

MERIDEN DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

CURRENT HEALTH AND RESPIRATORY VIRUS UPDATES

Monthly Newsletter: May 2024

Each month, we will feature an article written by a member of the Health and Human Services team. May's feature is Elizabeth, Public Health Educator.

MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH!

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. According to the National Institute of Medicine, nearly 1 in 5 Americans live with a mental health condition.

It is important to remember that you are not alone. Mental health is essential to a person's life in the same way as physical health. Hesitation to talk about mental health adds to the notion that the topic is taboo. It is important to normalize conversations surrounding mental health so people can feel empowered to seek the help they need. Click on the resources below from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) can help you feel more informed to talk about mental health with the people in your life who may need your support.

- [For People with Mental Health Problems](#)
- [For Young People Looking for Help](#)
- [For Parents and Caregivers](#)
- [For Friends and Family Members](#)
- [For Educators](#)
- [For Community and Faith Leaders](#)



**Elizabeth, Public
Health Educator**

Another way to learn more about supporting someone who is experiencing a mental health crisis is by taking a **QPR Suicide Prevention Training**. QPR stands for Question, Persuade, and Refer — the 3 simple steps anyone can learn to help save a life from suicide.

Just as people trained in CPR and the Heimlich Maneuver help save thousands of lives each year, people trained in QPR learn how to recognize the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to question, persuade, and refer someone to help.

Our next training will be held on Wednesday, May 15, 2024 11:00am to 12:00pm at the Meriden Department of Health and Human Services (165 Miller Street). To register for this important training, please contact Elizabeth DeMerchant, Public Health Educator at edemerchant@meridenct.gov or (203) 630-4288.

DON'T LET THE TICKS BITE!

How to Prevent a Tick Bite – Be A.W.A.R.E.

- A** **Avoid** areas where ticks live. Ticks thrive in wood piles, long grass, leaf piles and beach grass.
- W** **Wear** light-colored clothing; long pants, sleeves, socks and close-toed shoes. Tuck long hair into a hat.
- A** **Apply** EPA-approved tick repellent that contains DEET.
- R** **Remove** clothing upon entering the home; toss into dryer at HIGH temperature for 10-15 mins.
- E** **Examine** yourself and your pets for ticks daily. Check everywhere – ticks love to hide!

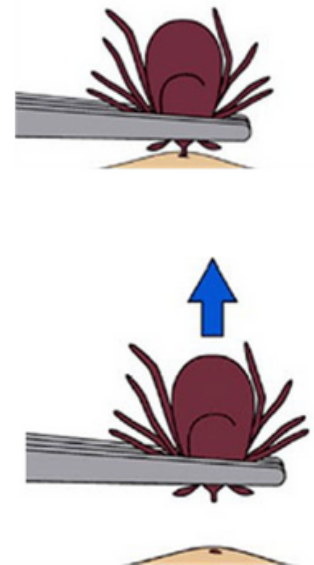
How to Remove a Tick

- Use fine tipped tweezers
- Grasp the tick by the mouth, as close to the skin as possible. Avoid crushing the tick's body
- Pull straight up, gently. Avoid twisting or jerking
- Clean the area with rubbing alcohol or soap and water
- Record the date and time that this occurred
- Watch for any sign or symptoms

DO NOT burn off with a match

DO NOT cover with petroleum jelly

DO NOT pour kerosene on the tick



Submitting a Tick for Identification and Testing:

Ticks found on a person can be brought to our Environmental Health Office to be identified and sent out for testing for tick-borne diseases such as Lyme disease, anaplasmosis, and babesiosis. Tick testing is offered by The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station as a public service free of charge.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call our Environmental Health office at (203) 630-4226.

HOW TO PROTECT AGAINST MOSQUITO BITES



Mosquitoes bite during the day and night. They live indoors and outdoors. Protect your family from mosquito bites. Use insect repellent, wear long-sleeved shirts and pants, and take steps to control mosquitoes indoors and outdoors.

