

PUBLIC HEALTH CONNECTION

A quarterly newsletter from the Clinton County Health Department

IDENTIFYING & MANAGING LEAD EXPOSURE

New York State Public Health Law (NYS PHL) and Regulations require health care providers to obtain a blood lead test for all children at one and two years of age, regardless of risk. Lead exposure risk should also be assessed at each well visit for all children aged 6 months to 6 years.

Even low level lead exposure can lead to delayed puberty, lowered IQ, hyperactivity, and attention, behavior, and learning problems. On October 1, 2019 the blood lead level (BLL) reporting requirement per NYS PHL was decreased from 10 micrograms per deciliter (µg/dL) of blood to **5 µg/dL**. With this change, CCHD has seen a **38%** increase in cases for reported BLLs between 5 to <10 µg/dL, compared to year-to-date number of cases from this time last year.

Data obtained from the NYS Immunization Information System (NYSIIS) indicates that in Clinton County, **75.1%** of children were tested for lead by two years of age in 2019. See Table 1 below for cases of blood lead levels ≥5 µg/dL reported in Clinton County from 2016 to 2020.

To assist providers, *Guidelines for Health Care Providers for the Prevention, Identification, and Management of Lead Exposure in Children* has been updated and is available at <https://on.ny.gov/2nbnh7y>. To reduce risk of contamination during blood collection for lead testing, a guidance video for staff is available at <https://bit.ly/2kNYXaM0>. Capillary BLL sample results ≥5 µg/dL should be confirmed with a venous sample as soon as possible. After venous test confirmation, results ≥5 µg/dL should be reported to the local health department in the child’s county of residence.

In Clinton County, CCHD offers in-home education to parents regarding lead hazards and prevention of lead poisoning for children with a confirmed BLL ≥5 µg/dL. This includes next steps to prevent any further lead poisoning, a nutritional assessment and diet considerations to help lower lead levels, and a developmental assessment. In addition, an environmental lead exposure assessment is completed, including testing of possible lead sources within the home. Short-term case management is also provided until the BLL is confirmed with a venous level <5 µg/dL.

TABLE 1. CASES OF BLOOD LEAD LEVELS (BLL) ≥5 µg/dL REPORTED IN CLINTON COUNTY BY REFERENCE LEVEL, 2016-2020

YEAR	BLOOD LEAD LEVEL (µg/dL)			
	5 to <10	10 to <15	15 to <20	20 to <45**
2016	34	3	1	0
2017	24	6	2	1
2018	26	2	0	1
2019	22	2	2	0
2020*	18	4	0	0

*Reported as of 9/15/20; **No levels reported ≥45 µg/dL

SCRAPING FOOD WASTE AND FOOD INSECURITY

While many families struggle to put healthy food on their tables, research shows that nearly **forty percent** of edible, nutritious food is wasted. In 2019, the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation sought innovative projects to enhance the reduction, recovery and/or recycling of food waste. CCHD responded with a plan that focuses on resident education for reducing food waste in the home-to save money, increase healthy food donations and reduce food scraps diverted to landfills.

To kick off the project, [Eat Smart, Waste Less Clinton County \(ESWL\)](#) has created a series of [short videos](#). Viewers are guided through small changes they can make in the way they shop, store foods, prepare meals and will be invited to participate in Facebook Challenges. The videos also detail how to responsibly donate and manage home food waste.

According to the 2016 ReFed Report, consumer education campaigns, like ESWL, have the highest net economic value of 27 different food waste solutions and have the potential to divert over half a million tons of food waste/ year.

For more on the *Eat Smart, Waste Less* initiative and to access the videos, patients may visit www.clintonhealth.org/eswl.

The videos are also available on the Clinton County Health Department’s YouTube Channel at <https://bit.ly/304fB7x>.

2020-21 INFLUENZA SEASON

Influenza vaccination for all persons aged ≥ 6 months remains the best method for influenza prevention and is especially important this season when SARS-CoV-2 and influenza virus might cocirculate. Summary recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) for the **2020-21 influenza season** are available at <https://bit.ly/2FGFwv5>; view full recommendations at <https://bit.ly/3kv8eho>. Recommendations include:

- No preferential recommendation is made for one influenza vaccine product over another for persons for whom more than one licensed, recommended, and appropriate product is available.
- Inactivated influenza vaccines (IIVs), recombinant influenza vaccine (RIV4), and live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV4) are expected to be available.
- Most influenza vaccines available for the 2020-21 season will be quadrivalent, with the exception of MF59-adjuvanted IIV, which is expected to be available in both quadrivalent and trivalent formulations.
- The composition of 2020-21 U.S. influenza vaccines includes updates to the influenza A(H1N1)pdm09, influenza A(H3N2), and influenza B/Victoria lineage components. Quadrivalent vaccines will include an additional influenza B virus component from the B/Yamagata lineage, which is unchanged from that included in quadrivalent influenza vaccines used during the 2019-20 season.
- Fluzone High-Dose Quadrivalent (HD-IIV4) and Fludax Quadrivalent (aIIV4) are now both licensed and approved for use in persons aged ≥ 65 years.
- Additional measures for those with a history of severe allergic reaction to egg (i.e., vaccination in a medical setting supervised by a health care provider who is able to recognize and manage severe allergic reactions) are needed only if a vaccine other than cell culture-based inactivated influenza vaccine (ccIIV4) or recombinant influenza vaccine (RIV4) is used.
- Additional contraindications and precautions for the use of live-attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV4) include: anatomic and functional asplenia; active communication between the cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) and oropharynx, nasopharynx, nose, or ear or any other cranial CSF leak; and cochlear implant.

WIC IS NOW OFFERING TELEHEALTH APPOINTMENTS!

In its effort to continue to increase accessibility of the program, Clinton County WIC is now offering telehealth appointments. Excitingly, it is the first WIC Program in NYS to offer this option. Transportation has long been the most commonly reported barrier to program participation for the local WIC program. Many families report having no vehicle or needing to share one for the household; cost of gas and winter driving have also been referenced as challenges in past participant surveys.

Prior to COVID-19, this new service was planned as a pilot project to offer an alternative for in-person appointments. However, it has turned out to be critical in staying connected with families through the pandemic and in accommodating new and altered family schedules. WIC is using **Healthie** – a web-based, confidential, HIPAA compliant platform that is free to users. For questions on how to participate, patients can call the WIC office at **518-565-4830**.

UPDATED VACCINE INFORMATION STATEMENTS

- [Hepatitis A](#)
- Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Pertussis ([DTaP](#))
- Tetanus and Diphtheria ([Td](#))
- Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Pertussis ([Tdap](#))
- [Yellow Fever](#)
- “Your Child’s First Vaccines” [Multi-Vaccines](#)
- [Adenovirus](#)
- [Anthrax](#)
- [Rabies](#)

To ensure you are using the most up-to-date VISs, visit <https://bit.ly/2rASaj8>.

PROVIDER RESOURCE

The New York State Association of County Health Officials (NYSACHO) is currently offering a *NYS Adult Immunization Coalition Lunch and Learn Web Series*, free to all adult immunization providers in NYS. For details visit: www.nysacho.org/events/list.

NEW PATIENT RESOURCE

Through grant funding awarded to NYS, **Better Choice, Better Health** is offering a free, six-week online workshop to provide patients with the tools they need to navigate life during the COVID-19 pandemic. The workshop will help patients stay informed about medications and physical activity, as well as pain, stress, and isolation management skills, and is open to all residents. Patients can register at: bit.ly/bcbh2020.