

Summer 2006  
Volume 6, Issue 1

# Lafayette County Health Department

## Special Interest Articles:

- Public Health  
\*Are you Prepared?
- Home Care  
\* Osteoporosis  
\* We say goodbye
- Hospice  
\*Program update

## REMINDER

Prepare for mosquito season by doing the following:

- Rid your yard of low tree holes (which can be filled and capped)
- Remove old tires, cans and buckets
- Empty, remove, cover or turn any container that could hold water upside down
- Properly discard unwanted tires and keep wanted tires inside or under cover
- Wear clothing that covers arms and legs, especially in late afternoon (the mosquito peak biting period)
- Use insect repellent, but **only** on the clothing of children under 6 years of age

## Public Health

*Debbie Siegenthaler, RN MSN - Director/Health Officer*

### Are You Prepared for a Disaster?

Prior to an emergency is the best time to think about what you and your family will do if one happens. There are many issues to think about when it comes to your family's safety in a crisis. The following tips are just some of the things to discuss and write down in a plan. These tips will help your family stay calm and feel you have some control over the situation at hand.

Share with your family and friends your decision and the importance of having a family emergency plan and their roles in your plan.  
(Don't forget to include your caregivers in your planning!)

#### Designate an "Out-of-Town" Contact

Ask someone that lives out of town and is close to you if they can be your out-of-town contact. After a disaster, all members of the family will report to this person. Everyone will need to have this person's contact information.  
\*After a disaster, it is often easier to reach people that live outside of town.

#### Pick a Location to Meet

If a sudden emergency happens(ex: fire) designate a location to meet outside of your home.

#### Develop Escape Routes & Safe Places

Be certain that everyone in your family knows the different ways to get out of your house and the safest places to take cover, in cases like a tornado. Some emergencies only give a moments notice, these routes need to be familiar before the emergency happens.

#### Plan for those with Disabilities & Special Needs

If a family member is dependent on a medication, a piece of equipment, or you, be certain to have back-ups to these. If those support items cannot be obtained, what will that person need to be safe?

#### Plan for your Pets

If you evacuate, be sure to take your pets with you. However, pets (other than service animals) are usually not permitted in emergency public shelters. Prepare a list of people and places that could shelter your pets in an emergency (ex. veterinarians, hotels, friends).

#### Prepare for Different Hazards

In your plan be sure you show how you will address all emergencies that can happen in your community. For example, there will be distinct differences in how you will react to a flood or tornado versus the bird flu.

#### Complete a Communication Plan

Your plan should include but is not limited to:

Contact information for family members (work, school, cell)

Contact information for out-of-town person

Meeting locations

Emergency Services Numbers

National Poison Control Center (1-800-222-1222)

A sample form for recording this information can be found at [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) or

[www.redcross.org/contactcard](http://www.redcross.org/contactcard).

\*Teach children how to call emergency numbers and when it is appropriate to do so. All members of your family should have a copy of your communication plan and a copy should be placed near your telephone.



**A disaster kit is a collection of supplies a family would probably need to stay safe and be more comfortable during an emergency. Sustaining you or your household for up to 2 weeks may be necessary.**

The following list is some (but not all) supplies that can be part of a Family Disaster Kit.

Water	Tool Kit
Food (2-week supply)	Pencil/Paper
Can Opener	Moist Towelletes
Medications	Blanket/Cloths
Flashlight	Batteries
First Aid Kit	Portable Radio
Work Gloves	Bleach (sanitizer)

Remember, not all supplies have to be purchased at one time, start by buying one thing for your kit each time you go grocery shopping. Also, be sure to update your kit annually!

## **WHAT ABOUT THE BIRD FLU?**

A lot of talk has occurred recently re a possible flu pandemic. A pandemic occurs when a contagious illness strikes humans around the world, not just in localized spots. Avian or “bird” flu is the general term for many different strains of influenza virus that infect birds, sometimes making them sick, and sometimes infecting other species. Transmission occurs when a sick animal “sheds” the virus in manure or in droplets exhaled. Other birds or humans in close contact with sick birds may contract the virus this way. There is much concern due to the fact that a pandemic has the potential to greatly disrupt society for a period of time.

Here are some important facts.

- Scientists don’t know when the next pandemic will happen so it’s important to be prepared.
- The H5N1 bird flu virus in its current form, does not spread easily from bird to human.
- There is no evidence of sustained human to human spread of bird flu (H5N1).

**There are no human or bird cases of the H5N1 virus in Wisconsin or the U.S.**

- Wisconsin actively looks for human and bird cases in the state.
- Wisconsin’s criteria for testing people for bird flu exceeds CDC recommendations.
- Disease investigators & scientists are prepared to quickly identify disease in birds and humans.

