



Health Matters

a monthly publication of the
Farmington Valley Health District
February 2019

Serving the towns of:

Avon
Barkhamsted
Canton
Colebrook
East Granby
Farmington
Granby
Hartland
New Hartford
Simsbury

FLU-associated deaths increase in Connecticut

This past week the CT Department of Public Health announced an additional three flu-associated deaths bringing the season total to 11 in the State. The percentage of people visiting emergency rooms with flu-like symptoms and illness is also increasing.

With flu activity increasing and considered widespread throughout the State, it is extremely important to follow these important tips to stay healthy:

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Visit our website at
www.fvhd.org

- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs like the flu.
- Vaccination is the best defense--anyone 6 months of age or older should be vaccinated.

95 River Road
Canton, CT 06019
860-352-2333

For more on the flu visit: [CDC](http://www.cdc.gov) or the [CT Department of Public Health](http://www.ct.gov/dph)

WINTER SAFETY GUIDE



Staying Safe This Winter: Protect Yourself and Your Family From Winter Hazards

Connecticut winters can present a wide variety of potential hazards including brutally cold temperatures, ice and snow and power outages. While we cannot control the weather, we can be prepared and take simple precautions to avoid injury.

- **Dress Appropriately:** Wearing multiple layers when planning on spending time outdoors allows you to adjust to changing conditions. Water-repellent outer layers are recommended to keep inner clothing dry. Considerable heat is lost from the head so wearing hats is important to retain body heat. Extremities including the fingers and toes are most susceptible to frostbite - keep hands and feet covered and dry.
- **Prepare an emergency supply kit and winterize vehicles:** Jumper cables, a blanket, a small bag of sand, a small shovel, a solar phone charger, water and non perishable snacks are suggested in the event that you get stuck during poor traveling conditions. In addition, make sure vehicles have been maintained, tire pressure checked and when possible - keep gas tank half full.
- **Install carbon monoxide detectors:** Prior to the heating season, make sure furnaces are serviced, and any stoves or fireplace chimneys are clear. Blocked vents or poorly functioning heating systems can create the build up of carbon monoxide in the home. Never use un-vented heating sources, charcoal or gas grills in the home. Make sure generators are located far from the house to ensure exhaust is not drawn into the house. Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless deadly gas.
- **Beware of Fall Hazards and Other Snow Removal Dangers:** To prevent falls wear shoes or boots that have good traction on ice. Special grippers can also be attached to the bottoms of shoes and boots especially when ice is a problem. Taking it slow and observing the conditions before stepping out of the house or the car can also help prevent falls. Unfortunately, each year people experience heart attacks after strenuous snow removal and shoveling. Recognize that snow removal can be physically demanding and avoid doing it if you are not physically fit. When using snow blowing equipment NEVER try to clear a jam or address operational issues while the machine is running. Each year avoidable emergency room visits are caused by these careless mistakes.
- **Make a Home Emergency Preparedness Kit:** In the event of a power outage or

travel restrictions, a home emergency preparedness kit can provide you and your family with the necessary supplies to stay safe in your home for a period of time. Items including bottled water, non-perishable food items, manual can opener, flashlights, batteries and solar phone chargers can be helpful. In addition, a hand-crank radio can keep you apprised of the latest weather alerts and advisories. www.ready.gov

For additional emergency preparedness information or information specific to winter hazards and how to stay safe, please view the following resources:

<https://www.ready.gov/winter-toolkit>

<https://www.ready.gov/winter-weather>

<https://www.fema.gov/winter-weather-readiness>

<https://portal.ct.gov/DEMHS/Emergency-Management/Resources-For-Individuals/Winter-Weather-Awareness/Winter-Weather-Awareness>

For more in-depth coverage about these topics, please view our *Health Matters* interview with Melissa Marquis, FVHD Emergency Response Specialist



Vaping: An Emerging Public Health Crisis

Vaping refers to the use of electronic devices that turn liquid, usually containing nicotine and other volatile compounds, into an aerosol, which is then inhaled. Originally marketed as a tool to help individuals interested in weaning themselves off of cigarettes, vaping use among youth has risen dramatically. In Connecticut, nearly 15% of high school students report current use of electronic nicotine delivery systems. This is a **doubling** since 2015.

The increased use of vaping devices among youth is raising a number of very significant public health concerns. Youth are typically unaware of the presence and level of nicotine found in many of the vaping products they are using. The most common vaping product used among Connecticut youth contains the same amount of nicotine in the liquid "pod" as a pack of cigarettes. Youth often report using one "pod" a day placing them at very high risk of early and quick nicotine addiction! In addition to addiction, nicotine presents very significant health implications including mood disorders, impaired impulse control, learning and attention deficits. Other substances found in the products including glycerin and propylene glycol can cause acute effects including eye, nose and throat irritation and upset stomach. Adverse health effects of the lung, heart, circulatory and gastrointestinal systems have also been attributed to vaping. Vaping devices are also being used to deliver THC, the active ingredient in marijuana.

Youth as young as middle school are attracted to vaping because it is often

marketed with fruity flavors and is perceived as less dangerous than cigarettes. Vaping is also very easy to hide from parents and others as it does not release an objectionable odor, the vapor dissipates rapidly when exhaled and vaping devices can look like USB flash drives or pens.



