New Immunization Requirements for School-Aged Children

MORE THAN 60,000 MARION COUNTY SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN COULD BE AFFECTED BY NEW INDIANA STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS.

The new requirements apply to students entering preschool, kindergarten and those in grades 6-12.

Students ages 3 through 5, attending a preschool located within a school building must have two appropriately documented varicella vaccines, separated by at least three months; physician documentation of disease history; or laboratory evidence of immunity.

In terms of chicken pox, children entering preschool, kindergarten and 1st grades, must present a signed statement by a health care provider, including date of disease.

Students in grades 6 – 12 must have appropriate documentation of the following vaccinations: tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis vaccine (tdap); meningococcal conjugate vaccine (mcv4); two varicella vaccinations appropriately spaced per centers for disease and control guidelines, documentation of disease history, or laboratory evidence of immunity.

For those children entering grades 2-12, documentation from a parent indicating when their child had chicken pox is sufficient. The written statement should include date of the disease, a parent’s signature and date of signature. (Example: if a parent cannot recall exact dates, something as simple as stating that disease occurred in the spring of 2000 is acceptable.)

To obtain a copy of your child’s immunization record, contact your child’s doctor or the Marion County Health Department at (317) 221-2122.

Back to School Family Day 2010

Saturday July 31 • 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Marion County Health Department
3838 North Rural Street (parking lot)

- Entertainment
- School Supplies (odds must be present)
- Health Screenings
- Health Information
- Immunizations
- Sports Physicals
- Free and Discounted
- Birth Certificates

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Key Bicycle Safety Tips

WITH SUMMER’S ARRIVAL AND MORE PEOPLE USING BICYCLES TO GO TO WORK, SCHOOL AND TO GET AROUND THE CITY, EMERGENCY ROOMS OFTEN SEE A RISE IN BICYCLE-RELATED INJURIES. TRAUMA SURGEONS AT THE IU/ WISHARD LEVEL I TRAUMA CENTER ARE ASKING THE PUBLIC TO FOLLOW IMPORTANT BICYCLE SAFETY TIPS.

Statistics from the Bicycle Helmet Safety Institute show that approximately 800 bicyclists die on American roads every year. In a typical year more than 90 percent of cyclists who are killed are involved in crashes with motor vehicles. In addition, non-helmeted riders are 14 times more likely to be involved in a fatal crash.

“The reality is with just some simple steps many of these injuries can be prevented,” said Dr. Thomas Hayward, attending surgeon, IU/Wishard Level I Trauma Center and assistant professor of surgery, Indiana University School of Medicine. “We see people of all ages injured in bicycle accidents and in most cases the injuries are a result of not following precautions or recommended guidelines.” Dr. Hayward added that bicycle injuries account for the largest number of sports-related injuries treated by emergency departments.

Some tips to follow when riding your bike include:

- Always wear a helmet
- Ride your bicycle like you would drive your car
- Obey all traffic controls
- Use reflectors, lights, and dress in light-colored clothing
- Make sure your bicycle is tuned up
- Never carry another person on your bicycle
- Always use hand signals when turning or stopping
- Look out for cars and ride your bicycle defensively
- Be careful when checking for traffic and do not swerve when looking over your shoulder

Indianapolis Farmers’ Market

THE WOMEN, INFANT, AND CHILDREN (WIC) PROGRAM OFFER FARMERS’ MARKET CHECKS TO PURCHASE FRESH INDIANA - GROWN FRUITS AND VEGETABLES.

Indiana was one of the first states to participate in the Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program (FMNP), established by Congress in 1992 to provide fresh, unprepared, locally grown fruits and vegetables to eligible WIC participants, and to expand the awareness, use of and sales at farmers’ markets. The WIC program provides checks for supplemental nutritious foods, along with nutrition education to participating low-income pregnant or postpartum women, infants, and children age five or younger who are nutritionally at-risk.

The WIC FMNP provides additional checks to WIC participants. From June 1 through October 16 Marion County WIC sites will kick off the FM season by distributing Farmers’ Market checks to WIC participants from the WIC clinic sites. Participants will receive six $3 checks ($18 total); one $18 set per household will be issued to the oldest eligible family member above 1 year of age in the family.

The checks can be redeemed at a WIC FMNP-approved farmers’ market and with an approved vendor. Participants do not get cash, change, credit or refunds when using a check. Farmers will have a WIC FM poster indicating they accept WIC FM checks.