Use insect repellent

- Use Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered insect repellents with one of the following active ingredients: DEET, picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon eucalyptus, para-menthane-diol, or 2-undecanone.
- Always follow product label instructions.
- Reapply insect repellent as directed.
 - » Do not spray repellent on the skin under clothing.
 - » If you are also using sunscreen, apply sunscreen first and insect repellent second.
- The effectiveness of non-EPA registered insect repellents, including some natural repellents, is not known.



Wear long-sleeved shirts, pants Treat clothes and gear

- Wear long-sleeved shirts and pants.
- Treat items such as boots, pants, socks, and tents with permethrin or buy permethrin-treated clothing and gear.
 - » Permethrin is an insecticide that kills or repels mosquitoes.
 - » Permethrin-treated clothing will protect you after multiple washings. See product information to find out how long the protection will last.
 - » If treating items yourself, follow the product instructions.
- Do not use permethrin products directly on skin.



EPA-registered active ingredients

Higher percentages of active ingredient provide longer protection

DEET

Picaridin (known as KBR and icaridin outside the US)

IR3535

Oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE)

Para-menthane-diol (PMD)

2-undecanone



Find the insect repellent that's right for you by using [EPA's search tool](#).

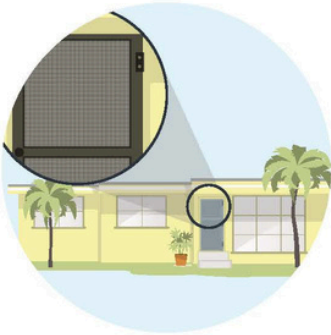
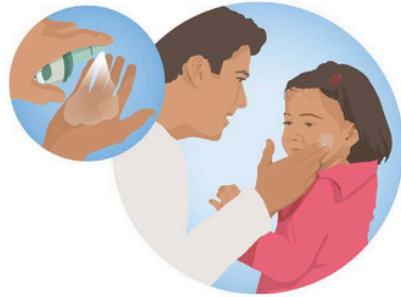
The EPA's search tool is available at: www.epa.gov/insect-repellents/find-insect-repellent-right-you



**U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services**
Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention

Protect babies and children

- Always follow instructions when applying insect repellent to children.
- Do not use insect repellent on babies younger than 2 months old.
 - » Instead dress your child in clothing that covers arms and legs.
 - » Cover strollers and baby carriers with mosquito netting.
- Do not use products containing oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE) or para-menthane-diol (PMD) on children younger than 3 years old.
- Do not apply insect repellent onto a child's hands, eyes, mouth, cuts or irritated skin.
 - » Adults: spray insect repellent onto your hands and then apply to a child's face.

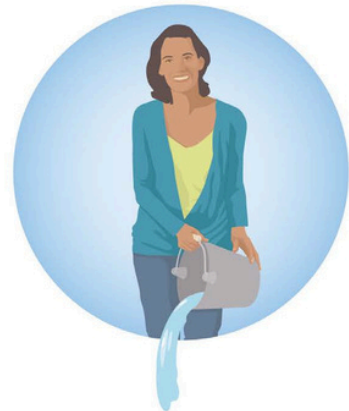


Control mosquitoes indoors

- Keep windows and doors shut and use air conditioning if possible.
- Use, install, or repair window and door screens.
- **Once a week**, empty or throw out any items that hold water like vases and flowerpot saucers.
- Use an indoor insect fogger or indoor insect spray to kill mosquitoes and treat areas where they rest. These products work immediately, but may need to be reapplied. Always follow label instructions.

Control mosquitoes outdoors

- **Once a week**, empty or throw out any items that hold water like vases and flowerpot saucers.
- Tightly cover water storage containers (buckets, rain barrels, etc.)
- For containers without lids, use mesh with holes smaller than an adult mosquito.
- Use larvicides to treat large containers of water that will not be used for drinking and cannot be covered or dumped out.
- Use an outdoor insect spray in dark humid areas where mosquitoes rest, like under patio furniture or in the carpet or garage. Always follow label instructions.
- If you have a septic tank, repair cracks or gaps. Cover vent or plumbing pipe openings using mesh with holes smaller than an adult mosquito.



