

November 2005



NORTHWEST REGION EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AND
TRAUMA CARE COUNCIL

What's Happening

Tips for the Cold and Flu Season

The cold and flu season is just around the corner and whether it will be a blip on the CDC's radar screen or a pandemic remains to be seen. There are a variety of ways, however, to protect yourself from catching a cold or the flu this season.

- Boost your immune system. All of the normal things you would do to stay healthy (plenty of rest, healthy food, taking medications and supplements as prescribed by your doctor, exercising, reducing stress) are even more important when it comes to helping your body protect itself from germs and viruses.
 - Get a flu shot if available/recommended by your doctor.
 - Avoid other people's germs. You never know if the phone, pen, computer keyboard or dollar bill you are using has been coughed on, sneezed on or spit on by someone who is contagious. Make sure to wash your hands often with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, disinfect your children's toys and play area regularly, and wipe down your office tools with a disinfectant if needed. Keep your distance from sick people, as close contact breeds contamination, and above all, keep your unwashed hands out of your eyes, nose and mouth.
 - Don't spread your germs. If you're sick, stay home! If you must be around people, sneeze or cough into a tissue and immediately dispose of it. Keep your distance from others as a sneeze or cough can send cold and flu germs up to three feet away. Avoid shaking hands with people or hugging others when you are ill—they'll be more than happy to avoid catching your cold.
 - Be prepared. Carry a stash of tissue, waterless hand sanitizer and handi-wipes to use when you are away from home. Also, avoid sharing water bottles, utensils, and the like with friends or family members as this is an easy way to spread germs.
 - Avoid high-risk places. Airplanes are notorious for spreading illness since you have a large group of people in close contact for hours on end, all sharing the same recirculated air. Hospitals and clinics are, of course, where the sick people gather—avoid these places if possible. If you work with people who are ill, be sure to take adequate precautions (gloves, masks, eyewear) to protect yourself. Malls, schools, and other places where people gather also require additional precautions as you are exposed to many more people in questionable health.
 - Pay attention to flu (particularly Avian flu) warnings. You will notice, particularly if you travel around Asia at this time, a heightened concern for the flu. Shoe washes, temperature testing and visual inspection for illness are all precautions being used to prevent the spread of this illness. Know where potential outbreaks could occur and plan your travel accordingly.
 - If you do become ill, stay home. It used to look like you were a dedicated worker if you came to the office in the midst of your bout with the flu, now it means you could cause your whole department to go home sick. If you are ill, get as much rest as you can, stay well-hydrated and wait it out. Various over-the-counter medicines offer symptom relief but there is no instant cure for these maladies. Of course, seek immediate medical attention for extreme symptoms (high fever, dehydration, etc.).
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Calendar of Events

November 2 7pm
DUI Victim's Panel
Gig Harbor Civic Center
Gig Harbor, WA
253-884-0715

November 10 6:30pm
DUI Victim's Panel
Pt Angeles City Council Office
Pt Angeles, WA
360-417-2385

November 17 8:30am
PALS Recert Course
Kitsap County EMS Office
Bremerton, WA
360-478-5997

November 3 9am
Kitsap EMS Base Station Meeting
Trauma: A Personal Experience by
Dr Ernie Franz
Bremerton Fire Station
Bremerton, WA
360-478-5997

November 12 9am
DUI Victim's Panel
Pt Townsend Rec Center
Pt Townsend, WA
360-385-9135

November 17 7pm
Adult DUI Victim's Panel
Abundant Life Foursquare Church
Bremerton, WA
360-731-5139

November 3 9am
Jefferson EMS Base Station
Meeting
Special Concerns/Geriatric Patients
JCFD #62
Chimacum, WA
360-385-5589

November 12-December 15
IV Technician Course
Mason County FD #5
Allyn, WA
360-426-5533

November 30 7pm
Adult DUI Victim's Panel
Rolling Bay Presbyterian Church
Bainbridge Island, WA
360-731-5139

November 8 7pm
Youth DUI Victim's Panel
Abundant Life Foursquare Church
Bremerton, WA
360-731-5139

November 17 1pm
ACLS Recert Course
Kitsap County EMS Office
Bremerton, WA
360-478-5997

To list your event here, simply email, fax or call your information to us at the contact numbers listed on the back page of this newsletter.

Suicide: Resources and Information

- Number of suicides reported in the Northwest Region between 1999 and 2003 according to the DOH: 38 (Clallam County—7, Jefferson County—1, Kitsap County—27 and Mason County—3).
- Suicide Crisis Lines: 1-800-273-TALK, 1-800-SUICIDE
- Suicide resources on the web: www.save.org, www.afsp.org, www.sprc.org, www.yspp.org, www.hopeline.com, www.spanusa.org
- Local Resources: Crisis Helpline 360-479-3033 or 1-800-843-4793, Kitsap Mental Health Services 360-373-5031

Did You Know?

