

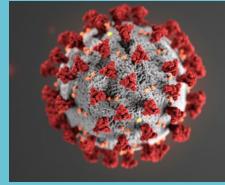


# Health Matters

a monthly publication of the  
**Farmington Valley Health District**  
**March 2020**

Serving the towns of:

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



## Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update

**NEWS:** Click [here](#) for the latest information and resources on coronavirus (COVID 19) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Click [here](#) for the Connecticut Health Department latest news about coronavirus COVID 19

Click [here](#) for a list of frequently asked questions and answers about the novel coronavirus.

### Event Cancellations

After recommendations from our governor, we are now beginning social distancing to slow the spread of COVID-19. Events with more than 100 people in attendance will be cancelled until at least April 30th of this year. We will follow up with updates on this as more information becomes available.

## Public Health Emergency Throughout Connecticut

In response to the global pandemic of COVID-19, our state governor has

declared a public health emergency throughout Connecticut. A state of emergency is a situation in which government officials and directors of health are empowered to impose actions or policies that they would normally not be permitted to.

The purpose of declaring a public health emergency is to limit the spread, and impact, of COVID-19 on our residents and on our healthcare system. When appropriate, the health department may issue guidance and apply principles of risk management to decisions about whether to cancel, modify, or postpone large gatherings, public events, or travel. Declaring a state of emergency may also result in an increase of resources for those who are working to protect the public.

Through this declaration, health officials and local governments will continue to work together around the clock to contain the spread of COVID 19. This declaration will remain in effect through September 9th, 2020, unless terminated earlier by the governor.

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## Here's What You Can Do to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19:

- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Visit this link to learn more about what you can do to get your household ready for coronavirus COVID-19
- Follow CDC's recommendations for using a face mask.
  - CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a face mask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19.
  - Face masks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others. The use of face masks is also crucial for health workers and people who are taking care of someone in close settings (at home or in a health care facility).
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds,

especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.

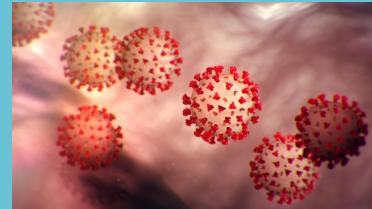
- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.

Visit the CDC's COVID-19 Video Playlist  
[here](#)



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## **Coronavirus (COVID 19) Guidance and Resources:**



### **General Public**

While this page provides good resources and information on COVID 19 preparedness, the FVHD routinely recommends these strategies for all-hazards preparedness.

<https://www.ready.gov/pandemic>

### **K-12 Childcare and Schools**

Schools should continue to collaborate, share information, and review plans with local health officials to help protect the whole school community, including those with special health needs.

### **Cleaning and Disinfection Recommendations**

Current evidence suggests that novel coronavirus may remain viable for hours to days on surfaces made from a variety of materials. Cleaning of visibly dirty surfaces followed by disinfection is a best practice measure for prevention of COVID-19 and other viral respiratory illnesses in community settings.

### **Businesses**

This guidance may help prevent workplace exposures to acute respiratory illnesses, including COVID-19, in non-healthcare settings. The guidance also provides planning considerations if there are more widespread, community outbreaks of COVID-19.

## **People at Higher Risk and Special Populations**

Older people and people of all ages with severe underlying health conditions seem to be at higher risk of developing serious COVID-19 illness. CDC has information for other special populations, who at this time are not considered high risk of developing serious COVID-19 illness, but are at increased risk of severe illness from other infectious diseases. These include pregnant women and children.

### **Seniors**

See the guidance for People at Higher Risk and Special Populations.

### **Institutes of Higher Education**

Encourage students, staff, and faculty to promote everyday preventive health behaviors on your campus:

- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue. If you don't have a tissue, cough and sneeze into the inside of your elbow, not your hands.
- Stay home when sick.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces following CDC guidance for cleaning and disinfection



### **Community and Faith Based Leaders**

Identify actions to take if you need to temporarily postpone or cancel events, programs, and services. Consider limiting access to your organization by non-essential visitors.

### **Homeless Shelters**

Identify those who could be at high risk for complications from COVID-19 (those who are older or have underlying health conditions) to ensure their needs are taken into consideration.

### **First Responders and Law Enforcement**

Law enforcement who must make contact with individuals confirmed or suspected to have COVID-19 should follow CDC's Interim Guidance for EMS. Different styles of PPE may be necessary to perform operational duties.

### **Quarantined or Isolated Individuals**

Household members should follow home care guidance when interacting with persons with suspected/confirmed COVID-19 and their isolation rooms/bathrooms.

### **Nursing Homes & Long-Term Care Facilities**

Are you thinking of visiting a loved one in a long-term care facility? Their visitation policies may have recently changed. It is best to call ahead and see what visitation restrictions are in place at your local nursing home.