MOSQUITO CONTROL PROGRAM



The Meriden Department of Health and Human Services is offering mosquito control consultation services and larvicidal mosquito dunks **AT NO COST** to Meriden residents.

We will provide the following services:

1. **A site visit to assess standing water issues and make recommendations for eliminating mosquito breeding conditions, and**
2. **An initial treatment with mosquito dunks*.**

**Please note that the Department will only provide larvicide dunks for standing water bodies less than 400 square feet. Application of the larvicide will be done by the homeowner.*



Now is the time to be proactive about mosquito control because they are just beginning to breed for the summer season.

For more information on mosquito control please contact the Environmental Health Office at (203) 630-4226 (option 3) or email cbuckley@meridenct.gov.

We will distribute dunks to residents until our supply is gone.



SCAN ME

RESPIRATORY VIRUS INFORMATION

FDA Authorizes Pemgarda to Help Prevent COVID-19 for Immunocompromised People

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has authorized a medication for preventing COVID-19 for people who are moderately or severely immunocompromised, ages 12 years and older, and weighing at least 88 pounds. In addition to vaccination, Pemivibart (Pemgarda) may provide another layer of protection against COVID-19 and can be given at least 2 weeks after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine.



Pemgarda is given by a healthcare provider as a single intravenous infusion over 60 minutes. If continued protection is needed, additional doses should be administered every 3 months.

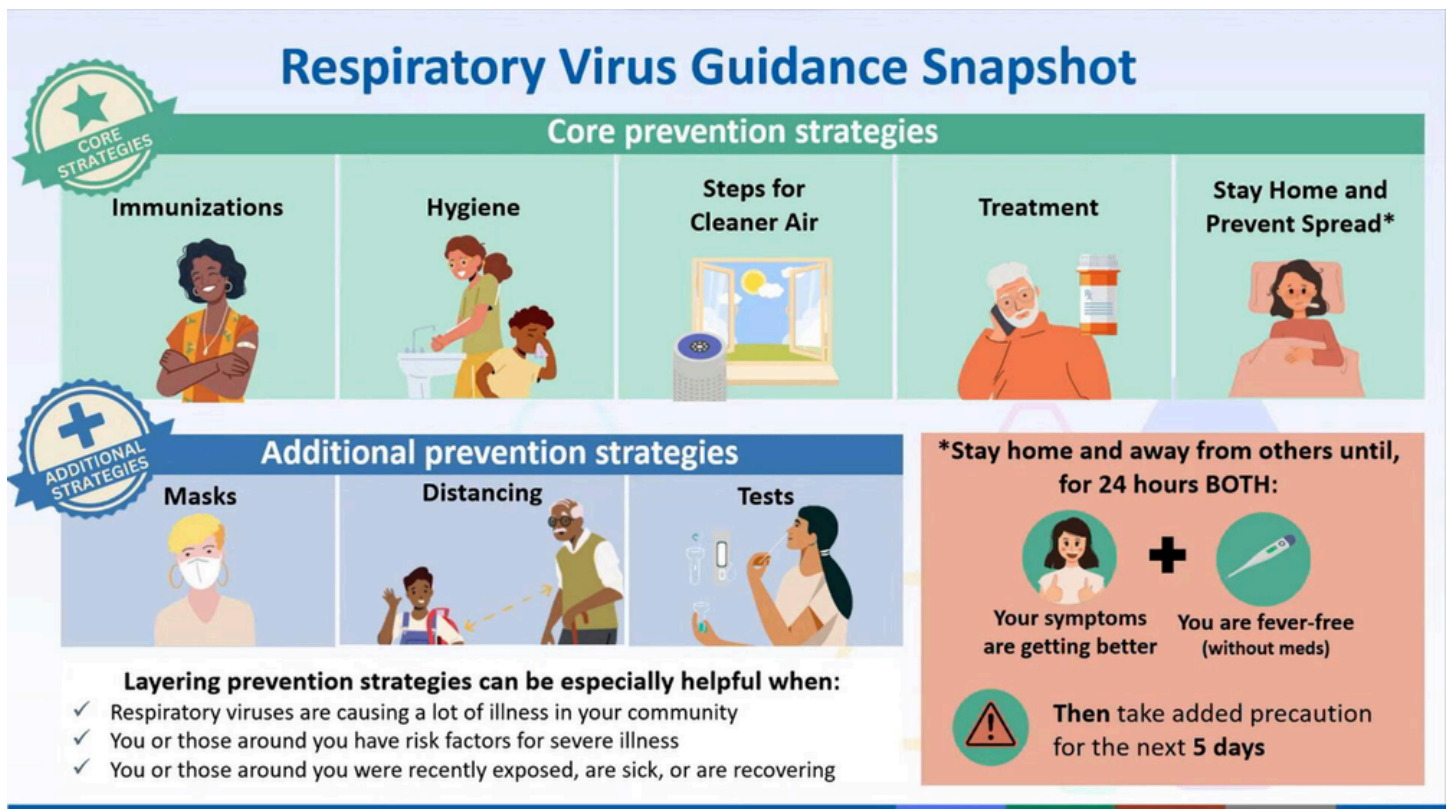
People who are privately insured or have Medicare part B may receive Pemgarda for free. Talk to your healthcare provider to see if Pemgarda is right for you.

