

BITS & PIECES



FROM FRAN

May & June 2023

Babesiosis: UNCAS Health District

Tick-borne illness cases in the United States are up 25% since 2011, according to a new report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, including a rare disease now spreading in the U.S. Northeast. The CDC says cases of babesiosis, which can cause illness ranging from asymptomatic to severe, have increased significantly in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island and Vermont. The disease is already considered endemic in Connecticut, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island and Wisconsin.

The tick-borne disease, which is growing cases but still rare, is transmitted from the bites of black-legged ticks.

Babesiosis infections can be asymptomatic or cause mild to severe illnesses that can be fatal. Symptoms, which can last for several weeks, typically show up between one and four weeks after a bite. The most common symptoms include fever, chills, sweating, fatigue, and myalgias. They also include hepatosplenomegaly, or an enlarged liver and hemolytic anemia, a disorder that causes red blood cells to be destroyed faster than they can be created.

Yale scientists Goudarz Molaei told WTNH one of the factors that could be causing the increase in tick-borne diseases could be shorter winters. "Understandably because of climate change and other environmental conditions we are seeing increases in tick abundance and tick activity." Molaei said.

The CDC states on its website: "Because warmer average temperatures can mean longer warm seasons, earlier spring seasons, shorter and milder winters,

and hotter summers, conditions might become more hospitable for many carriers of vector-borne diseases.”

Molaei said that, in Connecticut, for example, one in two ticks on average is infected with at least one disease agent. “We have to be aware of the areas that might be infested with ticks, so wooded areas, tall grass areas, try to avoid those areas at any cost,” he said. Molaei says if you have no other choice, you’ll have to consistently perform a tick check on yourself and your pets, as they can often bring home ticks with them.

The CDC is urging anyone spending extended time outdoors to use tick repellents and wear long sleeve shirts and pants if they can.

If you are bitten by a tick, the CDC recommends the following:

- *Use fine-tipped tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin as you can.
- *Pull upward with steady, even pressure. Don’t twist or jerk the tick.
- *After removing the tick, clean the bite area and your hands with rubbing alcohol or soap and water.
- *Dispose of the tick by flushing it down the toilet. If you would like to bring the tick to your healthcare provider for identification, put it in rubbing alcohol or place it in a sealed bag/container.

Food Distribution:

Mark your calendars for the May 5th Food Distribution at the Preston Senior Center, 42 Long Society Road from 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Plans are in the making for a June 2nd distribution and continuing throughout the summer months during the same time frame. As a reminder, if you are traveling any distance from our food distribution to your home, during the hot summer months, you might want to bring a cooler to keep the frozen items chilled. The UNCAS Health District staff will be available to answer questions, and provide updates on topics of interest such as Ticks. All are welcome and encouraged to come to the drive-thru for our monthly food distribution.

TVCCA Café:

The May menu for our TVCCA Café Program will consist of the following selections:

Monday, May 1st: Chicken Parmesan, Farfalle Pasta w/marinara, Green & Waxed Beans, Fresh Fruit, Bread, Margarine, Beverage

Monday, May 8th: Beef Hot Dog w/Bun, Baked Beans, Mixed Vegetables Medley, Apple Sauce, Beverage

Monday, May 15th: Vegetarian Lasagna, Diced Carrots, Lima Beans, Pineapple Tidbits, Bread, Margarine, Beverage

Monday, May 22nd: Pineapple Glazed Ham, Glazed Sweet Potatoes, Peas & Pearl Onions, Sweet Treat, Grape Juice.

Monday, May 29th: Program closed for Memorial Day Holiday

Persons 60 years of age and older are welcome to participate in the Café Program. There is a suggested donation request of \$3.00 per person per meal. Reservations must be made in advance. Persons under the age of 60 years are welcome to attend but a fee is assessed for their meal. Our meal count order is placed on Tuesday for the following Monday program. If you are interested in participating, please contact the Senior Center on Monday, 9:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m., Tuesday or Thursday from 12:30 – 4:00 p.m. at 860-889-0770. You may also leave reservation requests at the Senior Affairs Office by calling 860-887-5581 ext. 6.

Elderly and Totally Disabled Tax Relief Program:

As a reminder, persons eligible to participate in the Elderly and Totally Disabled Tax Relief Program, the application deadline is May 15th. The qualifying income guidelines for the 2022 Benefit Year are: \$49,100.00 for a married couple and \$40,300.00 for unmarried individuals. For additional information concerning eligibility or to complete an application for the program, please contact the Senior Affairs Office at 860-887-5581 ext. 6.