## **How Does COVID 19 Spread?**

Click the video to the right to learn more!



## CDC Protects and Prepares Communities

CDC is aggressively responding to the global outbreak of COVID-19 and preparing for the potential of community spread in the U.S.

### Travel

- Conducts outreach to travelers
- Issues travel notices



### Laboratory and diagnostics

- Develops diagnostic tests
- Confirms all positive test results submitted by states

### Schools

- Provides guidance for schools including school closures and online education options



### Healthcare professionals

- Develops guidance for healthcare professionals
- Conducts clinical outreach and education



### Healthcare systems

- Develops preparedness checklists for health systems
- Provides guidance for PPE supply planning, healthcare system screening, and infection control
- Leverages existing telehealth tools to redirect persons to the right level of care



### Businesses

- Provides business guidance including recommendations for sick leave policies and continuity of operations

### Community members

- Shares information on symptoms and prevention
- Provides information on home care
- Encourages social distancing

### Health departments

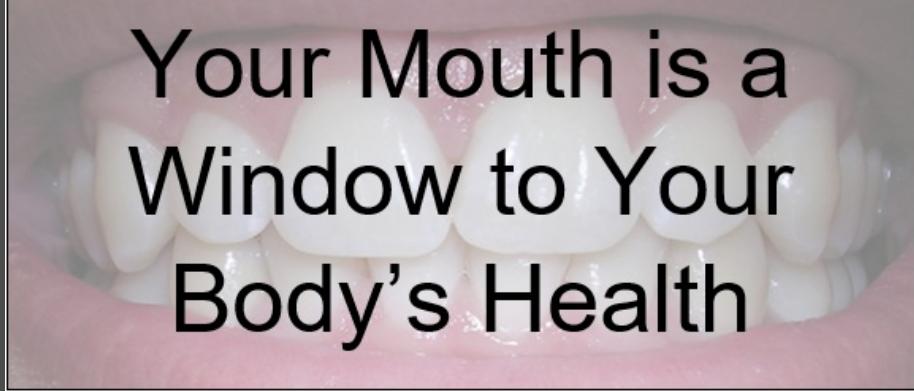
- Assesses state and local readiness to implement community mitigation measures
- Links public health agencies and healthcare systems



For more information: [www.cdc.gov/COVID19](http://www.cdc.gov/COVID19)

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\* Certain community partners and organizations may receive special guidance from the health department.



# Your Mouth is a Window to Your Body's Health

Dental health is an important part of your personal health regime. Your mouth is a “window” to your body’s overall health. Your mouth is filled with a variety of bacteria. Some of these bacteria can cause tooth decay and periodontal disease. Other oral bacteria can contribute to heart disease, stroke and bacterial pneumonia.

**According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) the impact of dental disease in America is extensive.**

- 1 in 4 adults have untreated cavities
- 46% of adults show signs of early gum disease
- \$124 Billion is spent annually on dental care
- 34 million school hours are lost annually due to dental urgent care

**Your mouth may also show the first signs of disease or deficiency in other parts of your body. Examples include:**

- Mouth ulcers can be the sign of a vitamin C deficiency
- Pale gums can be the sign of iron deficiency
- Bleeding gums can be an early sign of pregnancy or early sign of diabetes
- Dry gums can be a sign of autoimmune disease like Sjogren’s Disease or Lupus

**Good dental hygiene can be easy! Here is how to take care of your oral health:**

- Brush your teeth twice daily for 2 – 3 minutes
- Floss daily to reach the parts of your gums your toothbrush can’t
- Eat a varied, nutrient rich diet with plenty of Vitamin C and A as these are essential for healthy teeth and gums
- Avoid smoking or vaping
- Limit your alcohol intake
- See your dentist at least twice yearly for cleanings and dental exams
- See your dentist right away if you have unusual oral symptoms like pain, swelling, bad breath, mouth ulcers, red swollen gums or sore jaw.

# 6 Ways to Care for Your Mouth

*That Help You Stay Healthy*



**Brush twice a day with fluoride toothpaste.**  
Keeping your teeth and gums clean can prevent cavities and gum disease.



**Visit the dentist regularly.**  
Checkups can find tooth decay, gum disease, and other problems before they lead to more serious issues like tooth loss.



**Drink fluoridated water to keep teeth strong and reduce cavities.**



**Avoid all forms of tobacco and limit alcohol.**  
Smokers have twice the risk of gum disease compared to nonsmokers. Excessive alcohol use combined with tobacco use causes at least 75% of head and neck cancers.