- The Footprints and Bike Tracks Conference which features safety and accessibility information for walkers and bicyclists will be held November 1-3 at the Sheraton Hotel in Tacoma. Call 360-753-6197 for more information.
- The Mothers Against Drunk Driving organization has awarded their first ever 'Outstanding Law Enforcement Award' to the Washington State Patrol at a recent conference held in Washington DC. The Washington State Patrol has taken a multi-effort approach to reducing traffic crashes and they hope to reach their zero-fatality goal by 2030.
- The Washington State Department of Health is accepting applications for their Fire Safe Families Project. This project will award grants of \$2,000 plus 300 smoke detectors, training and fire prevention educational materials to successful grantees. Contact Mary Borges at 360-236-3606 for an application. Applications are due by November 30th.
- Have you heard about the "Choking Game"? Although kids have been doing this for years, there have been a handful of recent fatalities that highlight the seriousness of this "game". Kids, with or without their friend's help, will choke themselves in order to get a drug-free "high" when the blood rushes back to their brain. Whereas using their hands to choke themselves would result in them fainting, their hands falling away and their regaining consciousness, they are now using ropes, leashes and belts to do this. If they are alone when they do this and faint, there is no one to release the ligature and what started out as a fun "rush", results in what looks like suicide. Contact Barbara Smithson, the Kitsap County Health District Injury Prevention Coordinator at 360-337-5250 for a fact sheet on the "Choking Game".
- Prevention Connection: The Violence Against Women Prevention Partnership will be hosting a free web-conference on November 10th from 11am to 12:30pm PDT. The topic this month will be 'What is Collaboration Math? Enhancing Cross-Sector Partnerships for Preventing Violence Against Women. Go to www.preventconnect.org for more information.
- The Auburn Regional Medical Center will host a Child Passenger Safety Educational Class on November 17th from 8:30am to noon. The class will include information on types of child restraints, crash dynamics, current child restraint laws and community resources. Contact Dana at 253-350-2644 for more information.
- The Kitsap County Suicide Prevention Task Force is revamping their program and looking for interested participants. A great deal of information on suicide and suicide prevention is provided at their meetings as well as the opportunity to participate in community-wide prevention events. Their next meeting will be November 30th from 3pm-4:30pm at the Kitsap County Health District office. Email KitsapSPTF@comcast.net for more information.
- The Healthy Kids Now DSHS insurance program will be expanding their services to provide health insurance to *non-citizen children* under the age of 18, beginning in January 2006. Applications must be received between December 1 and December 16, 2005. Call 1-877-543-7669 for more information.
- Check out the National Safety Council's "Odds of Dying" chart at www.nsc.org/lrs/statinfo/odds.htm for a look at the odds of dying from a range of activities including being bitten or struck by a dog to contact with hot tap water.
- The National Safety Council also offers a great form for teen drivers and their parents. Called the Checkpoints Parent/Teen Driving Agreement, the form provides a written agreement for unsupervised driving privileges based on years of research into preventing teen crashes. Find it online at www.nsc.org/issues/teendriving/agreement.pdf

**NORTHWEST REGION
EMERGENCY MEDICAL
SERVICES AND TRAUMA
CARE COUNCIL**

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We're On The Web!

www.nwrems.org

The Northwest Region Emergency Medical Services and Trauma Care Council is a non-profit umbrella organization which oversees EMS training, prevention activities, and program funding in Clallam, Jefferson, Kitsap and Mason Counties.

Their Mission is to promote and support a coordinated system for local Emergency Medical Services/Trauma Care Councils by:

- *Providing resources/funding*
- *Enhancing education/training*
- *Promoting data collection/analysis*
- *Facilitating communication*
- *Promoting standardization*
- *Promoting public education and prevention*

NWR EMS Update

New from the Northwest Region EMS Office:

- We are searching for great EMS providers in our region. Each month in this newsletter we would like to spotlight an EMS provider in our region who has gone above and beyond the call of duty. Nominees can be from any provider level (first responder through paramedic) and can be nominated for any reason (dedication to continued learning, great handling of a particular call, best cook in the department, etc). Drop us an email at nwems@hurricane.net with your nominee!
- Check out the Northwest Region EMS office's new, redesigned website at www.nwrems.org. We have totally revamped our website to provide more information in an easier-to-locate format. As usual, we welcome input from our readers. If you have an upcoming class, interesting information, great weblink, or other piece of information that you would like to see on our site, drop us an email.
- GRANT DUE DATES: The Needs Grants are due into our office by the first week of November. If you have any questions about the needs grants or need help filling out your application, please call our office ASAP.
- Our office has a new secretary. Rachel Kaperick will be joining our staff starting on November 1st.
- Our Protocol revision process is going along well. Although originally scheduled to be published and distributed by January 2006, we are waiting for the AHA to release their new CPR guidelines before we send the Protocols to the printers. Expect a late winter release for the Protocols. Also, a big 'thank you' to everyone who has contributed to the revision process and given us a product we can be proud