Property Tax Exemptions for Blind or Totally Disabled Persons:

Connecticut law provides for a \$3,000 assessment exemption for taxpayers who are legally blind. Proof of the blindness (certification by a qualified medical practitioner) must be presented to the Assessor prior to October 1 in order for the exemption to be applied to that assessment year's tax bill.

Connecticut law also provides for a \$1,000.00 exemption for totally disabled persons who are receiving benefits under a federal, state or local retirement plan, which contains requirements comparable to those of the Social Security Administration. Proof of disability must be presented to the Assessor prior to October 1 in order for the exemption to be applied to that assessment year's taxes.

New COVID-19 Vaccine Guidance:

On Tuesday, April 18, 2023, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) updated their recommendations on COVID-19 vaccines. Any adult who has not yet been vaccinated will get one dose of the updated bivalent shot, rather than starting with the original vaccine and receiving the bivalent shot as a booster. The FDA is withdrawing authorization for those older COVID-19 monovalent vaccines targeting the original strain of the virus. It's part of an overall move to simplify the COVID-19 vaccination process, the agency said in a statement.

"At this stage of the pandemic, data support simplifying the use of the authorized mRNA bivalent COVID-19 vaccines and the agency believes that this approach will help encourage future vaccinations." Peter Marks, director of the FDA's Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research, said in a statement.

The original COVID-19 vaccine was matched against the first strain of the virus first identified in Wuhan, China. That strain of the virus is no longer circulating – the omicron variant and its sub variants are the predominant strains throughout the world. The bivalent shots target both that original strain and the omicron variant. They were first authorized as booster doses in fall of 2022 and research shows they offer stronger protection against infection and serious illness from omicron than the original shot. Now, they'll be the only vaccine available in the us.

Adults who haven't been vaccinated and who want to get vaccinated can get just a single dose of that vaccine, rather than a series of multiple shots. Unvaccinated children will still get multiple shots. Children 6 months through 5 years of age can either get two doses of the Moderna bivalent vaccine or three doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine.

If you are interested in receiving a COVID vaccine, please contact the Uncas Health District to schedule an appointment at 860-823-1189.

Save the Date:

Plans are in the works for a Senior Center picnic on Wednesday, June 21st. Tentative plans are to offer regular picnic fare, games, entertainment and a time to reminisce with your friends and neighbors. Lenny Domina will perform from 11:45 a.m. until approximately 12:15 p.m. Lunch will be served shortly after that. Registrations will be necessary so that we have an accurate count to purchase our supplies. More details will be made available in an upcoming newsletter so, stay tuned.

My Favorite Sayings:

Be yourself – everyone else is taken. Oscar Wilde

When we are no longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves. Viktor Frankl (famous psychotherapist and holocaust survivor)

If you want happiness.. don't seek happiness. Seek meaning.

If you haven't any charity in your heart, you have the worst kind of heart trouble.
Bob Hope

If you got everything you wanted, it would be called a vending machine. However, since you don't...it's called Life.

I don't think of all the misery, but of the beauty that still remains....Anne Frank

Grocery Shopping:

As a reminder, the Town of Preston does offer weekly grocery shopping trips to the Lisbon area. If you are interested in signing up for this service, please contact the Senior Affairs Office at 860-887-5581 ext. 6 .

EXPERTISE

ABLE	COMPRE-	EXPERIENCE	KNOWLEDGE
ADEPT	HEND	FORTE	LEARNING
APTITUDE	CRITICAL	KNACK	SAVVY
ASTUTE	DEPTH	KNOW-HOW	SKILL

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TALENT

TRAINING

UNDERSTAND

VERSATILE

VERSED



**PRESTON COMMUNITY
YARD SALE**

...is Saturday, May 6!!
(with a rain date of Saturday, May 13)

12+ multi-family yard sale will be taking place at
Preston Plains Middle School from 9:00 am - 1:00 pm

Preston City Congregational Church's Spring Yard Sale
is scheduled for 8:00 am - 2:00 pm

...and lots of individual yard sales at people's homes throughout town!!

Yard Sale maps will be finalized by Wednesday, May 3rd and posted on the
Town of Preston's website or available for pick up at Preston Town Hall (brochure
rack outside of Parks & Recreation office) or you can swing by Preston Plains
Middle School from 9:00 am - 1:00 pm on the day of the yard sale.

