



# Newsletter

April 2017  
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Prepare for Spring Weather

**Nursing Talk**

**AND MORE...**



# Prepare for Spring Weather



Spring weather can be unpredictable. Reduce injury risk and plan ahead.

Spring is the time of year when many things change—including the weather. Temperatures can swing back and forth between balmy and frigid. Sunny days may be followed by a week of stormy weather. Sometimes extreme weather changes can occur even within the same day. Mark Twain once said, “In the spring I have counted one hundred and thirty-six kinds of weather inside of four and twenty hours.”

Thunderstorms cause most of the severe spring weather. They can bring lightning, tornadoes, and flooding. Whenever warm, moist air collides with cool, dry air, thunderstorms can occur. For much of the world, this happens in spring and summer.

Because spring weather is so unpredictable, you may be unprepared when severe weather hits—particularly if you live in a region that does not often experience thunderstorms, tornadoes, or flooding. And when severe weather hits unexpectedly, the risk of injury and death increases. So planning ahead makes sense; prepare for storms, floods, and tornadoes as if you know in advance they are coming, because in the spring, they very likely will.

Advance planning for thunderstorms, lightning, tornadoes, and floods requires specific safety precautions. You can follow many of the same steps that you would for all extreme weather events. Keep an emergency kit on hand. Some items to include are:

- A battery-operated flashlight, a battery-operated NOAA Weather Radio, and extra batteries for both
- An emergency evacuation or shelter plan, including a map of your home and, for every type of severe weather emergency, routes to safety from each room
- A list of important personal information, including:
  - telephone numbers of neighbors, family, and friends
  - insurance and property information
  - telephone numbers of utility companies
  - medical information
- According to the American Red Cross a first aid kit may include:
  - non-latex gloves
  - assortment of adhesive bandages
  - antibiotic ointment
  - sterile gauze pads in assorted sizes
  - absorbent compress dressings
  - tweezers
  - scissors
  - adhesive cloth tape
  - aspirin packets (81 mg each)
  - first aid instruction booklet
- (NOTE: Customize your first aid kit to meet your individual and family needs.)
- A 3–5 day supply of bottled water and nonperishable food
- Personal hygiene items
- Blankets or sleeping bags
- An emergency kit in your car

Prepare your family members for the possibility of severe weather. Tell them where to seek appropriate shelter as soon as they are aware of an approaching storm. Practice your emergency plan for every type of severe weather. Show family members where the emergency supplies are stored, and make sure they know how to turn off the water, gas, and electricity in your home.

Often by the time we are aware of an approaching storm, we have little if any time to prepare for it. But we do know that when spring arrives, thunderstorms, tornadoes, and floods are real possibilities. So why not take the surprise factor out of severe weather and prepare yourself, your family, and your home? If thunderstorms, tornadoes, and floods do occur, you'll be ready for them.

source: <https://www.cdc.gov/features/springweather/index.html>

# April is STD Awareness Month



Know the facts about syphilis and how to protect yourself.

Syphilis Strikes Back in the United States

You might be thinking: “Syphilis? That problem was solved a long time ago.” Well, not exactly. At one point syphilis was almost eliminated, but that is not the case anymore. This persistent sexually transmitted disease (STD) is now on the rise again and it has reached a critical high: the current number and rate of cases is higher than it’s been in more than 20 years. In 2015, there were close to 24,000 cases of syphilis reported in the U.S.—that was almost a 20% overall increase since 2014 alone. This rise in infections makes syphilis a renewed health threat for many.

If left untreated, syphilis can cause severe health problems affecting the brain, eyes, heart, and other organs. Having syphilis also makes it easier to get HIV. The good news is that syphilis is simple to cure with the right treatment.

## “There’s no way I could get syphilis.”

The bottom line is this: if you’re having sex, you can get syphilis. This resurgence highlights its ability to affect many communities at any time and anywhere. Infection rates have spiked in all regions of the country, and across almost every race/ethnicity, and varying age groups from the oldest Gen Z’ers to younger baby boomers—and most troubling of all—babies. Some populations, such as gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men (MSM), and women are seeing higher increases than other groups of people.

Syphilis rates have risen among women 27% from 2014-2015, which has led to a surge in the number and rate of babies born with syphilis (congenital syphilis). Men, and especially gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men (MSM) remain hardest-hit by syphilis, with data suggesting an average of half of MSM with syphilis are also living with HIV.

While syphilis may affect some populations more than others, the increase across all demographics is a development that needs attention. It means people from all walks of life—including those who think they have slim-to-zero chances of becoming infected—

may be at risk, so protecting yourself is a must. Even if you do not think you have anything to worry about, it is better to be safe than sorry—and it’s easy to get informed. So arm yourself with the facts about syphilis.

