

# the health advisor

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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## FEATURES

- 2 | Disaster Behavioral Health Teams are There, When Needed
- 3 | Smoking's Impact on the Heart
- 4 | The Florida Department of Health Protects the Public from Radiological Terrorism
- 5 | This Fall, Join the Walking School Bus!
- 6 | Florida's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program Gains Momentum
- 7 | Over 50? Time to Get Screened
- 8 | Prevent and Report Foodborne Illness

## MISSION

To protect and promote the health of all residents and visitors in the state through organized state and community efforts, including cooperative agreements with counties.

*The Health Advisor* aims to present health information to Floridians in a reader-friendly format. Pages are designed for posting or handouts. If there is a topic that you would like *The Health Advisor* to cover, contact us.

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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Angela Lynn  
EDITOR AND DESIGNER Georgia Murphy

To submit an article, contact Georgia Murphy: 850.245.4444, ext. 2123; FAX, 850.488.6495; or e-mail, [georgia\\_murphy@doh.state.fl.us](mailto:georgia_murphy@doh.state.fl.us).

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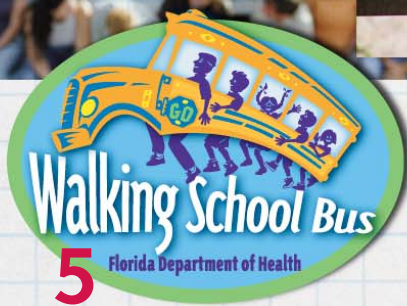
For the 2011 National Health Observances calendar visit: [www.healthfinder.gov/nho/nho.asp](http://www.healthfinder.gov/nho/nho.asp).



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# Disaster Behavioral Health Teams Are There, When Needed

Submitted by the Bureau of Preparedness and Response, Florida Department of Health

Experiencing or witnessing a disaster is a traumatic experience that can have long lasting effects on a person's mental health. Florida is not immune to disaster. The hurricanes of years past have been a testament to this fact. In any disaster the first priority is to address physical injuries. Physical injuries are important; however, the emotional pain and suffering caused by disaster are important as well. The Florida Department of Health's Disaster Behavioral Health (DBH) Teams specialize in helping people deal with the anxiety and trauma caused by a disaster.

The regional DBH Teams consist of health care professionals that volunteer for deployment as part of disaster response. These professionals are trained and credentialed to deal with disaster-related trauma. "The DBH team's role is to mitigate the adverse effects of disaster-related trauma by promoting and restoring psychological well-being and daily life functioning in impacted individuals, responders and

communities," says Michael L. Haney, Ph.D., DBH Team clinical director. Diane Fojt, DBH Team operations director, feels ". . . too often in a disaster, the focus is solely on treating physical injuries, and we overlook the emotional pain and suffering of survivors, which can last long after the physical injuries have healed."

Upon deployment, the DBH Team conducts a global assessment to identify disaster behavioral health needs and gaps, requests and manages additional resources to meet those needs, including provision of psychological first aid and immediate interventions as needed, and provides coping information and self-care guidelines to responders. DBH Team Chair Judith A. Hartner, M.D., states "We may be the best kept secret in Florida. It's important that we educate emergency managers that these teams are a valuable resource available when there is a need."



➤ Since 2007, more than 125 individuals have joined Florida's DBH Teams, but additional volunteers are needed. If you are interested in helping your fellow Floridians through the confusion and hardship of a disaster's aftermath contact Lynne Drawdy at 407.888.3794 or e-mail [Lynne\\_Drawdy@doh.state.fl.us](mailto:Lynne_Drawdy@doh.state.fl.us).

## Smoking's Impact on the Heart

Tobacco's devastating effects on the cardiovascular system

**M**any smokers fear developing lung health issues such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) or lung cancer; however, many are less aware of the immediate impact smoking has on the heart. When smoke is inhaled, it begins to poison the body immediately as more than 7,000 chemicals seep into the bloodstream and cause cellular damage in every organ.