Local farmers benefit by increased sales along with an expanded consumer base because FMNP allows only Indiana-grown produce to be purchased with the farmers’ market checks. The WIC Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program capitalizes on the existence of farmers’ markets by enabling WIC participants to utilize this rich community resource while encouraging consumption of more fresh fruits and vegetables, and encouraging outdoor family physical activity by walking around the market.

For more information about the Farmer’ Market Program please call the Marion County Administrative WIC Office at (317) 221-7401.
Summer Water Safety Key Throughout Summer

MORE THAN 40 MARION COUNTY RESIDENTS HAVE DIED AS THE RESULT OF DROWNING IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS, PROMPTING THE MARION COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT (MCHD) TO REMIND ALL RESIDENTS ABOUT THE DANGERS POSED BY POOLS, PONDS, STREAMS, RIVERS AND LAKES.

Appropriate precautions should be taken whenever anyone is around water. This is especially true with children who should never be left unattended near water.

Nationally, children 4 years old and younger have the highest drowning rate, with a majority of these tragedies taking place in residential pools. More than 3,000 individuals die across the nation from drowning, while another 4,000 suffer a near drowning.

While these statistics are alarming, water poses other health risks. Gastrointestinal illness is a significant public health concern often linked to recreational swimming pools. While public health agencies often warn about the dangers posed by ponds, streams, rivers and lakes, more than 75 percent of all gastrointestinal illnesses are associated with treated water sites like public and residential swimming pools.

“Our message is that recreational water, whether or not it has been treated, is not for drinking. We are especially concerned with younger individuals who may not fully understand the risk,” said Virginia A. Caine, M.D., director, Marion County Health Department.

MCHD inspects more than 911 pools in the county during peak usage in June, July and August. In any given year, the health department will complete more than 5,000 pool inspections.

“Common violations we observe include a general lack of training among pool operators, issues with pumps or disinfection systems and poor routine maintenance,” said Adam Rickert, supervisor, of the Department of Water Quality.

Health inspectors verify disinfection systems not working. Examples of these critical code violations include no measurable chlorine in the pool water; a cloudy condition where the bottom of the pool is not visible; a lack of appropriate lifeguards; an individual with diarrhea has an accident in the pool; and pumps, filtration systems or automatic disinfection systems not working.

For more information about pools and pool inspections contact the Marion County Health Department at (317) 221-2266.

Ways to Reduce Skin Damage

PROLONGED SUN EXPOSURE THIS SPRING AND SUMMER COULD HAVE FAR-REACHING CONSEQUENCES THAT GO BEYOND JUST THE IRRITATION OF PAINFUL, SUNBURNED SKIN.

By taking some simple steps, people who are going to be outside for extended periods can greatly reduce the risk of skin damage. Some of the precautions doctors recommend include conducting monthly self-examinations, re-applying sunscreen lotion with a sun protection factor of 15 or greater every two hours and forgoing sunbathing or trips to the tanning bed.

Affecting more people in the United States than any other form of cancer, skin cancer is one of the only known cancers that can be greatly reduced or prevented by avoiding certain environmental factors, said Dr. Lawrence Mark, dermatology service chief at Wishard Health Services and assistant professor of Dermatology at the IU School of Medicine.

If a person is going to be in the sun, avoiding the hours of 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. when ultraviolet-B rays are strongest is recommended. A baseball cap or hat, sunscreen applied 30 minutes prior to outside activities and protective clothing that covers exposed areas is advised. Dr. Mark said sunscreen should include titanium dioxide or zinc oxide to best combat the sun’s ultraviolet rays, and should be reapplied after getting out of water, even if the lotion is waterproof. Spray-on tanning products offer no protection from the sun. He said the two most common areas susceptible to sun are the top of the ears and neck.

When conducting monthly self-examinations, a person should look closely for what dermatologists term the A-B-Cs, standing for asymmetric, border, color and diameter. Doctors stress any skin marks that are asymmetric, have an irregular border, recently changed in color or increased in diameter should be examined more closely. Dr. Mark suggests if someone has a concern about skin health, he or she should make an appointment to see a primary care physician or dermatologist.

For more information about finding a primary care physician or dermatologist, please call Health Connection at Wishard at (317) 655-2255.

Aspiring Babysitters Encouraged to Take MCHD Safety Class

The Marion County Health Department is accepting reservations for its popular Safe Sitter classes. The daylong classes teach babysitters how to keep themselves safe while babysitting.

There is a $20 fee, class size is limited and pre-registration is required.

