

Public Health Views... and News

A Newsletter for regional Health Professionals

Fall 2003 Vol. 3, No. 1

Published by the Branch Hillsdale St. Joseph Community Health Agency

www.bhsj.org

In this issue

Pediarix

The new 5 in 1 vaccine

**Mold in your home
what should you do?
(Throw out the cheese?)**

**Arthritis pain relief –
(Just a walk away)**

**CD on the Net:
Current trends in
communicable disease at your
fingertips**

Mark your calendar:

**Our Sturgis office is officially
moving
December 8, 2003**

**Great American Smokeout
November 20, 2003**

Pediarix (The first 5 in 1 vaccine)

GlaxosmithKline has implemented their “First 5 in 1 Vaccine” and Pediarix is its name. Pediarix is indicated for active immunization against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (Whooping cough), all known subtypes of hepatitis B virus, and poliomyelitis caused by poliovirus Types 1,2 and 3 as a three dose primary series in infants born of HBsAg-negative mothers, beginning as early as 6 weeks of age. Pediarix should not be administered to any infant before the age of 6 weeks, or to any individual 7 years of age or older. Tetanus and diphtheria toxoids adsorbed (Td) for adult use, IPV, and hepatitis B vaccine (recombinant) should be used in individuals 7 years of age and older.

Pediarix is recommended for the primary series. It is not indicated for use as a booster dose. The most common

adverse reactions observed in clinical trials were local injection site reactions (pain, redness, or swelling) fussiness and fever. In one study that evaluated medically attended fever after the first dose of Pediarix or separately administered vaccines, infants who received Pediarix had a higher rate of medical encounters for fever within the first 4 days following vaccination. In some infants, these encounters included the performance of diagnostic studies to evaluate other causes of fever. Pediarix will not prevent hepatitis caused by other agents, such as hepatitis A, C and E viruses, or other pathogens known to infect the liver. As Hepatitis D (caused by the delta virus) does not occur in the absence of hepatitis B infection, hepatitis D will also be prevented by vaccination with Pediarix. Hepatitis B has a long incubation period. Vaccination with Pediarix may not prevent hepatitis B infection in individuals who

had an unrecognized hepatitis B infection at the time of vaccine administration. When passive protection against tetanus or diphtheria is required, Tetanus Immune Globulin or Diphtheria Antitoxin, respectively, should be administered at separate sites. As with any vaccine, Pediarix may not protect 100% of individuals receiving the vaccine, and is not recommended for treatment of actual infections.

Hypersensitivity to any component of the vaccine, including yeast, neomycin, and polymyxin B, is a contraindication for vaccination. It is a contraindication to use this vaccine after a serious allergic reaction temporally associated with a previous dose of this vaccine or with any components of this vaccine. Pediarix should be given with caution in children with bleeding disorders such as hemophilia or thrombocytopenia, with steps taken to avoid the risk of hematoma following the injection. As with any injection, the clinician should take all reasonable precautions to prevent adverse reactions, allergic or otherwise, including understanding the use of the biological concerned, and the nature of the side effects and adverse reactions that may follow its use.

The bottom line for patients is that the use of Pediarix will result in 6 fewer injections for infants in the first year. This will reduce infant pain and discomfort of the infant (not to

mention reduced parent discomfort) associated with multiple injections. Finally, with less stress and anxiety, immunization utilizing Pediarix may increase the likelihood that infants will get all their shots promptly, improving their chance of good health. That outcome is a win for all involved.

For additional information on Pediarix, visit www.Pediarix.com or visit our web site at www.bhsj.org

Fungi in your home (not just on the bread)

Fungi are organisms which include mushrooms, molds, and yeasts. Fungi generally found in buildings belong in the genera *Stachybotrys*, *Cladosporium*, *Penicillium*, *Alternaria*, *Aspergillus*, and *Mucor*. They produce spores which are very small and are resistant to desiccation. These ubiquitous



organisms are primarily responsible for the breakdown of organic materials in nature. The spores and fungal fragments are easily carried by slight air currents, on clothing, and on pets into homes, schools, and places of business.

Problems arise, however, when the organisms start growing in close proximity to

humans. Incidence of hay-fever like symptoms, allergic rhinitis, pneumonia, and asthmatic events may increase. Standard or Threshold Limit Values (TLVs) for airborne concentrations of mold or mold spores, have not been set. So there is currently no EPA regulations or standards for airborne mold contaminants.

Why Molds Grow in Buildings?

Problems arise when a building has a humidity level above 60% and available water has entered and soaked the structure and or its contents. It can be due to condensation from water pipes, on cold exterior walls in the winter, unsealed concrete slabs, soil surface under inadequately ventilated crawl spaces; water leaks from roof, ice dams from gutters or inadequately ventilated attics; sewage leaks; floods; inadequately ventilated kitchens, dishwashers, dryers, bathrooms.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, one third to one half of all structures has damp conditions that may encourage development of molds and bacteria. People may notice a musty smell in the building or a pink, blue-green, or black stain on the plaster or wall paper on an outside wall. They may see a green, white, pink, or black powdery or slimy material on clothing or leather goods.

How do you change the environment to reduce potential for mold growth?

The indoor humidity must be reduced to 30-60% by (1) increasing ventilation in the building (proper venting of cooking, drying, washing water vapor); (2) dehumidify the building with air conditioners or dehumidifiers; (3) remove the sources of condensation; (4) repair the leak in the roof and pipes.

