



ESSEX COUNTY OFFICE OF  
PUBLIC HEALTH  
MANAGEMENT

# HEALTHY MONDAY'S TOOL KIT: OCTOBER 2025



900 Bloomfield Avenue  
Verona, NJ 07044

OCTOBER IS ....



BREAST

CANCER

AWARENESS

MONTH

1 IN 8 WOMEN WILL BE  
DIAGNOSED WITH  
BREAST CANCER IN HER  
LIFETIME. THAT'S ONE  
PERSON EVERY 2  
MINUTES IN THE U.S.



THE TWO MOST COMMON  
RISK FACTORS OF BREAST  
CANCER ARE BEING BORN  
FEMALE AND GETTING  
OLDER.



IN 2025, IT'S  
ESTIMATED AMONG  
WOMEN IN THE U.S.  
THERE WILL BE  
316,950 NEW CASES  
OF INVASIVE BREAST  
CANCER



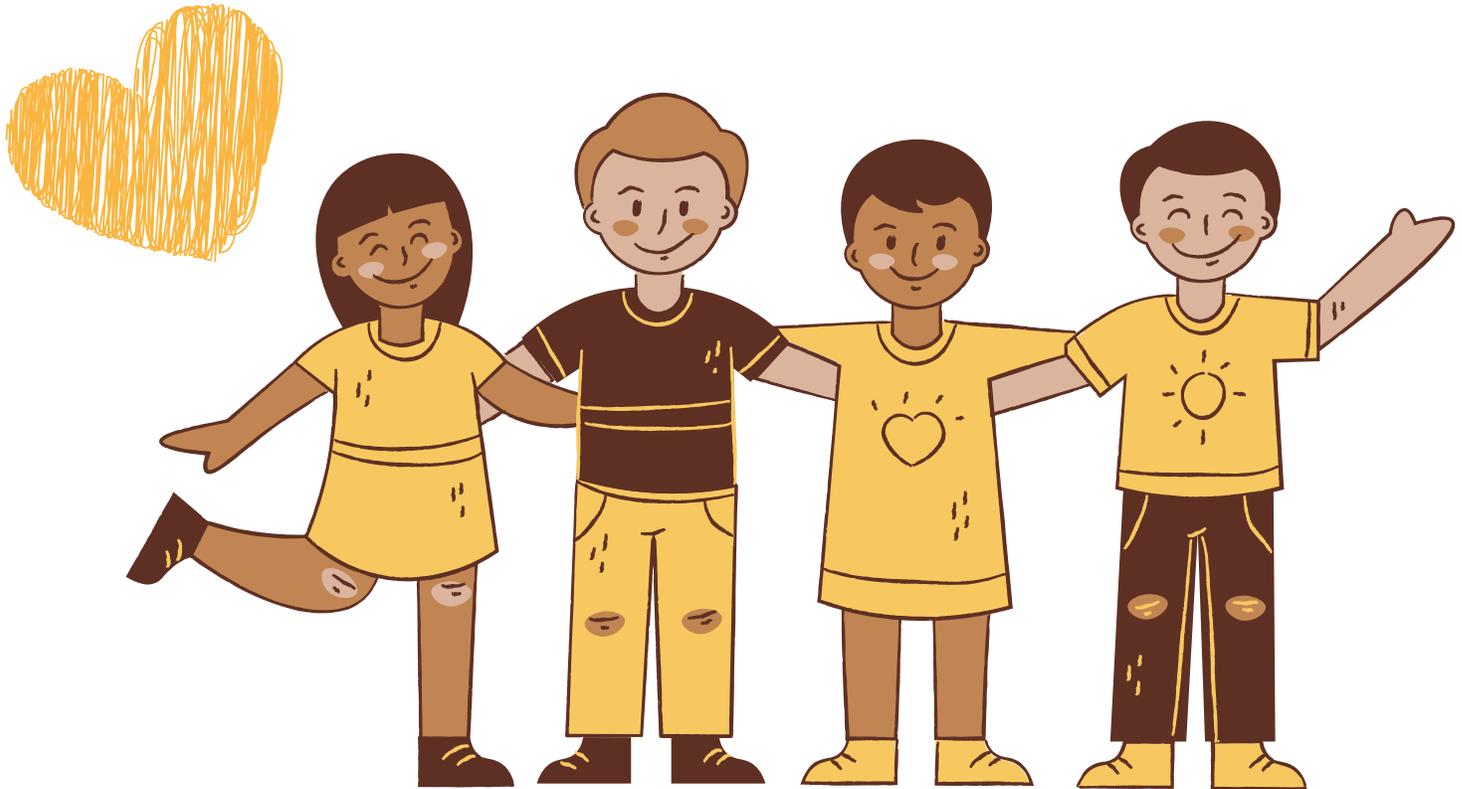
Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr., *Essex County Executive*  
The Board of County Commissioners  
The Essex County Office of Public Health Management  
*Putting Essex County's Health First*



# NATIONAL BULLYING PREVENTION MONTH

## SAY NO TO BULLYING

October is National Bullying Prevention Month – a time to raise awareness and promote kindness, acceptance, and inclusion. Bullying can have lasting effects on children, teens, and even adults, but together we can create safe and supportive communities. Let's stand up, speak out, and work toward a future free of bullying.