Thursday, July 22 Pecor Health Center 6940 North Michigan Road 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Saturday, September 18 Marion County Health Department 3338 North Rural Street 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.

For more information or to enroll in a class, please call the Marion County Health Department at (317) 221-5729.
Wishard will be First Green Hospital in Indiana

NEW PROJECT WILL AIM FOR USGBC LEED® SILVER CERTIFICATION


Community leaders reaffirmed the profound role of Wishard and its connection to Marion County as they joined Wishard officials and an estimated crowd of nearly 300 for The New Wishard groundbreaking on Wednesday, May 12. More than 60 officials and community members lined up along a row of dirt with ceremonial shovels to turn over a scoop of dirt.

Wishard’s decision to reuse an old urban site is one of the many credits the new facilities achieve for environmental sustainability.

The new facilities will pursue Silver certification, the third-highest level on the United States Green Building Council’s (USGBC) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) rating scale. This would make Wishard one of 10 newly-constructed hospitals in America to achieve LEED® certification at the level of Silver or higher and the only one of its kind in Indiana.

“The New Wishard project is a central component to the future of sustainability in Indianapolis and represents our commitment to creating a cleaner, healthier, more energy-efficient city,” said Mayor Greg Ballard.

“When so many of us stood in support of a new Wishard last fall, we weren’t merely supporting a better hospital – we were supporting a healthier, better Indianapolis community,” said Virginia A. Caine, M.D., director, Marion County Health Department.

“The New Wishard Hospital that the voters of Marion County overwhelmingly approved will be a beacon of health and wellness for Indianapolis,” said Matthew Gutwein, president and CEO of Health and Hospital Corporation of Marion County.

Plans for The New Wishard include numerous design elements that will contribute to its certification as one of America's greenest new hospitals:

- Pollution control during construction
- Energy saving through efficient design
- Water usage savings
- Outside air circulation

The New Wishard design elements are described as planned and may change due to construction and other factors. Certification is subject to USGBC audit upon project completion. LEED® is an internationally-recognized building certification providing third-party verification that a building was designed and constructed using strategies aimed at improving performance in energy savings, water efficiency, carbon emissions reduction, improved indoor air quality and stewardship of resources and sensitivity to their impacts.

For more information, visit www.thenewwishard.org.

Wishard Construction Tightens Parking

As the new Wishard construction project continues, employees, patients and visitors are finding it more difficult than usual to find a spot to park. Bell Flower Clinic, 1101 W. Tenth Street, staff and clients had been parking at the Wilson Street Parking Garage, but, right now, parking on IUPUI’s campus is a challenge.

Parking availability will continue to fluctuate during construction, which will disrupt about 1,600 parking spaces on campus.

“We have leased the old Bush Stadium at 16th and Harding, which can hold up to 1,000 cars,” said Health and Hospital Corporation’s Brian Carney, Vice President of Planning. “Shuttles run frequently to and from the hospital.”

Employees, patients and visitors are encouraged to take advantage of the free parking at Bush Stadium.”

“Monday through Friday, there are three shuttles running continuously from 6 a.m. to midnight (every seven or eight minutes),” Wishard Director of Emergency Services Chuck Ford said. “The lot is well lit and patrolled by Wishard security.”

On the weekends, patients and visitors are encouraged to use the Wishard parking garage.

Carney said that the first building project includes a parking garage that will take approximately two years to complete. The six-level, cast-in-place, post-tensioned concrete garage will be used for the parking of patient, staff, and visitor vehicles at the new Wishard and will stand immediately adjacent to the new hospital to maximize convenience and accessibility.

The total parking space in the garage is equal to about 18 football fields.

In the mean time, grab a good book and relax on a short shuttle ride to and from your parking spot! For Wishard construction and parking updates, visit http://thenewwishard.org.
New FDA Regulations Aim to Protect Kids from Tobacco

ON JUNE 22, INDIANAPOLIS’ CHILDREN WILL BE A LITTLE SAFER FROM THE DANGERS OF TOBACCO THANKS TO NEW FDA REGULATIONS THAT WILL GO INTO EFFECT NATIONWIDE. THE AGENCY’S INNOVATIVE TOBACCO CONTROL ACT WILL HELP REDUCE THE NUMBER OF KIDS UNDER 18 WHO USE TOBACCO BY MAKING CIGARETTES AND SMOKELESS TOBACCO LESS ACCESSIBLE AND LESS APPEALING.

