Philadelphia Department of Public Health

Health Bulletin

Health tips and news for the community

Winter 2011

Staying Warm This Winter

As the weather turns cold, the risk of frostbite rises.
Don't stay outside for a long time, and dress warmly.
The following tips can help you stay warm outside:

- Wear a hat, hood or scarf. More heat is lost through the head than any other part of the body.
- Wear layers. Layers provide warmth.
- Keep clothing dry. Take off any wet clothing.
- Know **frostbite** symptoms.

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Frostbite is a cold-related emergency that happens when body parts freeze. Frostbite can affect the nose, ears, cheeks, chin, fingers and toes.

Frostbite symptoms include:

- White, gray or yellow skin
- Firm and waxy skin
- Burning and pain
- Tingling (like needle-pricks)
- Loss of feeling
- Burning and pain

If a person has frostbite:

- Get them into a warm room right away and call 911.
- Put the affected areas in warm, **NOT HOT**, water. Or use your own body heat to warm the area.
- **Don't** rub the area!
- **Don't** use a heating pad, heat lamp, or the heat of a stove or radiator for warming.
- **Don't** give alcohol or caffeine (like coffee and soda). Give them a cup of warm water or broth.

Staying warm inside your house is important too!

If you can't afford to pay for your electricity bill, the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) may be able to help keep you warm!

For more information call 1-866-674-6327 or visit www.liheap.org.

Stay in Touch with the Health Bulletin

You can find the Health Bulletin in many languages at http://www.phila.gov/Health/DiseaseControl/healthBulletin.html.
For more information about the Health Bulletin, contact PDPH at HealthBulletin@phila.gov.

Don't be a turkey about food safety this season!

Be sure to follow these tips for a safe and delicious holiday dinner:

- Cook meat to the right temperature.
- Put leftovers in the refrigerator within 2 hours of being cooked.
- Reheat leftovers, don't eat them cold.
- **Holidays are during cold and flu season. Keep germs out of the kitchen!**
- Wash all fruits and vegetables.
- Wash your hands often.
- Be careful with eggs– keep them in the refrigerator until you are ready to use them.
- **Cook eggs to avoid *Salmonella* bacteria!**

Flu Season

This year's flu vaccine will protect against H1N1 **AND** seasonal (regular) flu. Take these everyday steps to protect yourself and others from getting the flu.

- Take time to get the **flu shot**. For information on flu clinics, call the **Flu Hotline at (215) 685-6458**
- **Cover your nose and mouth** with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Then throw the tissue away.
- **Wash your hands** often with soap and water, or use hand sanitizer.
- **Don't touch** your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- **Avoid** being around sick people.
- **If you are sick, stay home** for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone. Your fever should be gone without using a fever-reducing medicine, like Tylenol.
- While you are sick, **limit your time with other people**. You do not want to get them sick!

Salmonella

Salmonella bacteria are spread from eating foods contaminated with feces of animals or people. Contaminated food can be beef, chicken, milk, eggs or vegetables.

Food can also become contaminated if an infected person prepares your food and did not wash his or her hands with soap after using the bathroom.

You can also get sick if uncooked meats touch fruits and vegetables, cooked foods or ready-to-eat foods. This is known as cross–contamination.

Symptoms include:

- Diarrhea
- Fever
- Stomach cramps

Cooking food kills *Salmonella*.