Late summer 2014, has been a busy season for emerging diseases in the United States. Although Ebola has been the focus of the media, numerous others, such as the Enterovirus and the seasonal flu have been much more fatal in terms of the number of human deaths.

Click below to see how best to protect you and your loved ones from the most prevalent of diseases.

**Disease Prevention**

**Lead Poisoning**

535,000 children in the US, ages 1-5 have blood lead levels high enough to damage their health.

**Diabetes**

Diabetes is the 7th leading cause of death in the US and is a major contributor to heart disease and stroke.

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The time is almost here to get ready to indulge in the glory that is Thanksgiving Dinner. For the hostess this can be a daunting occasion (especially if being a hostess was not your idea in the first place), but if there is one thing that must go right, it’s the Turkey! Here are some helpful tips on getting that bird to be at its best behavior.

**Turkey Cooking Tips**

Now that our stomachs are full and we are all ready for a nap, what do we do with all of this left over food? This is where cooling becomes essential. Research has shown that food should cool to 41°F inside of a 6 hour window in order to stunt the growth of bacteria that could endanger the integrity of your delicious meal. The best ways to do this are, frequent stirring to help release heat, keeping food uncovered while it cools, as well as divvying up the leftovers so your fridge doesn’t become overloaded with warm food to cool. You could always use this as an excuse to get your in-laws out of the house, “Aww is been such a great time, but you may want to get home so your leftovers don’t go bad!”

**Health Department FAQ's**

The boxes below are filled with links to additional information on topics pertinent to the health of you, your family, and the environment.

Click a topic of interest to find out more!
First, the bad news: Hepatitis A is a serious liver disease caused by the hepatitis A virus. Hepatitis A is the most common type of hepatitis among children. Although hepatitis A sounds like it would be similar to hepatitis B, the hepatitis A and hepatitis B infections are really quite different. Hepatitis A virus is found in the stool (feces) of a person who has the virus. The disease spreads when a person puts something in his or her mouth that has the hepatitis A virus on it. The disease can also spread by touching objects that have virus on them. Sometimes the virus can get into food or water. If this happens, the virus can quickly spread to anyone who eats or drinks the affected food or water. The virus spreads easily from one family member to another.

Unfortunately, people infected with hepatitis A can transmit the virus to others up to two weeks before they have symptoms, so they may be infecting others without even knowing they have hepatitis A themselves. People feel sick 2 to 6 weeks after they get the hepatitis A virus. Symptoms include fever, jaundice (a yellowing of the skin), nausea and vomiting. Most people with hepatitis A feel very sick for about 2 months. Some people are sick for up to 6 months. Each year, about 8,500 people in the United States, many of whom are children, contract hepatitis A virus. There is no specific treatment for hepatitis A. Some people with hepatitis A get so sick that they need care in the hospital. About 100 people in the U.S. die each year from liver failure caused by hepatitis A.

Now, the good news: The hepatitis A vaccine prevents hepatitis A disease. It is made from killed (inactivated) virus. The vaccine protects children by preparing their bodies to fight the hepatitis A virus. Almost all children (at least 94 children out of 100) who get two doses of the vaccine will be protected from hepatitis A. The hepatitis A vaccine is very safe, and it is effective at preventing hepatitis A disease. Vaccines, like any medicine, can have side effects. But no serious side effects have been confirmed for the hepatitis A vaccine. About half of the people who get the hepatitis A vaccine will have no side effects at all. In the other half of people, most people who get hepatitis A vaccine report having very mild side effects. The hepatitis A vaccine can cause pain, redness and tenderness where the shot was given. The hepatitis A vaccine is recommended for all children. Children should get the hepatitis A vaccine at 12 through 23 months of age. Those who do not get the vaccine by age 2 should get the shot at their next doctor visit. The vaccine is given in two doses, at least 6 months apart. Children can get the hepatitis A vaccine at the same time as other recommended vaccines.

Hepatitis A vaccine should also be given to travelers to countries that have a high incidence of hepatitis A infections such as Asia, Central America, South America, the Mediterranean Basin, the Middle East, Southern Europe, the Caribbean and Mexico. The hepatitis A vaccine is most effective if given at least four weeks before traveling, but the vaccine is still somewhat effective if given at least two weeks before traveling. Hepatitis A vaccine should also be given to all household contacts of international adoptees.

Hepatitis A vaccine is also recommended for you if:
- You live in a community with a high rate of hepatitis A.
- You are a man and have sex with other men.
- You use street drugs.
- You have long-term liver disease.
- You receive blood products to help your blood clot.

To learn more about the hepatitis A vaccine or other vaccines, talk to your doctor. For immunization services for persons who do not have health insurance, please call the Allegan County Health Department Immunization Program at 269-673-5411.
IS THERE RADON IN YOUR HOME?

GET YOUR FREE TEST KIT AT THE ALLEGAN COUNTY HEALTH DEPT.

Click RADON For More Information

“RADON IS THE LEADING CAUSE OF LUNG CANCER FOR NON-SMOKERS”
- ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

“AN ESTIMATED 20,000 PEOPLE DIE EVERY YEAR FROM RADON”
- AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

“RADON IS A NATURALLY OCCURRING GAS WITH NO DETECTABLE SMELL OR TASTE.”
- AGENCY FOR TOXIC SUBSTANCES AND DISEASE REGISTRY

*According to a 2009 World Health Organization Study