**We are more prepared today than we were six months ago and we’ll continue to prepare.**

- The Lafayette County Health Dept has assembled and exercised plans to isolate and quarantine infected people and to dispense medications and vaccine, if available, to county residents. In 2006 we will continue to refine these preparedness plans.
- Families and businesses can help in preparedness efforts by having disaster preparedness kits in their homes and businesses and making preparations to sustain themselves for many weeks potentially in their home. A great website to visit is [www.Flupandemic.gov](http://www.Flupandemic.gov).



## Home Care

Jane O'Brien, RN

### Osteoporosis and Bone Density Testing

Calcium is constantly being added to and taken away from bone. When calcium is taken away faster than it is added, the bones become lighter, less dense, and more porous. This makes the bones weaker and increases their risk of fracture.

Loss of bone mass occurs as part of the natural process of aging. Bones naturally become thinner (called osteopenia) as you grow older, because existing bone is broken down faster than new bone is made. As this occurs, the bones lose minerals, heaviness (mass), and structure, making them weaker. With further bone loss, osteopenia develops into osteoporosis. The thicker your bones are, the longer it takes to develop osteoporosis. Although osteoporosis can occur in men, it is most common in women older than age 65.

The bones most commonly used for bone density testing are those in the lower spine and hip. These bones generally have the greatest amount of bone loss and are at the highest risk of fracture.

If your bone density is lower than normal, you can take steps to increase your bone strength and reduce your risk of fracture. Some ways to increase bone density and strength include taking calcium and vitamin D supplements, doing weight-bearing exercise (such as walking), weight training (such as lifting weights or using weight machines), and using medications as prescribed by your doctor.

### Congrats on Upcoming Retirement!!

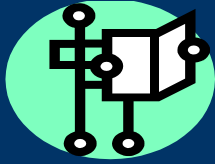
After 27 years, Jane O' Brien is retiring from the Lafayette County Home Care Program. In retirement, she will pursue her interests in reading, gardening, quilting and spending time with her family and friends.

**Jane's parting thoughts...** *"I would like to take this moment to acknowledge all the wonderful people I have met and the relationships I have formed both in the field and professionally. I will truly miss you all☺"*

Her "health department family" will miss her tremendously as she has been a wonderfully competent and stable asset at the Health Department for many, many years.

**We wish Jane lots of luck in her retirement!!!**

Kristie Lueck will be taking Jane's position over; we welcome her and wish her all the best☺



# Hospice

*Kristie Lueck RN, BSN*



## Lafayette County Hospice News

The hospice program, in addition to caring for patients and providing bereavement support, has been bringing the message of care at the end of life to the community at large this spring. The hospice team has participated in several outreach activities to provide hope, comfort, and information to various groups.

For ten weeks during the months of March, April and May, four hospice team members led a grief support group. Facilitators were Rev. Dave Ritchie, Rev. John and Barb Meyer, and Kristie Lueck, R.N. Open to anyone who has experienced a loss, this group provides information about the grief experience as well as opportunity for discussion and mutual support. Participants each receive a book and journal to keep, to assist them in their grief journey. The hospice plans to offer this series of sessions twice a year (spring and fall).

The hospice held volunteer training, also during March, April and May. Three men and women underwent the training. Colleen Keen, our Volunteer Coordinator, led some lively discussions as the prospective volunteers learned various aspects of being supportive to people who are facing terminal illness. Having now completed their seven-week course, our new volunteers join the ranks of several others who are ready to visit, help in practical ways, and listen.

The Health Department participated in the Senior Expo on April 28 in Belmont. The hospice program offered information about hospice care and advance directives as a part of the Health Department's display. (Advance directives are tools that allow people to make their health care wishes and decisions known, even when they cannot speak for themselves.)

The Lafayette County Aging Well, Living Well Coalition sponsored a series of workshops about the end of life. Attended by an average of about twenty people each time, the sessions used information from the Raising Awareness of Life Choices Workshop and the "End of Life Toolkit". Betty Gleason, UW-Extension, and Halie Helfvogt, of both the Lafayette Manor and Lafayette County Hospice, coordinated the sessions and presented much of the information. Kristie Lueck of the hospice program spoke at the final session on "Knowing When the Time is Right" for hospice or palliative care, and on "Grief and Bereavement".

Coffee Hour for Caregivers is just that - a chance for caregivers to have a break and chat with others who are caring for loved ones. This provides mutual support for all. Helpful information about coping with the demands, joys and burdens of care giving is given. Kristie Lueck will speak at the June 27 meeting regarding grieving the losses along the way, not just the death of the loved one. The group meets in the Job Center Conference Room at the Darlington Municipal Building at 9:30 a.m.

People having questions about hospice care are encouraged to call the Health Department at (608) 776-4895. Referrals or inquiries for hospice may be made by anyone. Upon receipt of a referral, a visit to explain hospice care and services is offered. After receiving the information, the patient and family can choose what type of care they wish to have, and the hospice determines whether the patient meets the eligibility criteria for hospice care. It is important to note that, in hospice care, "you matter to the last moment of your life", as stated by the founder of modern hospice care.

