



# The Daily Apple

Healthy Families... Keeping in the Know

November 2008 VOLUME 8

[www.niagararegion.ca](http://www.niagararegion.ca)

NIAGARA REGION PUBLIC HEALTH

PARENT NEWSLETTER

## An Ounce of Prevention Keeps the Germs Away

**Healthy habits can protect you and your children from spreading germs at home, work and school. Follow these easy steps to stop many illnesses.**

### **Wash your hands often:**

Handwashing is the best way to prevent illness. It is important to wash your hands correctly. Wet hands completely, then apply soap and lather to all parts of your hands and wrists for at least 20 seconds. Pay special attention to your fingertips, between fingers, backs of hands and the base of your thumbs. Rinse your hands well from the wrist to the fingertips before drying them completely.

If your hands are not visibly dirty you can also use hand rubs (i.e. alcohol-based hand sanitizer) to clean your hands.

Rub a quarter size of hand sanitizer into your hands and rub all parts of your hands and wrists for at least 20 seconds until hands are dry. Hand rubs are safe but should not be swallowed, therefore children should be supervised when using it.

### **Cover your cough or sneeze:**

Coughing and sneezing into a tissue or into your sleeve "elbow cough" will help prevent the spread of germs. Sneezing and coughing into your hands puts germs into the air and back on your hands. Germs can then be spread from your hands and from the air to other surfaces and may infect others.

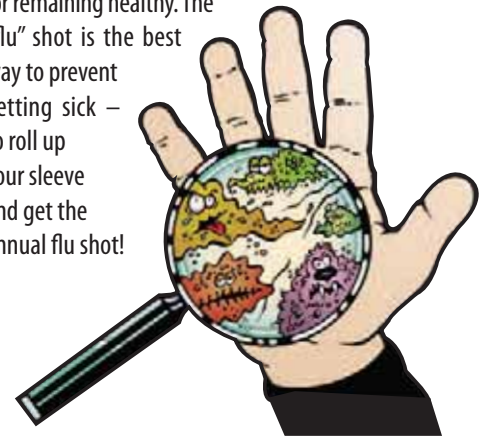
### **Stay home when you are sick:**

Some germs stay on surfaces for up to two days, so being at work or school places coworkers and classmates at risk of getting sick. Therefore, stay

home when you are sick and return to school only when feeling better.

### **Get your annual influenza "flu" shot:**

Immunization is one of the most effective strategies for remaining healthy. The "flu" shot is the best way to prevent getting sick – so roll up your sleeve and get the annual flu shot!



- Healthy Food for Healthy Schools
- Reduce the Impact on the Environment
- Walkable Communities Safer for Children
- Walk for a Chance to WIN AN IPOD
- One Stop Shopping
- Region's NEW Domain Name

Comments and questions regarding this publication are welcome at [dailyapple@niagararegion.ca](mailto:dailyapple@niagararegion.ca) or 905-688-8248, ext 7444 or toll free at 1-888-505-6074





# Healthy Food for Healthy Schools

The Ontario government is helping schools become healthier places for kids and teachers. Starting September 1, 2008 foods and beverages sold in schools will have less trans fat. It is good to eat less trans fat as it greatly increases your risk for heart disease. Trans fat can come from baked and fried foods like french fries, cookies or doughnuts because of the "partially hydrogenated" oils that are used. Some foods that naturally contain small amounts of trans fat, such as beef and milk, will be allowed, as this form of trans fat does not have the same health effects. Schools will be checking to make sure foods sold at school are very low in trans fat (less than 5% of total fat). Food companies are using less trans fat, so it is easier to find foods with less of this unhealthy fat. You can find out how much trans fat is in food by looking at the nutrition facts table on packaged foods. When preparing food at home, use liquid oils (such as canola oil) or non-hydrogenated margarine instead of shortening.

Schools are allowed up to 10 days per school year when they do not need to follow the trans fat rule. However, there are many healthy food options that can be available at school every day, including on "special event days". Pizza, subs, wraps, soups along with many other foods can be served. There is no need to offer foods with trans fat, such as many bakery products and popcorn from popcorn makers (made with hard fats). Remember, trans fat is the most harmful of all fats in our diet. We should never want to eat foods with trans fat or to serve them to children.