Although Indiana has long prohibited the sale of cigarettes to children under the age of 18, the FDA’s new provisions will go even further to help prevent kids from obtaining tobacco products. The Tobacco Control Act expressly prohibits the sale of cigarettes and smokeless tobacco to purchasers under 18, and it requires that retailers check photo ID if the buyer looks like he or she may be younger than 26.

Additional new regulations prohibit sales by vending machines and self-service displays, allowing them only in narrow instances, when there is essentially no risk of a minor accessing them. Manufacturers can no longer mix brands by using a non-tobacco brand to sell a tobacco product, unless the trade or brand name was on both the tobacco and non-tobacco products sold in the U.S. on Jan. 1, 1995.

Free samples of cigarettes are no longer allowed, and neither are sales of packages of fewer than 20 cigarettes. In contrast, samples of smokeless tobacco are allowed, but only in very limited circumstances, where children won’t be present. Distribution of smokeless samples now is prohibited to entertainment groups, athletic teams and at sporting events.

On the national stage, you can say goodbye to some familiar elements of tobacco branding, like advertising as you know it, sports team sponsorships, points-for-purchase programs, and brand memorabilia, like logo T-shirts or poker chips. By removing some of the familiarity – and maybe even some of the glamour – of the tobacco industry, the FDA hopes these regulations will make tobacco products less appealing to kids.

With respect to advertising, the Tobacco Control Act strictly limits visual advertising, such as print ads, to black text on a white background, and it restricts audio advertising to someone’s plain speaking voice, without the help of sound effects or background music.

In the sponsorship realm, recognized tobacco brands no longer can sponsor sports teams or entertainment events. There is an exception for tobacco companies that have been in the US for more than 15 years, but only if their brand name is not recognized as that of a tobacco product. For example, Philip Morris could not sponsor, but Altria could.

Finally, the regulation prohibits any non-tobacco product that uses a tobacco brand, like logo T-shirts, hats, or other giveaway items, along with programs that reward tobacco purchasers with gifts, other than cigarettes or smokeless tobacco, in exchange for their proof of purchase.

Liza Sumpter, Marion County Health Department’s Tobacco Program Manager, is enthusiastic about this movement forward in the battle against tobacco. “Tragically, children in Indianapolis continue to start smoking,” she said. “By making tobacco less accessible and less attractive, I’m optimistic that these new regulations will help reduce the number of our city’s children who start down this unhealthy, often lifelong, path.”

If you see a violation of one of these new policies after June 22, bringing it to the FDA’s attention is easy. Members of the general public can report violations to the agency’s Center for Tobacco Products in the following ways:

- Use their Web site: FDA.gov/ToBaccoProducts
- E-mail: AskCTP@fda.hhs.gov
- Call: 1-877-CTP-1317 and press option #4

Are Your Smoke Alarms Keeping Your Family Safe?

THE KIND OF SMOKE ALARM YOU HAVE IN YOUR HOME IS CRITICALLY IMPORTANT. TESTS HAVE SHOWN THAT THE MOST COMMON TYPE OF SMOKE ALARM IN INDIANA HOMES – IONIZATION SMOKE ALARMS – MAY NOT WORK IN SLOW-BURNING, SMOBLDING FIRE. INDIANA FIRE DEPARTMENTS RECOMMEND PURCHASING DUAL SENSOR OR PHOTOLECTRIC SMOKE ALARMS.

Ionization vs. Photoelectric Smoke Detection

Ionization smoke detection is generally more responsive to flaming fires. They have a small amount of radioactive material between two electrically charged plates, which ionizes the air and causes current to flow between the plates. When smoke enters the chamber, it disrupts the flow of ions, thus reducing the flow of current and activating alarm.

Photoelectric smoke detection is generally more responsive to fires that begin with a long period of smoldering. The alarm aims a light source into a sensing chamber at an angle away from the sensor. Smoke enters the chamber, reflecting light onto the light sensor, triggering the alarm.

In addition to individual ionization and photoelectric alarms, dual alarms that include both technologies in a single device are available.

Fatal home fires, day or night, include a large number of smoldering fires and a large number of flaming fires. It’s impossible to predict what type of fire may happen or during what time of the day or night. For the best protection, use both types of smoke alarm technologies in your home. It isn’t necessary to replace all of the ionization detectors in your home or to get rid of them. It’s recommended that every home should have the photoelectric or dual detectors in addition to the ionization detectors.

The Marion County Health Department’s Lead Safe & Healthy Homes (LSHH) Program is giving out free smoke detectors to qualifying Marion County residents. For more information, contact LSHH at (317) 221-3093.