New CDC data shows that PCR tests are the most reliable COVID-19 diagnostic test



The CDC highlights the importance of using the right type of COVID-19 test. Findings from a recent study shows that PCR tests are the most reliable type of COVID-19 test regardless of symptoms. Antigen or “rapid” tests are still reliable, but are less likely to detect SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19), than PCR tests. Rapid test performance (i.e. sensitivity) is better in individuals with symptoms, like a fever.

Respiratory Virus Guidance



Respiratory Virus Guidance Snapshot

Core prevention strategies

- Immunizations**: Illustration of a healthcare worker.
- Hygiene**: Illustration of a person washing hands.
- Steps for Cleaner Air**: Illustration of a window with a fan and a plant.
- Treatment**: Illustration of a person on a phone with a pill bottle.
- Stay Home and Prevent Spread***: Illustration of a person in bed.

Additional prevention strategies

- Masks**: Illustration of a person wearing a mask.
- Distancing**: Illustration of two people with a distance arrow.
- Tests**: Illustration of a person getting a test.

Layering prevention strategies can be especially helpful when:

- ✓ Respiratory viruses are causing a lot of illness in your community
- ✓ You or those around you have risk factors for severe illness
- ✓ You or those around you were recently exposed, are sick, or are recovering

***Stay home and away from others until, for 24 hours BOTH:**

- Your symptoms are getting better
- You are fever-free (without meds)

Then take added precaution for the next 5 days

CDC's guidance for respiratory viruses provides practical recommendations and information to help people lower health risks posed by a range of common respiratory viral illnesses, including COVID-19, Influenza (flu) and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV).

When you may have a respiratory virus...

Stay home and away from others (*including people you live with who are not sick*) if you have respiratory virus symptoms that aren't better explained by another cause. These symptoms can include fever, chills, fatigue, cough, runny nose, and headache, among others.

You can go back to your normal activities when, for at least 24 hours, **both** are true:

1. Your symptoms are getting better overall, **and**
2. You have not had a fever (and are not using fever-reducing medication).

When you go back to your normal activities:

Take added precaution over the next 5 days, such as taking additional steps for cleaner air, hygiene, masks, physical distancing, and/or testing when you will be around other people indoors.