Since 1964, the U.S. Surgeon General has raised awareness about the dangers of tobacco by issuing in-depth reports about the effects of tobacco use on public health. In December 2010, the U.S. Surgeon General issued a report titled *How Tobacco Smoke Causes Disease*, which made bold statements about the effects of tobacco smoke on cardiovascular health. Gathering extensive data from thousands of studies, one of the findings revealed that if an individual is prone to developing a heart condition, even brief exposure to secondhand smoke can trigger a cardiac episode such as a heart attack, create a sudden blood clot or raise the probability of developing a stroke.<sup>1</sup>

Approximately 20 percent of all deaths from heart disease in the United States are directly related to cigarette smoking.<sup>2</sup> Cigarette smoke impacts the heart by raising blood pressure, creating an increase in blood clots and disrupting normal heart rhythms.<sup>3</sup> As the heart works harder to deliver oxygen, the extra effort raises the risk of developing atherosclerosis. Atherosclerosis is a disease in which plaque builds up in the arteries. Over time, the plaque hardens, narrowing the arteries and thereby restricting the flow of blood to one's body organs. As plaque builds, the chance of developing coronary heart disease (CHD) increases. Controlling or reversing atherosclerosis is an important part of preventing future heart attacks or strokes.<sup>4</sup>

As part of Tobacco Free Florida's campaign to raise awareness about the damaging effects smoking has on the heart, an ad titled "Artery" shows the fatty deposits found in the aorta of a 32-year-old smoker. Produced in Australia by Quit Victoria and aired in New York City, the ad closes with an imperative and graphic message which supports the U.S. Surgeon General's recent report stating, "Every cigarette is doing you damage."

Tobacco Free Florida provides every Floridian with free and convenient resources to help them quit, including phone counseling, online help and in-person assistance with specially trained tobacco cessation experts and nicotine replacement therapies.

➔ Talk to your doctor about medications and treatments that can help you quit smoking, and call the Florida Quitline at 1.877.U.CAN.NOW to speak with a Quit Coach who will assess your addiction and create a personalized quit plan. Enroll in online counseling with the Florida Quitline at [www.quitnow.net/florida](http://www.quitnow.net/florida).

### DO YOU KNOW?

- The average adult heart beats 72 times a minute, 100,000 times a day, 3,600,000 times a year and 2.5 billion times during a lifetime.<sup>6</sup>
- Every day, the heart creates enough energy to drive a truck 20 miles. In a lifetime, that is equivalent to driving to the moon and back.<sup>7</sup>
- The "thump-thump" of a heartbeat is the sound made by the four valves of the heart closing.

### STEPS YOU CAN TAKE

- If you know someone who wants to quit, suggest that they speak with a health care professional to help them create a comprehensive and personalized quit plan.
- If you want to quit, work with your doctor to create a plan and also ask your family to support your quit attempt. Don't give up. It takes an average of 8-11 quit attempts to finally quit for good.
- Call Florida's Quitline at 1.877.U.CAN.NOW to speak with a counselor to get you started on your quit attempt.

"Smoking and exposure to cigarette smoke result in instant damage," says Kim Berfield, deputy secretary of the Florida Department of Health. "A small amount of exposure to secondhand smoke can constrict blood vessels and cause a heart attack. If you've been smoking for many years, it's time to consider quitting. After you quit, your body will start feeling better. After your last cigarette, the risk of heart-related problems lowers substantially."<sup>5</sup>

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7. Avraham, Regina. 2000. The Circulatory System. Philadelphia, PA: Chelsea House Publishers.

## The Florida Department of Health Protects the Public from Radiological Terrorism

Submitted by the Bureau of Radiation Control, Florida Department of Health

The Florida Department of Health's (DOH) Bureau of Radiation Control (BRC) helps provide radiation security during large public gatherings like the Daytona 500, Superbowl games, Blue-Angels air shows and the inauguration ceremony for Governor Rick Scott. BRC staff are part of a multiagency, multidisciplinary, state Preventive Radiological and Nuclear Detection (PRND) team that consists of dozens of men and women including:

- BRC health physicists
- Florida Department of Transportation Motor Carrier Compliance officers
- The 44th and 48th Florida National Guard Civil Support Team units
- Florida Highway Patrol troopers
- U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) scientists and health physicists from the federal Radiological Assistance Program in South Carolina

PRND operations use sensitive radiation detectors to look for hidden radioactive material that terrorists could use in dirty bombs or improvised nuclear devices to harm people or cause economic devastation at large public events. BRC and DOE physicists provide the radiation expertise while military and law enforcement agencies provide the tactical expertise and legal authority to arrest suspects. The equipment used is contributed by each agency and consists of several personal radiation detectors, backpack radiation detectors, and hand-held and vehicle-mounted gamma spectroscopy systems (also known as radioisotope identification devices or RIIDs). The personal and backpack detectors alert the team members to the presence of the radioactive material, while the RIIDs spectroscopy systems (also known as radioisotope

identification devices or RIIDs). The personal and backpack detectors alert the team members to the presence of the radioactive material, while the RIIDs help distinguish the "non-threat" types of material found in nuclear medicine patients from the types of "threat" material that can be used in dirty or nuclear bombs.