**Avoid sugary snacks and drinks,** which can lead to tooth decay, obesity, type 2 diabetes, and other health problems.



**If you have diabetes,** work with your doctor to keep your blood sugar close to your target level. High blood sugar increases the risk of tooth decay and gum disease.

Learn more about how good oral health is important for overall health at [www.cdc.gov/oralhealth](http://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth).



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

NATIONAL CENTER FOR  
CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION AND HEALTH PROMOTION  
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## New License Requirements for Salons

*Spring is on its way! That means “mani” “pedi” season is around the corner. Here is what you need to know about visiting a salon.*

For many members of our community, salon services are a part of our everyday life. We sometimes hesitate to think about the potential risks of having different services done to our hair, skin, and nails but it is important to recognize that those risks do exist.

To protect the public's health and prevent disease in our salons, Farmington

Valley Health district currently permits and inspects Salons performing the following services to the public:

- Hairdressing and Barbering
- Manicuring and Pedicuring
- Tattooing
- Piercing
- Tanning

An esthetician is a person who performs skin care treatments such as facials, makeup application, and waxing. Previously those performing skin treatments, eye lash extensions, and/or nails did not have to be licensed. Salons offering these services will now be permitted and inspected by the Farmington Valley Health District.

- Effective 7/1/2020, Estheticians and Eyelash Technicians must be licensed by CT DPH
- Effective 1/1/2021, Nail Technicians must be licensed by CT DPH

**What you need to know before your next appointment:**

- Look for a FVHD Salon Permit. It should be posted!
- Ask your salon technician to see their license.
- Ask your salon technician how they disinfect their tools and equipment and how often
- Speak up if single use items like nail files and foot buffers appear used!

## CHES Certification

The National Commission for Health Education Credentialing (NCHEC) is dedicated to helping professionals maintain the highest level of competence within the community health education workforce.

NCHEC is the organizational that grants the Community Health Education Specialist (CHES) designation. This certification requires those who work within the field of community health to pass a competency-based examination and complete a minimum of 75 continuing education credits over the course of 5 years. This CHES designation ensures that the certification holder will be educated on the latest and best practices of community health education and intervention.

“Health educators, also known as Health Education Specialists, are active in communities large and small across the United States addressing needs for health education programs, planning effective programs, analyzing community data, and encouraging healthy lifestyles, policies, and environments.”

Recently, FVHD’s community health program associate, Sarah Altieri, received her Community Health Education Specialist Certification.



# What is a Sanitarian?

The National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) is dedicated to helping professionals maintain the highest level of competence within the environmental health workforce.



NEHA is the organization that grants the Registered Sanitarian License designation. To obtain this license and environmental professional must have the minimum of a bachelor's degree with thirty credit hours of science, two years of work experience in the environmental health field and need to pass an exam of 250 questions with a 70 or better. Lastly, one must complete 24 continuing credits every two years.

Some of the responsibilities of a Registered Sanitarian include:

- 1) Plans, develops, and executes environmental health program: Organizes and conducts training programs in environmental health practices for schools and other groups.
  - 2) Determines and sets health and sanitation standards and enforces regulations concerned with food processing and serving, collection and disposal of solid wastes, sewage treatment and disposal, plumbing, vector control, recreational areas, hospitals and other institutions, noise, ventilation, air pollution, radiation, and other areas.
  - 3) Confers with government, community, industrial, civil defense, and private organizations to interpret and promote environmental health programs.
  - 4) Collaborates with other health personnel in epidemiological investigations and control.
  - 5) Advises civic and other officials in development of environmental health laws and regulations.

Recently, FVHD's Jason Brown received his Registered Sanitarian License.



# Taking the Pulse of the Community



A community health assessment, commonly referred to as a CHA, identifies key health needs and issues through systematic, comprehensive data collection and analysis. Community health assessments also aim to take note of helpful resources and assets within a territory. Community health assessments include:

- Diverse collaborations that support shared ownership of all phases of community health improvement, including developing an assessment, planning, and implementation.
  - Inclusive and diverse community involvement
  - Use of evidence-based interventions and encouragement of best practices with thorough evaluation
  - Use of the high-quality data gathered from, and shared among, assorted public and private sources

## Why conduct a community health assessment?

A community health assessment gives organizations widespread information about the community's current health status, needs, assets, and issues. This information can help develop a community health improvement plan by justifying how and where resources should be distributed to best meet community needs.

Other benefits of conducting an assessment include:

- Improved community collaboration and coordination
- Increased knowledge about public health
- Identified strengths and weaknesses within the community to address
- Baselines on performance to use in preparing for accreditation
- Benchmarks for public health practice improvements

**Who conducts community health assessments?**

Tax-exempt hospitals are required to conduct within their communities every three years. However, many other local health organizations, such as the health department, decide to conduct an assessment to better serve their communities.

**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.**