## “How can I protect myself?”

The only way to avoid syphilis and other STDs is to not have vaginal, anal, or oral sex. However, if you are sexually active, you can do the following things to lower your chances of getting syphilis:

Be in a long-term, monogamous relationship with a partner who’s tested negative for syphilis and other STDs.

Use latex condoms the right way every time you have sex.

Talk openly and honestly with your healthcare provider and ask what tests may be right for you. Check out CDC’s overview of STD testing recommendations and find a testing location near you.

If you test positive for syphilis, get treated right away and be sure your sexual partner is treated as well to reduce the risk of re-infection.

Know the facts about syphilis and what you can do to protect yourself.

## Together we can disrupt syphilis

The rise in syphilis requires awareness, attention, and action. To underscore the importance of this issue, CDC is dedicating all of STD Awareness Month (April) to syphilis prevention. We encourage everyone to join us in tackling its dangerous return. CDC’s STD Awareness Month website is filled with resources and guidance for healthcare providers and individuals who may be impacted by the disease. You can also join the conversation on Twitter and Facebook by using #STD-Month17. Sign up for our Thunderclap and share a prevention message from your Twitter, Facebook, and/or Tumblr account.

We’ve come out on top in the battle against syphilis before, and together we can do it again.

source: <https://www.cdc.gov/features/stdawareness/index.html>

# Nursing Talk

## TORNADO WARNINGS

Dear Cassandra,

I recently moved here from the East Coast. Last night I was listening to the radio, and I heard tornado warnings for this area. Have any tornadoes actually touched down in the Chicago area? What should I do if I am at work in the home of a client?

### Concerned in Chicago

Dear Concerned,

Although they are rare, tornadoes have hit the Chicago metropolitan area and caused death and destruction. In fact, according to “History of Tornadoes in Chicago Area” at <http://chicago.cbslocal.com>, there have been eight EF-4/5 tornadoes to hit the Chicago area between 1950 and 2010.

An F4 tornado has wind speeds of 207-260 miles per hour. It can destroy well-constructed houses. Some structures are lifted from their foundations and blown some distance. There is a large amount of debris airborne.

An F5 tornado has wind speeds of 261-318 miles per hour. It can lift strong frame houses off their foundations. Automobiles and debris become airborne. Trees are completely stripped of their bark.

Below is a list of EF-4 and EF-5 tornadoes in the Chicago area since 1960:

**April 11, 1965.** A massive storm hit McHenry, Crystal Lake, and Wauconda. Six people were killed and seventy-five were injured.

**April 21, 1967.** An EF-4 tornado cut a twenty-eight mile path from Cherry Valley to Belvidere and Woodstock. Twenty-four people were killed, and five hundred were injured. Thirteen were killed and three hundred were injured in Belvidere when the storm hit twelve school buses at dismissal time.

**April 21, 1967.** An EF-4 tornado formed in Palos Hills. It traveled through Oak Lawn and the South Side of Chicago. Thirty-three people died, and five hundred were injured.

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# Healthy Weight

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The tornado, which was two hundred yards wide, traveled sixteen miles and caused over \$50 million in damages.

**June 13, 1976.** An EF-4 tornado hit Lemont and caused \$13 million in damages. Two people were killed, and twenty-three were injured.

**August 28, 1990.** An E-5 tornado struck Plainfield. Twenty-nine people were killed, and three hundred fifty-three were injured.

**April 20, 2004.** An E-4 tornado destroyed more than half of downtown Utica. Nine people were killed. Eight of these had sought cover in the basement of the Milestone Bar.

**April 9, 2015.** An E-4 tornado hit Fairdale. It killed two people, and injured twenty-four.

Some people believe that tornadoes cannot hit major metropolitan areas or will be stopped by the cool water of Lake Michigan. Both of these are false. According to [http://www.weather.gov/lot/Plainfield\\_Tornado\\_Anniversary](http://www.weather.gov/lot/Plainfield_Tornado_Anniversary), "Tornadoes have struck within the city limits of Chicago in the past. Tornadoes have occurred at or near the lakefront as recently as August 2<sup>nd</sup>, when a tornado waterspout (a tornado over water) occurred just offshore of North Chicago, spawned from the same thunderstorm that produced an EF-1 tornado over central Lake County, Illinois. In 2006, a tornado occurred briefly at the Loyola University campus and moved out over Lake Michigan as a waterspout."

### What should you do now?

- Plan ahead. Find out what warning devices exist such as sirens, warning devices on your cell phone, Facebook, and Twitter.
- Learn the difference between a tornado watch and a tornado warning.
- Become familiar with your surroundings. Develop a plan. The safest place is in an underground shelter or basement under sturdy furniture. If this is not available, plan to go to an interior room on the lowest floor away from windows. A closet could also offer shelter.
- In a high rise, get into an interior room with no windows.
- DO NOT stay in a mobile home. Go to the nearest sturdy building or shelter.



