

# Public Health Preparedness Newsletter

SPRING 2023



This newsletter is available in **Amharic, Arabic, French, Haitian Creole, Indonesian, Khmer, Portuguese, Russian, Simplified Chinese, Spanish, Swahili, and Vietnamese** at [bit.ly/CRPNnewsletter](http://bit.ly/CRPNnewsletter).

To request free printed copies, visit [bit.ly/PHPMaterials](http://bit.ly/PHPMaterials) or leave a message at 215-429-3016.

## How Does Climate Change Affect Flooding?

Climate change can affect weather patterns and temperatures in different regions.

As a result of climate change, Philadelphia will experience extreme heat and heavier rainfall, causing sea levels to rise and increased flood risk.



## Vector-Borne Diseases

Warmer temperatures and changes in weather patterns can interrupt nature's normal balance.

Philly is getting hotter. Warmer temperatures could bring more mosquitos and ticks, causing more outbreaks of vector-borne diseases.



## Get ReadyPhiladelphia and be the First to Know

The Office of Emergency Management provides alerts about disasters and local emergencies.

For free text alerts, please text **READYPHILA** to **888-777** or sign up at [bit.ly/ReadyPhila](http://bit.ly/ReadyPhila).

Read on for information about how to prepare yourself, your loved ones and your home during the spring season.

- Lyme Disease
- West Nile Virus
- Flooding
- Seasonal Flu
- COVID-19 and more

# Protect yourself and your loved ones

## Lyme Disease

Lyme disease is an infection caused by a germ ticks carry and can spread to humans through their bite.

**Not all ticks have Lyme disease.**

Ticks are usually found in high grass, and wooded environments.

### Protect from tick bites



- Stay on the center of trails.
- Check your clothing for ticks.
- Shower and check your whole body for ticks and use a mirror if needed.

### How to remove a tick

1. Pull upward with an even, steady pressure to remove the tick.
2. Clean the area with rubbing alcohol or soap and water.

For detailed instructions on how to dispose of live ticks visit [bit.ly/tick\\_removal](https://bit.ly/tick_removal).

### When to get medical care, immediately.

- If you cannot or do not want to remove a tick on your own.
- If you develop a fever or red rash in the shape of a circle surrounding the bite.

## Mosquitoes

Mosquitoes are common when the weather is warm. Most mosquito bites can be itchy but some spread germs that can make you sick.



### Protect from mosquito bites

- **Use bug spray**
  - ◇ To find the right insect repellent for you, visit: [bit.ly/findrepellent](https://bit.ly/findrepellent).
  - ◇ To get safety tips on how to apply insect repellent on children, visit: [bit.ly/repellent\\_safety\\_tips](https://bit.ly/repellent_safety_tips).
- **Cover up**
  - ◇ Wear long sleeves, long pants, and socks to prevent bites.
- **Dump water**
  - ◇ Emptying or covering anything near your home that holds water (flowerpots, pet food, water dishes, buckets, etc.) will stop mosquitos from breeding around your home.

## What is West Nile Virus?

- West Nile Virus is a disease that is spread by the bite of a mosquito.
- **Not all mosquitos carry West Nile Virus.**
- Most people who get infected will not get sick, but some develop fever and flu-like symptoms and, in rare cases, inflammation or swelling of the brain.
- People 50 years and older are at the highest risk for severe disease and death.
  - ◇ If you or a family member experience unexplained headaches, weakness, or fatigue, speak with your primary care provider.

For more information on mosquitos and West Nile Virus, visit [bit.ly/Mosquito\\_bites](https://bit.ly/Mosquito_bites).

# Flooding in Philadelphia

Like most major East Coast cities, Philadelphia is prone to flooding. Philadelphia experiences three types of floods due to heavy rain: flooding from rivers, surface water, and groundwater. Climate change can impact storms making them stronger and more frequent. This increases the chance for flooding in Philadelphia.

For more on flooding in Philadelphia, visit: [bit.ly/PWDFlood](https://bit.ly/PWDFlood)

## Preparing for a Flood

- Keep a battery-operated Am/FM radio set to a local station.
- Create an emergency kit/go bag. For more information, visit [bit.ly/MakeAGoBag](https://bit.ly/MakeAGoBag).
- **Sign up with ReadyPhiladelphia for free weather alerts by texting READYPHILA to 888-777 or at [bit.ly/ReadyPhila](https://bit.ly/ReadyPhila).**

## During and After a Flood

### Avoid flood waters

- **DO NOT** drive or walk across flooded roads.
- Just **one** foot of rushing water is enough to carry a car away.
- Flood water contains harmful germs, chemicals, and trash.
  - ◊ Wash your hands if you touch flood water.
- **TURN OFF** gas, electric and water, if the home floods.

### If you lose power

- For fallen power lines or if you smell gas, call PECO's emergency line at 1-800-841-4141.
- Discard food if the refrigerator has not been on for more than four hours.



## Mold prevention and cleanup

Mold can cause eye and skin irritation and allergic reactions.

If you have asthma, mold can trigger asthma attacks.

### Prevention

- Clean and dry wet surfaces within 24 hours and discard items that can't be dried.
- To dry, use fans, air conditioning, and dehumidifiers.

### For safe clean up

- Wear rubber gloves, eye protection, a long-sleeved shirt, long pants, and a mask.
- Open doors and windows.
- Use a non-ammonia soap or detergent. **NEVER** mix bleach with ammonia.

For more information on floods and mold, visit [bit.ly/floods\\_cdc](https://bit.ly/floods_cdc).

# Mental Health Resource Corner



Need support with a mental health crisis? Call 215-685-6440.

For other Mental Health & Addiction Services, call 888-545-2600.

**Services are provided 24/7. Interpretation is available.**

For free, online screening & helpful resources visit [HealthyMindsPhilly.org](https://HealthyMindsPhilly.org)

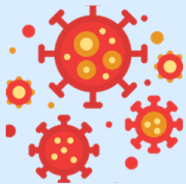
## COVID-19 and Seasonal Flu

The seasonal flu vaccine is updated every year to protect against the types of flu expected to be the most common.

The Bivalent COVID-19 booster provides extra protection from the Omicron variant.

Healthy people of any age can get seriously sick, become hospitalized and even die from complications of the COVID-19 or flu viruses.

It is important to get an annual flu vaccine and a COVID-19 booster to make sure your immune system is in the best shape to protect against illness.



**It is safe to get both vaccines at the same time.**

[bit.ly/FluPHL](https://bit.ly/FluPHL) [bit.ly/COVIDvaxPHL](https://bit.ly/COVIDvaxPHL)

For more information or if you have any questions, call PDPH at **215-685-5488**.

For interpretation, press 3 for your language, press 2 for Spanish and dial 711 for TRS/TTY assistance.

It is important to have a primary care provider you trust to help you stay healthy, especially if you have a chronic condition.

Find free or low-cost medical care, even if you do not have insurance, at

[www.phila.gov/primary-care](https://www.phila.gov/primary-care).

## Let's stay connected!

Visit our website at [bit.ly/PDPHPreparednessOutreach](https://bit.ly/PDPHPreparednessOutreach).



For printed copies of this newsletter, questions, or problems with the translation, or if you are interested in us providing an info desk or presentation to your community, email us at [PublicHealthPreparedness@phila.gov](mailto:PublicHealthPreparedness@phila.gov) or leave a message at **215-429-3016**.

**We would love to hear from you!**

Sign up for the Community Response Partner Network at

[bit.ly/phlcommunityresponse](https://bit.ly/phlcommunityresponse).

Get essential public health information to share with family, friends, and neighbors.

**Be safe!**