**MAKE YOUR SCHOOL A BULLY FREE-ZONE**



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## **WHAT IS THE HEALTHY MONDAY CAMPAIGN?**

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The Healthy Monday Campaign is a public health initiative that encourages individuals and organizations to commit to healthy behaviors each Monday, helping to prevent chronic diseases and promote long-term wellness.

In Essex County, Healthy Monday will focus on children and their parents by providing a weekly toolkit with topics tailored to their needs. Each month will highlight a new theme that is relevant to children's health and well-being.

For October, we welcome you to the Essex County Healthy Monday Campaign, with our main topic: Staying Strong This Flu Season.

# LESSON 01:

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The flu, also known as influenza, is a common but sometimes serious illness that affects people of all ages every year. Because it spreads so easily from one person to another through coughs, sneezes, and even by touching doorknobs, desks, or other surfaces where germs can live, it is important for everyone to take steps to prevent it.

One of the most effective ways to protect yourself and your community is by getting the yearly flu vaccine, which works like a shield that trains your body to fight the virus. The vaccine not only lowers your chances of getting sick but also helps protect those who are more vulnerable, such as young children, older adults, and people with health conditions. Along with vaccination, good daily habits are essential for flu prevention.

Washing your hands regularly with soap and water, or using hand sanitizer when soap isn't available, helps remove germs before they spread. Covering your mouth and nose with a tissue or your elbow when you cough or sneeze keeps germs from reaching others. Staying home when you feel unwell gives your body the rest it needs to heal and prevents spreading illness to classmates, coworkers, or family members. Beyond these practices, taking care of your overall health by eating a balanced diet, getting enough sleep, drinking plenty of water, and staying physically active strengthens your immune system so it can better fight off infections. Flu prevention is not just about protecting yourself—it's about protecting everyone around you. Each healthy choice you make, whether it's washing your hands, choosing to get vaccinated, or staying home to rest when sick, plays an important part in keeping schools, workplaces, and communities healthier and stronger throughout flu season.



# Flu Shots = Your Shield

The flu shot is a special shield that helps your body fight germs.

Doctors and nurses give flu shots every year because germs change.

The flu is like a really strong cold that can make you miss school and playtime.

Getting your flu shot helps keep YOU, your friends, your teachers, and your family healthy.



Don't be afraid—it's quick, and it keeps you strong!

**Stay strong. Stay healthy. Get your flu shot!**



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# WHY THE FLU SHOT MATTERS

## PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS THIS FLU SEASON

- The flu is more than a cold—it can keep you out of school for a week or longer.
- The flu spreads easily in classrooms, sports, and hangouts.
- The flu vaccine lowers your risk of severe illness and missing school or activities.
- It changes yearly—so even if you had one last year, you need another this year.
- When you get vaccinated, you also protect people around you, especially younger kids and older adults.



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# LESSON 02:

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Your immune system is your body's natural defense against germs, viruses, and other harmful invaders, and keeping it strong is one of the best ways to protect yourself from getting sick.

A healthy immune system works like an army, ready to fight off illness before it can slow you down, and the good news is that there are many simple things you can do every day to help it stay strong. Eating a balanced diet filled with fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins gives your body the vitamins and nutrients it needs to fuel your immune cells. Foods rich in vitamin C, such as oranges, strawberries, and bell peppers, and foods with zinc, like beans, nuts, and seeds, are especially helpful.

Staying hydrated by drinking plenty of water supports every part of your body, including your immune system. Regular physical activity, such as playing outside, walking, dancing, or sports, keeps your body strong and helps your immune system work more effectively. Just as important, getting enough sleep each night allows your body to recharge and repair, giving your immune system the energy it needs to fight germs.

Managing stress is another key factor—too much stress can weaken your defenses, so practicing relaxation, deep breathing, or taking quiet time for yourself can make a big difference. By making these healthy choices part of your daily routine, you give your immune system the tools it needs to stay ready and resilient, which means fewer sick days, more energy, and a healthier you all year long.

# SUPERCHARGE

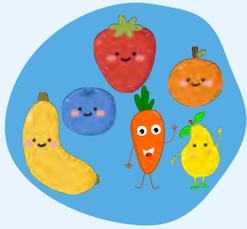
## YOUR BODY'S

## DEFENSES!



### Eat the rainbow!

Fruits and veggies give your body superhero powers.