To find a COVID-19 testing site near you, please use the CDC's COVID-19 Testing Locator Tool.

Information about COVID-19 vaccines can be found HERE.

A full list of clinics available in Connecticut can be found at <https://www.vaccines.gov/>. Search by zip code and type of vaccine desired. Please call before going to ensure dates, times, and supply is correct.

UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS/TRAININGS

Community Narcan Training

Join us for our next Community Narcan Training on May 7, 9:00 - 10:00am, in-person at 165 Miller Street (Teen Conference Room, second floor). You will learn: signs and symptoms of an overdose, what Narcan is and how to administer it, and local resources and support. Each participants will leave with a certificate of completion and a FREE Narcan kit with other prevention resources. To register please call Elizabeth at (203) 630-4288.

Meriden Senior Center Health Fair

The Meriden Senior Center's annual Health Fair will be Wednesday, May 8th 9:00 - 11:30am at the Meriden Senior Center (22 W Main St). Get free health screenings and information including a presentation from guest speaker Sandy Gifford from Hartford HealthCare's Center for Healthy Aging. For more information please contact Liz Parra, Recreation Coordinator at (203) 630-4703 or lparra@meridenct.gov.

Fentanyl Facts Webinar

In honor of National Fentanyl Awareness Day on May 7, join us for a Fentanyl Facts Webinar from 12 - 1pm on Microsoft Teams. We will talk about what fentanyl is and how it is driving the overdose crisis, current drug trends, community resources, and more. To register, please contact Elizabeth at edemerchant@meridenct.gov or (203) 630-4288.



Kindergarten Registration 2024-2025 School Year



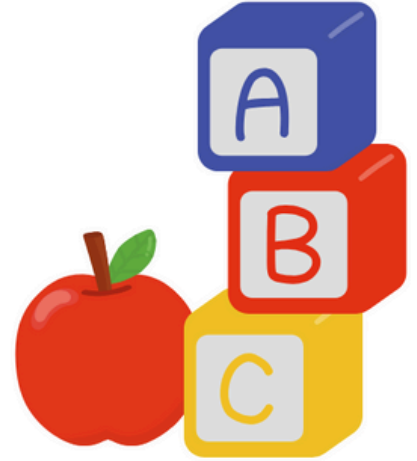
Will your child be 5 years old by September 1, 2024?
If so, your child is eligible to register for Kindergarten for the
2024-2025 school year.

To start the registration process, please visit the Meriden
Board of Education's Central Registration website:

<https://www.meridenk12.org/parents/registration/>

There you will find the step-by-step process to start
registration including:

1. Gathering all required documentation.
2. Completing the online registration application.
3. Scheduling an office appointment online. **Registrations are by appointment only.**



Part of the registration process is meeting the State of Connecticut's health
requirements. This includes:

1. A **physical examination** within 12 months before the first day of school
(August 28, 2024) **AND**
2. A copy of the child's **immunization record**

For specific questions about health requirements, please contact the Meriden
Department of Health and Human Services' Clinic office at (203) 630-4234.



MERIDEN DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Working for Our Community



165 Miller Street Meriden, CT 06450



(203) 630-4226



Monday-Friday 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM

FOR ALL UPCOMING EVENTS AND NEWS:



City of Meriden Health & Human Services Department



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Scan the QR code to visit our website www.meridenhealth.com



CLINICAL SERVICES

(203) 630-4234

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

(203) 630-4226

PUBLIC HEALTH EDUCATION

(203) 630-4288

MERIDEN SCHOOL READINESS

(203) 630-4222

WOMEN, INFANTS AND CHILDREN (WIC)

(203) 630-4245

JUVENILE ASSISTANCE AND DIVERSION BOARD (JAD)

(203) 639-5058

PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

(203) 630-4221

SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES

(203) 630-4239

SENIOR CENTER

22 WEST MAIN STREET
(203) 237-0066