For the inauguration, the BRC helped conduct counter-terrorism activities at multiple venues all over Tallahassee including the Capitol Complex, Florida A&M University's Lawson Center, Florida State University's Alumni Center, the Leon County Civic Center, Goodwood Museum & Gardens, The Mary Brogan Museum of Art and Science, Mission San Luis, and the downtown area of Monroe St. where the inaugural parade took place. BRC staff worked from well before dawn on Jan. 3 to late into the night on Jan. 4, with some working almost 40 hours during this two-day period.

The PRND team has had many successes and demonstrates what can be accomplished when different agencies and disciplines work together toward a common goal: protecting the public. "We are proud of the work of our health physics team," says Dr. Lisa Conti, Division of Environmental Health director. "Their training efforts, coordination and direct services protect our communities on a daily basis."

The Department of Health's Bureau of Radiation Control will provide radiation security for the 2012 Republican National Convention in Tampa.

# This Fall, Join the Walking School Bus!



Submitted by the Office of Communications, Florida Department of Health

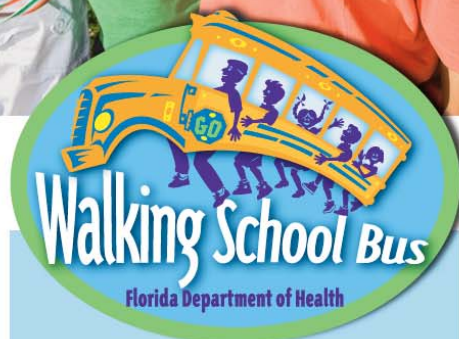
A Walking School Bus (WSB) is an organized group of children who walk to school with parents or volunteers. The WSB teaches children pedestrian safety while giving them a jump start on daily exercise. Children who join the bus increase their physical activity, learn pedestrian safety, meet new friends and have fun. In addition, preliminary data show that physical activity may improve academic performance and alertness in youth.

It is a simple concept. The bus consists of trained parents or volunteers taking turns walking a group of children to school along a planned route with meeting points. The volunteer who leads the group of walkers is the “driver,” and the volunteer at the back of the group is the “conductor.” Some buses walk every day and some once a week on days such as “Walking Wednesday.” Sue Parker, a parent and Walking School Bus leader at Kimbell Elementary School in Tampa says, “It gets all of us walking more, and my children have formed new friendships because of the Walking School Bus. The parents get to know each other too!”

Many of the buses began during International Walk to School Day, which will be held on October 5 this year. For more information about International Walk to School Day, visit [www.walktoschool.org](http://www.walktoschool.org).

The Walking School Bus is an initiative of the Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CPPW) program. CPPW regional coordinators, located across Florida, work with county health departments, local health advocacy groups, civic organizations, school districts, and city and county officials to implement policy, systems and environmental changes. They work with local policymakers to put into effect three interventions for their communities: increased physical activity, improved nutrition, and more tobacco-free parks and recreational facilities. For more information on CPPW, visit [www.floridacppw.com](http://www.floridacppw.com).

➔ For more information visit [www.doh.state.fl.us/family/chronicdisease/CPPW](http://www.doh.state.fl.us/family/chronicdisease/CPPW).



## Teach Young Children Safe Walking and Biking Skills

Children ages 5–9 often lack the skills necessary to safely walk to school. The Walking School Bus not only supervises young children, it teaches young children safe walking and biking skills.

### SIDEWALKS:

Always use a sidewalk, face the traffic and never run!

### CROSSWALKS:

At a crosswalk, make eye contact with drivers and wave as you pass.

### BEFORE CROSSING STREETS:

Stop. Look left. Look right.  
Look left.

### WHEN THE STREET IS CLEAR:

Cross and keep looking both ways until you're across.

The Electronic-Florida Online Reporting of Controlled Substances Evaluation program (E-FORCSE) is Florida's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP). The PDMP was created by the 2009 Florida Legislature as an initiative to encourage safer prescribing of controlled substances and to reduce drug abuse and diversion within the State of Florida. The purpose of E-FORCSE is to provide information that can help guide a health care practitioner's prescribing and dispensing decisions regarding highly abused prescription drugs.