When it comes to weight loss, there's no lack of fad diets promising fast results. But such diets limit your nutritional intake, can be unhealthy, and tend to fail in the long run.

The key to achieving and maintaining a healthy weight isn't about short-term dietary changes. It's about a lifestyle that includes healthy eating, regular physical activity, and balancing the number of calories you consume with the number of calories your body uses.

Staying in control of your weight contributes to good health now and as you age.

## Healthy Eating

A healthy lifestyle involves many choices. Among them, choosing a balanced diet or healthy eating plan. So how do you choose a healthy eating plan? Let's begin by defining what a healthy eating plan is.

According to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2015-2020, a healthy eating plan:

- Emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products
- Includes lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts
- Is low in saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, salt (sodium), and added sugars
- Stays within your daily calorie needs



### Eat Healthfully and Enjoy It!

A healthy eating plan that helps you manage your weight includes a variety of foods you may not have considered. If "healthy eating" makes you think about the foods you can't have, try refocusing on all the new foods you can eat—

- **Fresh, Frozen, or Canned Fruits** — don't think just apples or bananas. All fresh, frozen, or canned fruits are great choices. Be sure to try some "exotic" fruits, too. How about a mango? Or a juicy pineapple or kiwi fruit! When your favorite fresh fruits aren't in season, try a frozen, canned, or dried variety of a fresh fruit you enjoy. One caution about canned fruits is that they may contain added sugars or syrups. Be sure and choose canned varieties of fruit packed in water or in their own juice.
- **Fruits and vegetables section of grocery store** Fresh, Frozen, or Canned

# Healthy Weight

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- Vegetables** — try something new. You may find that you love grilled vegetables or steamed vegetables with an herb you haven't tried like rosemary. You can sauté (panfry) vegetables in a non-stick pan with a small amount of cooking spray. Or try frozen or canned vegetables for a quick side dish — just microwave and serve. When trying canned vegetables, look for vegetables without added salt, butter, or cream sauces. Commit to going to the produce department and trying a new vegetable each week.
- **Calcium-rich foods** — you may automatically think of a glass of low-fat or fat-free milk when someone says “eat more dairy products.” But what about low-fat and fat-free yogurts without added sugars? These come in a wide variety of flavors and can be a great dessert substitute for those with a sweet tooth.
  - **A new twist on an old favorite** — if your favorite recipe calls for frying fish or breaded chicken, try healthier variations using baking or grilling. Maybe even try a recipe that uses dry beans in place of higher-fat meats. Ask around or search the internet and magazines for recipes with fewer calories — you might be surprised to find you have a new favorite dish!

- Eat smaller amounts. If your favorite higher-calorie food is a chocolate bar, have a smaller size or only half a bar.
- Try a lower-calorie version. Use lower-calorie ingredients or prepare food differently. For example, if your macaroni and cheese recipe uses whole milk, butter, and full-fat cheese, try remaking it with non-fat milk, less butter, light cream cheese, fresh spinach and tomatoes. Just remember to not increase your portion size. For more ideas on how to cut back on calories, see Eat More Weigh Less.



## Do I have to give up my favorite comfort food?

No! Healthy eating is all about balance. You can enjoy your favorite foods even if they are high in calories, fat or added sugars. The key is eating them only once in a while, and balancing them out with healthier foods and more physical activity.

## Some general tips for comfort foods:

- Eat them less often. If you normally eat these foods every day, cut back to once a week or once a month. You'll be cutting your calories because you're not having the food as often.

The point is, you can figure out how to include almost any food in your healthy eating plan in a way that still helps you lose weight or maintain a healthy weight.

source: <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/index.html>

## Nursing Talk

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- Practice your plan periodically, just like a fire drill.

## What should you do if you are at work in the home of a client?

- If there is a risk of severe weather, monitor the weather.
- Listen to NOAA Weather Radio, or monitor your cell phone for weather alerts.
- If a warning is given, go to your safe place.
- Stay there until the all-clear has been given.
- Use your phone to stay in touch with the office.

With your plan in place, you will feel more confident if a tornado should occur. Don't hesitate to talk with your supervisor about special situations or concerns.

*Cassandra*

We invite you to submit questions for this column. E-mail [edward.lara@ahhc-1.com](mailto:edward.lara@ahhc-1.com).

### AHHC Newsletter

**Editor(s):** Edward Lara

**Designer(s):** Edward Lara

**Contributions:** Edward Lara & Karen Centowski

**For Contributions,**

*E-Mail:* [edward.lara@ahhc-1.com](mailto:edward.lara@ahhc-1.com)

*Write:* 1660 N. Farnsworth Ave., Suite 3  
Aurora • IL • 60505

# WANTED 475 PEOPLE

TO READ THE BLOG EACH WEEK

MUST BE CURIOUS, INTELLIGENT,  
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