please email: Rebecca.johnson2@albertahealthservices.ca. You will receive a monthly email containing articles for the upcoming four weeks.

An archive of past wellness articles is available at <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/9966.asp>

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Spread joy, not germs: stay healthy this holiday season

'Tis the season of fun holiday get-togethers but unfortunately it's also the season for not-so-joyful germs. With seasonal illness circulating, remember to protect your health and prevent illness.

Get immunized: Immunization is one of the most effective ways of protecting yourself against influenza viruses already circulating in our communities. It's not too late to be immunized. Vaccine continues to be offered to all Albertans (six months of age and older), free of charge. Remember: it takes up to two weeks after receiving your influenza immunization to be protected against influenza, so make plans to get your vaccine today! For more information, visit www.albertahealthservices.ca/influenza or call Health Link at 811.

Cover your cough: Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when sneezing or coughing. If you don't have a tissue, always cough or sneeze into your arm, not into your hands. Throw away tissues after wiping your nose or covering a cough, and wash your hands.

Clean your hands: Using soap and warm water wash your hands thoroughly and often, including after coughing, sneezing, using tissues or the washroom, and before eating or preparing food. Alcohol-based hand rub or sanitizer can also be helpful if hands are not visibly soiled. Clean or dirty: always try to keep your hands and fingers away from your eyes, nose and mouth.

Stay home if you are sick: If you're experiencing illness, including fever, cough, diarrhea and/or vomiting, stay home from work, school, daycare or any social function. Please also do not visit family, friends or loved ones in hospitals, care facilities or seniors lodges, until you have fully recovered.

Mind your food prep: If you are sick, do not prepare food for anyone, until fully recovered. When you are cooking, always keep safe food handling practices top of mind. To help you with the turkey task, follow AHS' Turkey Tips:

www.albertahealthservices.ca/turkeytips.asp

Around the house: Keep household surfaces clean, using a household cleaner. Think creatively when hosting gatherings: put a bow on a hand sanitizer pump and leave it out for guests to use; choose pre-wrapped candies or single serve food items instead of offering bowls of unwrapped snacks to all. Always thank others for declining invites due to illness.

Year-round: Keep yourself in good health by covering the basics: get enough rest, eat a balanced diet including at least five servings of fruit and vegetables each day, and exercise regularly. Finally, if you drink alcohol, do so in moderation and don't drink and drive.

For more information on these and other wellness topics, visit www.myhealth.alberta.ca, or call Health Link at 811.