### Drink Water

Your body needs water to stay strong—choose water over soda.



### Play and move!

Running, jumping, and playing make your body healthy.



### Sleep like a champ

Kids need 9–11 hours to rest and recharge.



*Eat well. Drink well. Rest well. Play well!*



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# BOOST YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM

*Strong daily habits = a stronger immune system.*



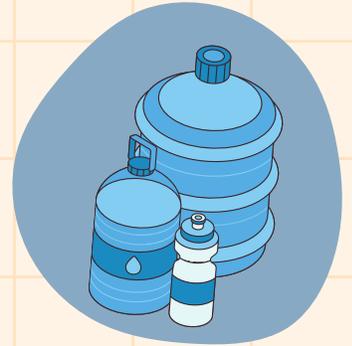
## Nutrition

Balanced meals with fruits, vegetables, protein, and whole grains. Limit junk food and sugary drinks.



## Sleep

Teens need 8-10 hours. Lack of sleep weakens your immune system and affects focus.



## Hydration

Drink water often—hydration helps your body fight illness and stay energized.



## Exercise & Stress Management

Sports, workouts, or even a walk help lower stress and keep your body strong.



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# LESSON 03:

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Small choices you make every day can have a big impact on your health, especially when it comes to preventing the spread of germs. Practicing good hygiene and building strong daily habits are some of the easiest and most powerful tools for staying healthy. Washing your hands often with soap and water is one of the best defenses, especially before eating, after using the bathroom, or after coughing and sneezing. If soap and water aren't available, hand sanitizer is a good backup.

Covering your mouth and nose with a tissue or your elbow when you cough or sneeze keeps germs from traveling to the people around you. It's also important to avoid touching your face—especially your eyes, nose, and mouth—since that's how many germs enter the body. Cleaning and disinfecting surfaces like doorknobs, desks, phones, and shared electronics helps stop germs from spreading in schools, homes, and workplaces. Beyond hygiene, healthy daily routines like getting enough sleep, eating balanced meals, staying hydrated, and being physically active all make your body stronger and more resistant to illness. By making these habits a part of your everyday life, you're not only protecting yourself but also helping to create a healthier, safer environment for your family, friends, and community.

# Germ Fighters: That's You!



## Washing Your Hands



Wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds—sing “Happy Birthday” twice!

## Covering Your Cough



Cover your coughs and sneezes with your elbow, not your hands.

## Don't Touch!



Don't touch your eyes, nose, or mouth—germs love to sneak in!

## Tell A Teacher



If you feel sick, tell a teacher or parent right away.



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# Stop Germs in Their Tracks

1.

Wash often.  
Soap and water are best; use sanitizer if soap isn't around.

2.

Cover coughs & sneezes.  
Use your elbow or tissue—  
then wash up.

3.

Avoid face-touching.  
Your eyes, nose, and  
mouth are germ  
entryways.

4.

Stay home when sick.  
Skipping a day of school  
helps protect others and  
helps you recover faster.



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# LESSON 04:

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Even when we do our best to stay healthy, sometimes we still catch a cold, the flu, or another illness. Knowing how to recognize the signs of being sick and taking the right steps to care for yourself is an important part of staying healthy. Common signs of illness include fever, cough, sore throat, runny nose, body aches, tiredness, or stomach troubles. When these symptoms appear, the best thing you can do is listen to your body and rest. Staying home when you're sick is not only good for your own recovery but also prevents germs from spreading to classmates, coworkers, and loved ones. Drinking plenty of fluids, eating nourishing foods, and getting extra sleep all help your body fight off illness more quickly. Sometimes, using comfort measures like warm tea with honey, a humidifier, or extra blankets can make you feel better while you heal. If symptoms become severe, last longer than expected, or if you have trouble breathing, it's important to reach out to a healthcare provider for help. Taking the time to recover fully before returning to school, work, or activities makes a big difference for your health and for the people around you. Remember: Recognize when you're not feeling well, take the rest you need, and allow your body to recover—it's one of the healthiest choices you can make.

# Not Feeling Well?

## That's Okay!



- If you feel hot, achy, or tired, tell a grown-up.

- Rest helps your body heal—sleep is medicine.



- Drink water, juice, or warm soup to stay strong.

- It's okay to stay home—you'll get better faster and keep your friends from getting sick.



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# RECOGNIZE, REST, RECOVER.

## Know the symptoms:



Fever, chills, sore throat, cough, congestion, muscle aches, and fatigue.

## Recovery:



Rest and drink plenty of fluids—your body needs time to heal.

## Smart care:



Over-the-counter medicine can help with fever, pain, or congestion (use responsibly).

## Stay home:



Avoid school, practice, or hanging out until you're feeling better—don't spread it to others.

## Check in:



If symptoms get worse or last too long, see a doctor.



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