Image source: www.cdc.gov

Call to Action

- Becoming more educated on what vaping is, what it looks like and signs of its use.
- Talk to your children and teens about vaping. Chances are they, or someone they know has tried it.
- Encourage tobacco and vaping free lifestyles as the norm - talk realistically about the risks.
- Support policies that reduce access by youth including increasing the age of purchase. Click [Here](#) to read FVHD's position paper.



Click the video to learn more about vaping from colleagues Kristen Formanek, Director of Social Services-Simsbury and Chris Montes, Juvenile Justice Coordinator-Farmington

FEBRUARY IS HEART HEALTH MONTH

Protect Your Hardest Working Muscle!

Cardiovascular health refers to the health of the heart and blood vessels, also known as the circulatory system.



About 610,000 people die of heart disease in the United States every year – that's **1 in every 4 deaths**. Every year about 735,000 Americans have a heart attack. Of these, 525,000 are a first heart attack and 210,000 happen in people who have already had a heart attack! Heart disease and stroke are two of the leading causes of death in the United States, although they are widely preventable. Preventing heart disease starts with understanding the risk factors for developing heart disease and making healthy lifestyle choices.

Obesity is one of the major risk factors for developing heart disease along with smoking cigarettes, not maintaining healthy cholesterol levels and not maintaining a healthy blood pressure. To help reduce your risk of heart disease and stroke work to do the following:

- Eat a colorful diet with as many whole, unprocessed foods as possible. Talk to your healthcare professional for more dietary advice and always consult your doctor when you start a new diet.
- Watch your sodium and sugar intake. This helps maintain a healthy weight.
- Get moving! Integrate 150 minutes per week of moderate-intensity aerobic activity. ([Exercise Guidelines](#))
- Know your cholesterol and blood pressure numbers and work with healthcare providers to achieve or maintain healthy levels.
- Quit smoking. Smoking is a major cause of heart disease and causes **1 of every 3** deaths from heart disease. (www.cdc.gov)

Monitoring cholesterol levels, blood pressure and managing conditions such as diabetes can help lower the risk of heart disease and stroke. It is important to remember cardiovascular diseases are the most common complication associated with diabetes.

HEALTH PROGRAMMING IN YOUR DISTRICT



"It's Your Life...Live it Well"

No cost to attend

Workshop is held once a week for six weeks

Caregivers are welcome

CHRONIC PAIN SELF MANAGEMENT

Are you an adult with an ongoing health condition such as arthritis, high blood pressure, heart disease, chronic pain, anxiety or depression?

Do you care for someone who lives with chronic pain?

This workshop can help you be in control and feel better.

You will learn:

- Practical ways to deal with pain and fatigue
- Better nutrition and exercise choices
- Better ways to talk to your doctor about your health
- Communication techniques to help make your needs known

Where and When?

Simsbury Senior Center

754 Hopmeadow St # 1

Simsbury, CT 06070

April 3rd, 2019

To Register Call Simsbury Senior Center at: (860) 658-3273

photo & information source: cthealthyliving.org

Farmington Valley Food Pantry and Mobile Food Share Locations

The percent of households in the Farmington Valley towns that have been identified as **Asset Limited Income Constrained Employed (ALICE Project)**-initiative of United Way) has increased substantially since 2010. As many as 20-29% of households in our towns are considered "ALICE." No individual or family should feel embarrassed or avoid seeking assistance. Below is a list of available food resources throughout the Farmington Valley. Access is simple, free and confidential--there are no requirements for exchange of information.

Name	Waste Not Want Not South Congregational Church	First Church of Christ	Burlington Social Services	St. Mary Star of the Sea	Avon SS - The Farmington Valley American Muslim Center
Town	Granby	Simsbury	Burlington	Unionville	Avon
Address	242 Salmon Brook St	689 Hopmeadow St.	200 Spielman Highway	145 Main St.	35 Harris Road
Day	Every other Tuesday	Every other Monday	Every other Tuesday	Every other Tuesday	Every other Tuesday
Time	12:00 – 12:30 P.M.	1:00-1:30 P.M.	10:30 – 11:00 A.M.	9:00 – 9:30 A.M.	10:00 -10:30 A.M.
January	15, 29	14,28	15, 29	8, 22	8, 22
February	12, 26	11,25	12, 26	5, 19	5, 19
March	12, 26	11,25	12, 26	5, 19	5, 19



RESILIENCE GROWS HERE

Veterans & Community. Together, we thrive!



Year of Resilience

Resilience Grows Here is proud to be collaborating with the local school districts of East Granby and Canton to bring resiliency programming to the Middle and High schools. In our "Year of Resilience" initiative, students participate for an hour a month with the RGH team to creatively and actively explore different aspects of resilient behaviors like: Asking for Help, Communication, Empathy vs Sympathy, Friendship, Community and Failure.

Acknowledging that the development and promotion of resilient attributes and help seeking behaviors among youth is central to individual and community mental wellbeing, RGH is providing leadership to help create the consistency of a nurturing, resilient and trauma informed classroom and school community.

For more information about getting your school and community involved with the RGH "Year of Resilience" please contact Justine Ginsberg at: **860-352-2333 or 860-986-2503**



Kevin Case, Canton School Superintendent, talks about the importance of this programming in a segment of *Health Matters*

The health department strives to prevent disease outbreaks and conditions that give rise to poor health, promote health programs and policies that support good health, and protect members of our community from health threats.

