

# Public Health Preparedness Newsletter | Spring 2025



Department of  
**Public Health**  
CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

## About This Newsletter

This newsletter was created by the Philadelphia Department of Public Health Preparedness Program to better prepare residents for public health emergencies, such as severe storms, infectious diseases, and more.

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

**Request free printed copies.**



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



Leave a message at 215-429-3016.

## In this newsletter you can expect:

Information on  
vector-borne  
diseases.

Tips for severe  
weather safety.

Mental health  
resources.

Information on  
respiratory  
viruses: RSV, Flu,  
and COVID-19.

## Don't Forget to Sign Up for ReadyPhiladelphia!

The Office of Emergency Management shares information about severe weather through free email and text alerts using the City's mass notification system, ReadyPhiladelphia.

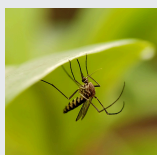
Alerts are now available in **eleven languages**: English, French, Arabic, Russian, Spanish, Vietnamese, Simplified Chinese, Haitian Creole, Portuguese, Swahili, and American Sign Language.

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

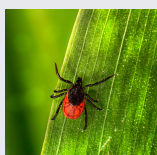


# Mosquitos and Ticks in Philadelphia

## Vector-Borne Diseases



Warmer temperatures and other climate factors, such as shorter winters and longer, hotter summers, are creating conditions that allow vectors like ticks and mosquitoes to thrive and spread diseases more easily.



## Protect against mosquitoes

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

### West Nile Virus

**Mosquitoes in Philadelphia are known to 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 old 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 mosquitoes and West Nile Virus, visit [bit.ly/Mosquito\\_bites](https://bit.ly/Mosquito_bites).



## Prevent mosquito bites

- **Use bug spray**
  - To find the right insect repellent for you, visit [bit.ly/findrepellent](https://bit.ly/findrepellent).
  - For 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**
  - Empty or cover still water, such as flowerpots, buckets, or bird baths, to stop mosquitoes from breeding around your home.

## Protect against ticks

**Ticks in Philadelphia are known to carry Lyme disease.** Lyme disease is an infection caused by a germ ticks carry. Ticks are usually found in parks, and yards with high grass and wooded environments.

### Prevent tick bites

- Use an EPA-approved repellent.
- Stay on the center of trails.
- Shower and check your body and clothes for ticks.

### Removing ticks

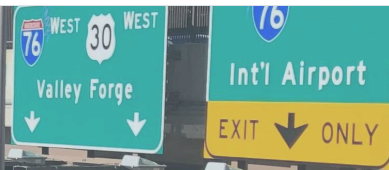
- Use fine-tipped tweezers to pull upward on the head of the tick with steady pressure.
- Clean the area with alcohol or soap and water.

Since ticks need to be attached for 36 hours to transmit bacteria, removing it within 24 hours will reduce the risk of Lyme disease.

For detailed instructions on removing ticks visit [bit.ly/Safe\\_TickRemoval](https://bit.ly/Safe_TickRemoval).

**Seek medical care immediately if you cannot remove a tick, or if you develop a fever or a red, circular rash around the bite**

# Flooding in Philadelphia



The risk of flooding in Philadelphia is increasing and is expected to rise further. This is driven by factors such as climate change and warmer temperatures that contribute to rising sea levels, more severe storms and storm surges, and heavier rainfall—all of which lead to more frequent and severe flooding. These changes also increase health risks associated with severe storms and flooding.

For more information 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, power, and water if your home floods.

### If you lose power

- If you see fallen power lines or 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.
- Replace medications that require refrigeration.



## 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 cannot 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 N-95 face mask.
- Open doors and windows.
- You do not need to use bleach. Use a non-ammonia soap or detergent. **NEVER** mix bleach with ammonia.

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



# Protect Your Health

## Respiratory Viruses

Some illnesses such as **COVID-19, Influenza, or RSV** can cause fever, chills, cough, runny nose, or headache that can make others sick. Stay protected by getting vaccinated.

**Bird flu**, or H5N1, is a viral infection primarily transmitted through contact with infected birds, poultry, or other animals. While the risk of H5N1 in Philadelphia remains low, it is important to be cautious if you're handling birds or consuming products like raw milk that may carry the virus.

### Help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses.

- If you have symptoms, test for COVID-19 and the flu, if possible.
- Wear a mask in crowded public spaces.
- Stay home if you feel sick.
- Avoid contact with sick birds or animals, especially at places like petting zoos.

### Find more information on respiratory viruses.

- [bit.ly/Covid19\\_test](https://bit.ly/Covid19_test)
- [bit.ly/FluPHL](https://bit.ly/FluPHL)
- [bit.ly/COVIDvaxPHL](https://bit.ly/COVIDvaxPHL)
- [bit.ly/RSV\\_PHL](https://bit.ly/RSV_PHL)
- [bit.ly/BirdFlu2025](https://bit.ly/BirdFlu2025)

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

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

Questions? Call the Philadelphia Department of Public Health at **215-685-5488**. Press **2** for Spanish; press **3** for interpretation in your language. Dial 711 for TRS/TTY assistance.

## Mental Health Resources

- You are not alone.
- Reach out 24/7 (interpretation available).

### Mental Health Crisis Hotline

- 215-685-6440

### Mental Health and Addiction Services

- 888-545-2600

### Free online screening and resources

- [HealthyMindsPhilly.org](https://HealthyMindsPhilly.org)

More than 1 in 6 adults in Philadelphia has a diagnosed mental health condition.



## Stay Connected


### Visit our website.


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

Request a resource table or training.



### Contact us for copies of this newsletter, questions, or problems with the translation.

 [PublicHealthPreparedness@phila.gov](mailto:PublicHealthPreparedness@phila.gov)

 Leave a message at 215-429-3016.

### Sign up for the Community Response Partner Network (CRPN).

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

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