Next year, more healthy choices based on the new Canada's Food Guide will be offered in school cafeterias, vending machines, tuck shops, canteens and any other places that food is served at school. Visit [www.niagararegion.ca](http://www.niagararegion.ca) for more information on healthy eating and healthy schools.



Niagara Region Public Health and the Niagara IceDogs are working together to "Send tobacco to the penalty box." Why you ask? Each day 101 Canadians die from sickness related to tobacco; that is 37,000 people every year.

### **Tobacco-free sports and recreation is about:**

- creating a healthier place for people of all ages to be active;
- developing good role models; and
- helping people who are trying to quit using tobacco products.

**To pledge to be tobacco free and to enter to win Niagara IceDogs tickets and autographed gear visit [www.niagararegion.ca](http://www.niagararegion.ca).**

**IceDogs fans attending the January 25, 2008 game will help wrap up National Non-Smoking Week**



## Send Tobacco to the Penalty Box ...Pledge to be Tobacco Free.



# Walkable Communities Safer for Children



Many parents remember walking to school, their friends' houses, the corner store, the park or wherever they needed to go and yet today, fewer children do the same. Parents often cite safety as their number one concern. However, the more people that walk, the safer the community becomes! You can help create a safe and walkable community!

## What is a Walkable Community?

A "walkable community" is one that is a friendly and safe place for people to walk in all seasons. Many neighbourhoods are built for driving which has a big impact on the health and wellbeing of our children. Streets can be made more people-friendly in a number of ways, for example having sidewalks on both sides of the street and removing obstacles that can block a driver's view of pedestrians.

## What can you do to make your community walkable and safe for your children?

While you may not be able to make all of the changes that need to be done you can have a voice in making them happen! Take a walk someplace you'd normally drive, about 1-2 km. On your way, fill out an iCANwalk checklist about where you went. iCANwalk checklists can be downloaded at [www.icanwalk.ca](http://www.icanwalk.ca). These checklist results will be sent to your elected officials to let them know how walkable your community is.

## During the winter months you can:

- Keep your community walkable by fully shovelling the sidewalks and walkways
- Keep the snow banks low around the ends of your driveway so you can see pedestrians better
- Call your local municipality if people aren't keeping the walks clear

## Walk and Have a Chance to Win an iPod



## WIN

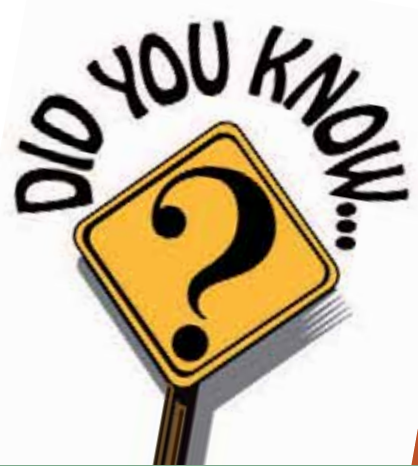
**an Apple iPod Nano**  
To Win: Visit [www.icanwalk.ca](http://www.icanwalk.ca), print and fill in the iCANwalk checklist and mail it to us. We will enter your name into a random prize draw on December 1st, 2008.

**Please fill out this ballot and include it with your completed checklist**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Send the form and checklist to:**  
Healthy Living Niagara  
c/o Niagara Region Public Health  
P.O. Box 1052, Station Main  
Thorold, ON L2V 0A2



The Ontario Student Drug Use Survey (Grades 7-12) reveals "the big three" most commonly used and abused substances for this grade level are:

1. Alcohol
2. Marijuana (also known as weed, pot, dope, blunt, joint, chronic, or spliff)
3. Prescription Pain Relievers (without a prescription from your doctor)  
e.g. Codeine, Percocet, Percodan, and Tylenol 3

On average 20.6% of Grade 7-12 students reported using prescription pain relievers in 2007.

72% of youth who abuse prescription drugs report getting prescription drugs from someone they know (e.g. taking from their grandparents medicine cabinet).