MCHD’S Tire Drop-Off A Success

The Marion County Health Department’s Tire Amnesty Day program, where unused tires could be dropped off at locations around the community at no charge, set a record for tires collected. During the June 12 event, more than 4,000 tires were collected among sites at the health department’s Mosquito Control headquarters, POMP’S Tire, 2120 South Harding Street, Southeast Community Organization (SECO), 1925 Fletcher Avenue and J.R.’s Used Tires, 3519 West 10th Street. In 2009, the health department collected more than 800 tires during Amnesty Day.

This year, Walmart joined POMP’S tires as a Tire Amnesty Day sponsor. With recent heavy rains and unreasonably hot temperatures, this year’s event took on additional meaning. “The dark color of the tire attracts and retains heat, holds enough water to hatch eggs and offers protection from predators and chemical treatments,” said Chuck Dulla, administrator, Mosquito Control. Tires collected by Mosquito Control are then sent to Entech, a Michigan-based firm. Tires sent to Entech for processing are transformed into:

- Tire Rings
- Septic system chips
- Landfill construction material
- Tire derived fuel
- Custom ground feedstock
- Reuse for actual tires

For more information on the Marion County Health Department’s Mosquito Control program, please call (317) 221-7440.
HHC Receives Urban League Award

Health and Hospital Corporation of Marion County (HHC) received the Chairman's Award at the Indianapolis Urban League's Equal Opportunity Day event on June 15. State Representative Greg Porter was on hand to accept the award for HHC. The Chairman's Award is presented to a company or organization that has helped to develop new opportunities for or promote, expand and support programs of the Indianapolis Urban League.

“Health and Hospital Corporation is excited about receiving the Chairman’s award from the Urban League for Wishard’s key role in our community. Wishard is vital to the quality of life in our community and clearly provides healthcare to thousands of citizens who otherwise would have no place to go,” said Greg Porter, Vice President of External Affairs, Health and Hospital Corporation.

Dr. Caine, Mayor Ballard Thank Community Leaders for H1N1 Effort

"Your role was significant in assisting the health department and city in using our vast resources in the most effective, efficient manner possible.”

Indianapolis was one of the first two communities in the nation to receive the H1N1 vaccine and has continued to be a national leader in implementing the flu emergency response plan.

Since receiving the initial shipment of H1N1 vaccine October 5, 2009, the MCHD has vaccinated 117,910 school age children with more than 10,262 of these children also receiving their recommended second vaccine from the health department. The health department has also vaccinated more than 40,200 adults. A majority of these adults were considered most at-risk for complications from the H1N1 flu.

The MCHD, the Indiana State Department of Health, schools, hospitals, nurses, pharmacies, neighborhood groups, civic organizations, municipal government, long-term care sites, nursing homes and the faith community all played key roles and made significant contributions in implementing and ensuring the success of the county H1N1 response plan.

Better Healthcare For Indiana Hosted ‘All Healthcare Is Local’ Conference

Better Healthcare for Indiana (BHI) presented “All Healthcare is Local: Helping Indiana Communities Organize Around Health” on June 2 at the Second Presbyterian Church in Indianapolis. The Conference—Sponsored by the Marion County Health Department, St. Vincent Health, and Roche—was organized to:

- Help Indiana communities leverage their strengths to energize and mobilize local multi-stakeholder health improvement coalitions that function through mutual trust, public accountability, and clarity of community-wide health and medical care improvement goals.
- Learn how communities can leverage federal legislation and make health reform work for all stakeholders and citizens.

Keynote speakers were Len Nichols, PhD., Director of the Center for Health Policy Research and Ethics at George Mason University; and Dick Pettingill, Advanced Leadership Fellow, Harvard University.

Nichols’ topic was, “After the Law has Passed: Making Health Reform Work for Communities.” Nichols discussed how national reform will affect Indiana providers and communities, and taking full advantage of the choices and grant opportunities buried in the new law.

Dick Pettingill’s topic was, “Why Health Needs to Become a Top-Tier Community Leader Priority: What does it mean for a community/region to organize around health?” Pettingill introduced available resources, tools, metrics and organizing techniques to help communities build social capital and improve health.

BHI is a non-partisan, not-for-profit, multi-stakeholder organization designed to bring together diverse leaders in communities across the state—not just providers—to identify their community’s health and health care issues, and initiate collaborative, community-wide responses and programs. The BHI role is to serve as convener, facilitator, coordinator and supporter of these efforts. For more information, visit www.healthierindiana.com.
Environmental Control, Neighborhood Association Work To Create Change

Every community has eyesores; places that were once thriving that have for one reason or another become forgotten, abandoned and run down; places that can invite pests, illegal dumping, criminal activity and other health and safety issues. When a community unites to tackle these sore spots, the results are impressive.