Florida's PDMP law requires the Florida Department of Health (DOH) to establish a statewide comprehensive electronic database system that collects controlled substance dispensing information from health care practitioners within seven days of dispensing to an individual. E-FORCSE has selected Health Information Designs, Inc. (HID) to develop a prescription drug monitoring system (PDMS) that will collect and store prescribing and dispensing data for controlled substances in Schedules II, III and IV. The PDMS is a web-based program that facilitates the collection and analysis of medical and pharmacy data to enable state regulators and practitioners to detect and prevent the diversion, abuse and misuse of controlled substance prescription drugs.

Registration for dispensers begins Aug. 1, 2011. Please visit [www.hidinc.com/flpdmp](http://www.hidinc.com/flpdmp) and view the *Dispenser's Implementation Guide* for step-by-step instructions on how to register as an uploader and how to upload your controlled substance

## Florida's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program Gains Momentum

Submitted by Florida's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program, Florida Department of Health

dispensing information. The guide provides information regarding system registration and data collection requirements. "As a health care practitioner myself, I encourage all practitioners to register to access the database to guide their decisions in prescribing and dispensing these highly-abused prescription drugs, says Rebecca Poston, BPharm., R.Ph., program manager.

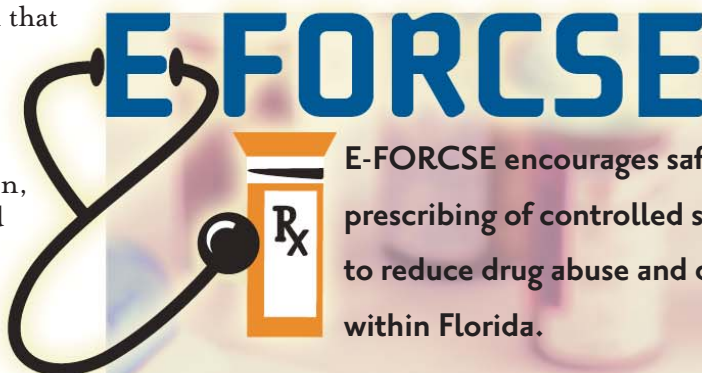
Reporting begins Sept. 1, 2011. In addition, E-FORCSE is requesting health care practitioners to retrospectively report prescription dispensing data from Dec. 1, 2010 to the current go-live date.

Once the PDMS is operational, E-FORCSE anticipates that more than 111,000 prescribing practitioners, dispensing practitioners, pharmacists and pharmacies will register to upload controlled substance dispensing data and

access the PDMS to view individual patient-specific prescription information. The registration process for all users will occur electronically on HID's website, and will vary depending on the type of user.

Health care practitioners and pharmacists may view the data in the system for their specific patient on Oct. 17, 2011. This PDMS is a fully hosted system that includes data collection, an extensive prescriber file and improved reporting capabilities.

E-FORCSE complies with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act as it pertains to protected health information, electronic protected health information and all other relevant state and federal privacy and security laws and regulations.



**E-FORCSE encourages safer prescribing of controlled substances to reduce drug abuse and diversion within Florida.**

➔ For more information, please contact Erika Marshall at [E-FORCSE@doh.state.fl.us](mailto:E-FORCSE@doh.state.fl.us), or visit [www.eforcse.com](http://www.eforcse.com).

## Over 50? Time to Get Screened

### Colorectal Cancer Screening Saves Lives

Submitted by the Office of Communications, Florida Department of Health

**T**he facts are clear and undeniable—since 2001, colorectal cancer has remained the second leading cause of cancer death for men and women in Florida.

According to the Florida Cancer Data System—Florida’s statewide, population-based cancer registry—there were 10,199 colorectal cancer cases diagnosed and 3,775 deaths in 2008 (the most current year that data is available). Anyone over the age of 50 is at risk of developing this type of cancer that develops inside the large bowel, but with proper screening, colorectal cancer is nearly 60 percent preventable.

Colorectal cancer is one of the most preventable cancers, “A routine colon screening beginning at age 50 is a must for prevention of colorectal cancer, as well as for early detection. Screening saves lives,” states Annette Phelps, ARNP, MSN, director of the Division of Family and Community Health. Early detection of cancer is critically important as survival is nearly 90 percent when cancer is detected early.

Personal and family history is another important factor which may increase a person’s chance of developing colorectal cancer. If you, your mother, father, sister or brother has had colorectal cancer or a history of polyps, then you may be at increased risk for colorectal cancer and should consult with your health care provider to see if screening at an earlier age is recommended.

