

July 2025

Health Officer's Update

Happy summer everyone!

Summer brings sunshine, outdoor activity, and an important opportunity to recharge. As we navigate seasonal health challenges and broader changes in the healthcare landscape, I hope you take a moment for rest and renewal—doing something that restores your energy and feeds your soul. In June I have our biannual health update to the [County Council sitting as the Board of Health](#). We touched on themes related to substance use, maternal health, COVID-19 and responding to recent Federal actions.

Heat, Sunscreen, and Summer Safety



With summer, comes the heat and sun. It's critical to be prepared to enjoy the sun in a safe and healthy manner. Here are some tips for outdoor activity

- Use a **broad-spectrum sunscreen** with **SPF 30 or higher** daily.
- Apply sunscreen **15 minutes before sun exposure** and **reapply every 2 hours**, or after swimming or sweating.
- Wear **wide-brimmed hats**, **UV-blocking sunglasses**, and **long-sleeved clothing** when outdoors. **Seek shade**, especially during peak sun intensity hours (10 a.m. to 4 p.m.).
- Adequately hydrate and **take regular water breaks** every hour during activities
- Perform regular skin checks and talk to your doctor about skin health can skin cancer prevention at your next visit

On July 28th we recognize **World Hepatitis Day**. Established in 2008, World Hepatitis Day increases awareness and promotes preventive actions against hepatitis globally. Hepatitis is an infection in the liver. Hepatitis types include:

- Hepatitis A: Typically spread via contaminated food/water, gastrointestinal illness like nausea and vomiting. If severe it jaundice (yellowing of the skin and eyes).
- Hepatitis B: Blood-borne virus causing acute and chronic potentially leading to cirrhosis and liver cancer.
- Hepatitis C: Primarily transmitted via blood, often leading to liver disease. Hep C is the leading cause of liver cancer in the 1965 birth cohort in the US.



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There are vaccinations available for Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B and medical interventions for chronic Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C. Talk to your doctor about Hepatitis and protect yourself by practicing safe sex with condoms, and avoiding sharing needles, razors or other products that could expose you to shared blood.

Family Violence Prevention Initiative

Family violence remains a critical public health issue. Community members are encouraged to recognize common warning signs. These include verbal insults, shaming, demeaning behavior, or physical or verbal threats.

The following are resources for are for the patients and community and highlight the 24/7 support from Montgomery County:

Montgomery County Resources:

- Family Justice Center: 240-773-0444 | safe@montgomerycountymd.gov
- Crisis Center (24/7): 240-777-4000

Lyme and Tick Awareness

Summer is here, which means more outdoor activities in nature, but also the increased risk of Lyme Disease and other tick borne illnesses.

Lyme disease is primarily transmitted by the **blacklegged tick (Ixodes scapularis)**, identifiable by its dark brown color and small size (about the size of a sesame seed).



Montgomery County’s prevalence is among the highest in Maryland, with approximately 38 cases per 100,000 individuals annually; Maryland statewide averages around 22 cases per 100,000 individuals.

[Montgomery County Parks](#)

Lyme disease oftentimes causes fevers, headaches, flu-like symptoms, muscle or joint pain and may have a circular red rash with a clear “bulls-eye” center about 3-4 cm or larger in the area of the tick bite.

Antibiotics are required to treat Lyme Disease and require medical attention

- Johns Hopkins Lyme and Tickborne Disease Research Institute
 - [Tick Identification](#) Resource
- Maryland Department of Health Center for Zoonotic and Vector-Borne Diseases
 - [Tickborne Disease](#)

Preventive tips:

- 1) Regular tick checks after outdoor activities
- 2) Use tick repellents (DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus)
- 3) Treat shoes, socks, outer layers with permethrin products

Thank you for all you do for the continued well-being of our communities to make Montgomery County community a healthier, happier place to live, work, and play! Enjoy the summer!

Best regards,

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