Remediation

The Environmental Protection Agency recommends the use of soap and water to remove fungi from hard surfaces. They do not encourage use of bleach because of the possible release of air pollutants. They recommend discarding absorbent materials such as carpets and ceiling tiles. After a flood, roof leak, or water line break – clean and dry wet building materials and furnishings within 24-48 hours to prevent mold growth. They recommend discarding those items which will not dry quickly such as carpets and ceiling tiles.

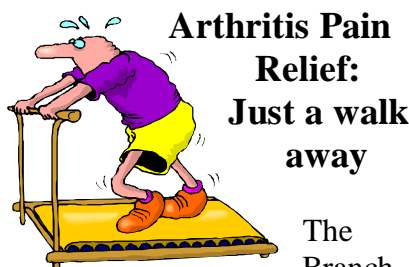
Conclusions

Fungi are commonly found in indoor and outdoor environments. Their growth needs to be controlled in indoor environments to prevent allergy related symptoms and potential mycoses in immunocompromised individuals. The most successful means of control of fungi in indoor

environments is through maintaining the humidity at between 30-60%. A large number of information resources are available on the internet from the Environmental Protection Agency [EPA] and the Federal Emergency Management Agency [FEMA] which includes information for the home owner how to prevent molds and how to remove them once they are growing on site.

Mold in Private Homes – Resource suitable for public use:

Federal Emergency Management Agency [FEMA].
www.fema.gov/fima



The Branch-St. Joseph Area Agency on Aging (AAA) was chosen by the State Office of Services to the Aging & the Michigan Department of Community Health to participate in a marketing campaign called “Physical Activity, The Arthritis Pain Reliever.” in August 2003. The marketing campaign intended to raise awareness in the community about the positive effects that regular physical activity can have in reducing arthritis pain among adults, age 45 and older.

In an effort to deliver this message, our agency partnered

with over 30 local agencies, organizations and health care entities. You may have heard or seen one of many radio announcements and/or print advertisements placed throughout our local media in August. By the end of the campaign, feedback from our partners indicated nearly 100,000 individuals were reached through our marketing efforts! This includes those individuals who visited our agency’s web site & were linked to the Michigan Chapter of the Arthritis Foundation’s website. “Physical Activity. The Arthritis Pain Reliever” campaign was a great opportunity to focus on an area of health promotion that we hadn’t in the past. Moreover, it allowed us to build relationships with local entities to further our health promotion activities in the future. We certainly look forward to continuing efforts like these in the future! “Physical Activity. The Arthritis Pain Reliever.” materials are still available! As a result of our successful campaign, we have requested more materials from the Michigan Department of Community Health to distribute. Please contact Laura Sutter, Senior Services Coordinator, at the Branch-St. Joseph Area Agency on Aging for further information: (517) 279-9561 extension 137 or via email at sutterl@bhsj.org. As always, if you would like to discuss promoting health and wellness among older adults that you serve, contact our

office and we would be happy to assist you!

Communicable disease on the Net? Viruses too!

The Branch Hillsdale St. Joseph Community Health Agency has been making significant changes (improvements, if we may be so bold) to our web site. One of those improvements is in the area of communicable disease data. All of the current reportable diseases which the Health Agency is required to report to the Michigan Department of Community Health are now posted on our web site. The data is posted in three different tables, one for each county. You can access this information at www.bhsj.org On the home page, you select Health Data and scroll down to the bottom of the page. This information is updated monthly.

We're moving



The Sturgis office of the Branch Hillsdale St. Joseph Community Health Agency is moving effective December 8, 2003. Due to expansion at the Sturgis Hospital and increasing demand for services and space, the Health

Department decided to seek it's own office space in the Sturgis community. Our new office will be located at 209 W. Hatch Street. The Building was previously occupied by the Michigan Employment Security Commission. Moving into this facility will allow us to remain in close proximity to our clients in the community. It will also expand our current office space and assist us in providing quality, confidential service to additional clients, and not significantly increase the cost of operation to the department. Additionally, parking for this new (new to us) facility is more convenient for clients as they now can walk directly into the office, rather than taking a ramp and then an elevator to a lower level. We feel the move will prove beneficial for both the Health Department and our clients. We hope you agree.

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!!

The American Cancer Society's 27th annual Great American Smokeout is scheduled for November 20th, the third Thursday of this month. The event is held annually to help millions of Americans quit smoking by encouraging them to quit for a day and is intended to "get the ball rolling" for a smoke-free lifetime.

In the United States alone smoking:

- ? causes nearly one in five deaths
- ? claims more than 400,000 lives each year
- ? has caused at least one serious illness in about 8.6 million people

In addition, smoking is attributable to:

- ? many chronic ailments including heart disease, lung cancer and emphysema
- ? reducing the life expectancy by an average of 12 to 15 years
- ? 26,000 new cases each year of childhood asthma due to children inhaling the secondhand-smoke.

In support of the Great American Smokeout the American Cancer Society, the St. Joseph County Tobacco Reduction Action Coalition and the Branch and Hillsdale County Tobacco Reduction Action Coalition will be encouraging area restaurants and worksites to go "smoke free" for the day. Make sure you partner with these organizations by patronizing a participating restaurant, in your area, or by remaining smoke-free at work on this very important day. For further information or to find out which local restaurants will be going smoke-free for the day, contact your local American Cancer Society or the Branch, Hillsdale and St. Joseph Tobacco Reduction Action Coalition, Coordinator at 517-279-9561 ext. 123 or logon to www.bhsj.org .