On June 12, the Marion County Health Department’s Environmental Control Department set out to tackle the former Bryant Heating building in the Sugar Grove Davis addition of Riverside, something they do once or twice every year. This year, however, they were not alone in their efforts. The Riverside Civic League decided to get involved with the project after receiving numerous complaints from residents in regards to the amount of illegal dumping going on there. Keep Indianapolis Beautiful and the City of Indianapolis joined the effort.

“The goal of this project was to inspire neighborhood residents to come together…to show that together residents can take back their neighborhoods,” said Peggy Gamlin, president of Riverside Civic League, Inc. “Our effort shows that working together really works.”

More than 158 tons of trash were removed from the old Bryant building. In addition to the trash removal, brush, weeds and trees were cleared as a preventative measure to eliminate pests, unsightly overgrowth and to create a safer environment by eliminating secluded spots that may contribute to illegal dumping.

“We were very excited to work with the city, the neighborhood association, Keep Indianapolis Beautiful, and volunteers to empower the community to create the change necessary to keep this area safe,” said Kip Mibey, administrator, Environmental Control. “Communities with active neighborhood associations have less dumping and are at the best advantage for creating change in their neighborhoods.”

Gamlin said partnering with Environmental Control has been great.

“I was amazed at the enthusiasm with which they attacked this seemingly insurmountable task and the friendliness of all involved,” said Gamlin. “My goal is to encourage the residents of Sugar Grove Davis to form a block club to keep the momentum going. The Riverside Civic League can help facilitate their effort by funding or finding signage to post on the fence of the old Bryant Heating building naming the consequences of illegal dumping.”

In addition to the old Bryant building, Environmental Control has participated in several special projects:

- Keep Indianapolis Beautiful on April 17—removed 18 tons
- Great Indy Clean-Up on April 16-17—removed 42 tons
- Neighborhood Outreach Clean-up on May 1—removed 19 tons

For more information, contact MCHD’s Environmental Control Department at (317) 221-7580.

Summer Events Challenge Health Department

Licensing Temporary Food Events is a Full-Time Effort for the Marion County Health Department’s Food and Consumer Safety Program. With nearly 300 Events and More Than 1,400 Licenses Granted Annually, Temporary Food Licensing Accounts for Events at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, Fairs, Festivals, Trade Shows and Business Grand Openings.

“If food is being prepared or served for the public, it is likely we will have issued a license and inspected the vendor,” said Kelli Whiting, responsible for the temporary licensing program.

With warmer weather comes a dramatic increase in outdoor events and most will include food. Whiting says consumers should apply common sense when considering eating food at events. “Is cold food cold and is hot food hot? Temperature control is often an issue. If the food doesn’t look or smell right, or if the vendor doesn’t look reliable, that is a sign you should consider other options,” said Whiting.

There should be no bare hand contact with ready to eat foods. Last year health officials responded to concerns that an individual was selling tacos out of the trunk of a car. “If something seems out of place, avoid it and contact the health department,” added Whiting.

Health department inspectors ensure all food code requirements are met. If not, the vendor faces having to make immediate changes or having to throw food out or be shut down.

“Most of the vendors I have worked with now and then we encounter someone who does not know or want to follow the food code and we are always prepared to take the appropriate action,” said Whiting.

The health department works closely with event organizers and vendors. In the case of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, which allows non-profit groups to sell food to raise funds for their organizations, the health department provides free food handling education.

The Marion County Health Department licenses 4,098 food establishments, with 2,359 classified as restaurants. For more information about the Department of Food and Consumer Safety, please call 221-2222, or to find food establishment inspection reports, go to www.mchd.com

Participants Sought for Research Study

Indiana University School of Medicine, Division of Adolescent Medicine, is conducting a research study in order to learn more about the bacteria that may exist in certain areas of the body. This study requires that participants (females age 10-13 and their mothers) visit a study site four times a year for up to four years. At each visit, participants will be asked some personal questions about their health and have swab samples collected. All participants will be compensated for study participation. Adolescent participants will receive $40 for each study visit. Mothers will receive $50 for each annual study visit and $20 at each of her daughter’s visits. Contact Alexis Roth-Graneros, at (317) 274-8812 or almroth@iupui.edu.