Talk to your health care provider about which colorectal cancer screening strategy is right for you. For people 50–75 years old at average risk, the United States Preventive Services Task Force recommends three colorectal cancer screening strategies that are equivalent in reducing colorectal cancer mortality.

**COLONOSCOPY:** Every 10 years. Colonoscopy prevents and finds cancer. During a colonoscopy, the doctor inserts a long, thin, flexible tube to look for polyps or cancer inside the rectum and the entire colon. During the test, the doctor can find and remove most polyps and some cancers. A colonoscopy needs to be performed every ten years for patients at average risk.

**FLEXIBLE SIGMOIDOSCOPY:** Every five years. Doctors use a flexible, lighted tube (sigmoidoscope) to look at the interior walls of the rectum and part of the colon. This strategy includes a high-sensitivity fecal occult blood testing every third year.

**ANNUAL HIGH SENSITIVITY FECAL OCCULT BLOOD TEST (FOBT):** Fecal Immunochemical Test (FIT) is a newer FOBT that identifies human blood hidden in the stool. FIT does not require diet or medication restrictions prior to testing, so testing can be completed conveniently in the privacy of your home. Some doctors may also offer high-sensitivity guaiac FOBT.

In addition to getting screened, you may reduce your risk of developing colorectal cancer by increasing your physical activity, eating fruits, vegetables and foods that are high in fiber and lower in fat, avoiding tobacco and limiting alcohol consumption.

Screening saves lives and isn’t your life worth saving?

➔ For more information, visit the CDC’s Colorectal Cancer website at [www.cdc.gov/cancer/colorectal](http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/colorectal) or Florida’s website for providers at [www.getthefitfacts.com](http://www.getthefitfacts.com).



## PREVENT Foodborne Illness

Submitted by the Office of Communications,  
Florida Department of Health

Each year, 48 million people get sick from foodborne illness, also known as food poisoning, in the U.S. You can't see, smell or taste the harmful bacteria, viruses, parasites or chemicals that can make you sick, so safe steps in food handling, cooking and storage are essential to prevention. Protect yourself and your family from food poisoning by following these guidelines:

**CLEAN:** Wash hands, utensils and surfaces before and after food preparation.

**SEPARATE:** Don't cross-contaminate. Keep meat, poultry, seafood and eggs away from all other foods in the fridge and at the grocery. Use separate cutting boards. Store foods separately from household chemicals.

**COOK:** Cook food to proper internal temperature. Check the temperature with a food thermometer.

**CHILL:** Refrigerate promptly. Refrigerate or freeze perishables, prepared food and leftovers within two hours.

Symptoms of food poisoning generally include diarrhea, nausea, vomiting and abdominal cramps. Symptoms can vary based on the type and amount of micro organism ingested. Symptoms often appear from within six hours to several days after eating contaminated food, but illness sometimes shows up much sooner. If you suspect you have food poisoning, contact your health care provider and be sure to report it online at [www.reportfoodpoisoningflorida.com](http://www.reportfoodpoisoningflorida.com).

If symptoms are severe or you are experiencing double vision, trouble swallowing or difficulty breathing, call 911 immediately. Do not destroy suspected foods, but make certain they will not be eaten by someone else. The Florida Department of Health (DOH) may need leftover food for testing if the food is suspected as the source of an outbreak. "Early detection of foodborne outbreaks," says Carina Blackmore, state public health veterinarian and state environmental epidemiologist, "is key to rapid control."

The DOH Food and Waterborne Disease Program performs outbreak investigations in partnership with Florida's county health departments. The program

➔ Report food poisoning online at [www.reportfoodpoisoningflorida.com](http://www.reportfoodpoisoningflorida.com). For more information regarding foodborne illness, visit [www.foodandwaterdisease.com](http://www.foodandwaterdisease.com).



## REPORT Foodborne Illness

maintains a surveillance system to capture the number and type of foodborne illnesses that occur, as well as investigative data regarding the specifics of each outbreak such as the location, number of people affected and the risk factors that may have contributed to the outbreak. These surveillance data can help determine trends and possible causes so that specific prevention measures can be put into effect to help reduce the incidence of future foodborne illness.

### Check out foodborne illness public service announcement (PSA)

Most minor cases of foodborne illness are treated at home. These unreported cases impact the amount of reporting data available to investigate causes and monitor foodborne illness trends. DOH will launch a PSA that will encourage consumers to report unsuspected cases of foodborne illness or online at [www.reportfoodpoisoningflorida.com](http://www.reportfoodpoisoningflorida.com). Be sure to check out the foodborne illness PSA on the DOH YouTube channel.