# One-Stop Shopping for You and Your Family's Health

Niagara Region Public Health is pleased to inform you about our new Parenting Resource Guides. A comprehensive series of five guides created to support your parenting journey as you make the best health choices for you and your family. Each series focuses on a different developmental stage, beginning with planning for pregnancy through to raising your teenage child. We hope the Parenting Resource Guide will answer many questions you may have as you nurture your child and guide them from infancy to adulthood.

Please visit [www.niagararegion.ca](http://www.niagararegion.ca) to view an online copy of the Parenting Resource Guides.

\*Parenting Resource Guide 4-13 years will be available early 2009.



Public health nurses are available to answer any parenting questions you may have by calling the Parent Talk Information Line at 905-688-8248 ext. 7555, or toll free at 1-888-505-6074, Monday – Friday from 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

For confidential health information, call:

**The Health Connection Line**  
905-688-8248 or 1-888-505-6074

**Child Car Seat Line, ext. 7362**

Car seat safety, including troubleshooting and free information classes.

**Dental Health Line, ext. 7201**

Dental programs and services.

**Flu Information Line, ext. 7443**

2008-09 flu shot clinic schedule and general information about the flu shot.

**Health Bus Line, ext. 7512**

Schedule of community stops made by the mobile clinic.

**Pandemic Info Line, ext. 7765**

Personal preparedness and the Niagara Region Influenza Pandemic Plan.

**Parent Talk Information Line, ext. 7555**

Parenting information on pre-pregnancy, pregnancy, parenting of infancy through adolescence; breastfeeding information and clinics; child care and Ontario Early Years Centres; course registration and post partum depression support group

**Tobacco Hotline, ext. 7393**

Information about the health risks of smoking, ways to quit and the laws that apply to smoking.

**Travel Health Niagara Line, ext. 7383**

Information on safe and healthy international travel or to book an appointment for our Travel Health Clinic.

# A New Domain Name

On September 30, Niagara Region changed its domain name to: [www.niagararegion.ca](http://www.niagararegion.ca)

This change makes it easier for you to access information you need about regional government, our programs, and services.

As well, note that all e-mail addresses for Niagara Region employees and regional councillors will be changing to this format: [firstname.lastname@niagararegion.ca](mailto:firstname.lastname@niagararegion.ca)

Please update your bookmarks, any website links, and contact information to reflect our new domain name.

Questions? Call 905-685-4225 ext. 3218 or toll free 1-800-263-7215.



This newsletter provides health information for families of every size, and promotes access to public health programs and resources. We employ health experts who are excellent sources of information and act as links to other community agencies in the Niagara region. Every school has an assigned school health nurse who is your resource for public health issues. Ask your principal about how to contact your school nurse.

## Our Locations

### Main Office/Office of the Medical Officer of Health

2201 St. Davids Road, Campbell East, Thorold, ON

Phone: 905-688-3762

Toll Free: 1-800-263-7248

Fax: 905-682-3901

#### Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 1052, Station Main, Thorold, ON L2V 0A2

### Branch Offices

#### Niagara Falls

5710 Kitchener Street,

Niagara Falls, ON L2G 1C1

Phone: 905-356-1538

Fax: 905-356-7377

#### Sexual Health Centre

Phone: 905-358-3636

Fax: 905-358-2717

#### Welland

540 King Street,

Welland, ON L3B 3L1

Phone: 905-735-5697

Fax: 905-735-4895

#### Sexual Health Centre

Phone: 905-734-1014

Fax: 905-734-1770

#### Fort Erie

43 Hagey Avenue,

Fort Erie, ON L2A 1W4

Phone: 905-871-6513

Fax: 905-871-3020

#### Sexual Health Centre

Phone: 905-871-5320

Fax: 905-871-3333

#### St. Catharines

Sexual Health Centre

277 Welland Avenue,

St. Catharines, ON L2R 2P7

Phone: 905-688-3817

Toll Free: 1-800-263-5757

Fax: 905-688-6063

#### Niagara-on-the-Lake

Emergency Services Division

509 Glendale Avenue East

Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON L0S 1J0

Phone: 905-984-5050

Fax: 905-688-5079

