



Environmental Health

Community Outreach Newsletter

Introducing Our New Health Inspectors

The City of Berkeley Department of Health and Human Services is pleased to welcome two Environmental Health Specialists (The official term for "Health Inspector") to our Environmental Health

Division staff.

Harvey Johnson previously worked as an Environmental Health Specialist with the County of Los Angeles. Antoinette Stetzenmeyer comes to us after working

as an Environmental Health Technician with San Diego County. We are pleased that these two dedicated professionals decided to come to Berkeley and join our community and staff.

Winter 08

January-June 08

Issued 2X per year

Our Mission:

"Our mission, as the Division of Environmental Health, is to promote and protect the health and well being of all persons in the City of Berkeley by administering state and local regulations. We believe in the importance of disease prevention through education and enforcement as a means of safeguarding public health."

Eat Well Berkeley Restaurant Program

How to participate



What is the Eat Well Berkeley Restaurant program? Eat Well Berkeley is a new community health program, sponsored by the City of Berkeley Public Health Division Chronic Disease Prevention program and the Kaiser Permanente Healthy Eating Active Living Program. It is designed to support and promote restaurants that

provide healthy food choices. Customer can use the program to identify restaurants that meet the overall criteria, as well as to identify specific menu items at that restaurant.

What do restaurants have to do to be a part of the program?

Restaurants have to meet a set of health criteria, including:

- ◆ No trans fats
- ◆ A fruit or vegetable side dish and a lean meat option.
- ◆ Healthy options on the kid's menu.

- ◆ At least two Eat Well option menu items (these can be found on the City of Berkeley Eat Well web site.)

What is an Eat Well option?

An Eat Well option is a specific menu item that has been approved by our dietician to meet a health standard. To be an Eat Well option, an entrée must have at least two of the following: a serving of fruit or vegetable, a whole grain and a lean pro-

(Continued on page 3)

Inside this issue:

Norovirus	2
Eat Well Berkeley: Continued	3
Hand Washing	4

Meet “Icky” The Microorganism and his not so friendly pal “norovirus”



I’m “Icky” the microorganism. I’m tiny, in fact I am so small you can’t see me unless you are peering at me through a microscope. But don’t be fooled by my size. I can pack a real punch. Remember the time you woke up at 2 in the morning with terrible cramps and were sick to your stomach? Or how about the time you missed three days of work with a 102 degree fever and a case of diarrhea? That could have been me, or one of my not so friendly pals paying you a visit.

Indeed, most of you have probably met me at one time or another. A visit from me was likely even more unpleasant than that unannounced weeklong stay from your ornery Aunt Edna. Make no bones about it, you are probably best off avoiding me, uh um, like the plague (no pun intended).

In this newsletter I am going to tell you all about my good friend norovirus. He is a particularly unpleasant and devious pal of mine, so I am going to give you some background information on him and what you can do to help prevent

an unwanted visit.

Norovirus

Noroviruses are members of a group of viruses called caliciviruses also known previously as “norwalk virus”. Infection with norovirus affects the stomach and intestines, causing an illness called gastroenteritis, or “stomach flu”. This “stomach flu” is not related to influenza, which is a respiratory illness caused by influenza virus. Noroviruses are also not related to bacteria or parasites that can cause gastrointestinal illnesses.

Norovirus infection causes gastroenteritis, which is an inflammation of the stomach and the intestines. The symptoms are nausea, vomiting, and/or diarrhea accompanied by abdominal cramps. Some people also complain of headache, fever, chills, and muscle aches. Symptoms usually last a couple of days, and begin 1 to 2 days after ingestion of the virus. There is no evidence that sick persons can become long-term carriers of the virus, but the virus can be in the stool and vomit of infected persons as long as 2 weeks after they feel better.

People can become infected with the virus in several ways, including: eating food or drinking liquids that are contaminated with norovirus, touching surfaces contaminated with the virus and then placing their hand in their mouth, or having

direct contact with and infected person who has symptoms.

People working with food who are sick with norovirus are a particular risk to others, because they handle the food and drink many other people will consume. Since the virus is so small, a sick food handler can easily, without meaning to, contaminate the food he or she is handling.

Many of those eating the contaminated food may become ill, causing an outbreak.

Outbreaks of norovirus have taken place in restaurants, cruise ships, nursing homes, hospitals, schools, banquet halls, summer camps, and family dinners. In other words, places where people have consumed water and food prepared or handled by others. It is estimated that as many as half of all food related outbreaks of illness may be caused by norovirus. In many of these cases, sick food handlers were thought to be implicated.

As sick as norovirus can make you, most people who are infected recover completely within a couple of days, with no long term complications. Anyone working in a restaurant who experiences norovirus-like symptoms should not come to work until cleared by a doctor and/or the local health department. (www.cdc.gov)

Eat Well Berkeley Restaurant Program

(Continued from page 1)

tein source. An entrée must also have less than 750 calories, 30% calories from fat and 10% calories from saturated fat. A side dish, appetizer or dessert must have one of the above items and have less than 300 calories (with less than 30% calories from fat and 10% calories from saturated fat).

How do I know if a restaurant is participating in the Eat Well Berkeley program?

You can find a list of participating restaurants at the City of Berkeley official web site. You will also know a restaurant is part of the Eat Well Berkeley program by the decal displayed on the door, the certificate on the wall and the other promotional materials describing the program throughout the restaurant. Restaurant operators choose to participate in the program. Participating in this program shows a restaurant's interest in and willingness to offer healthy food choices to their customers.

Why should my restaurant be part of the Eat Well Berkeley program?

- ◆ As a restaurant owner/operator, you have the opportunity to make a difference in the health of your customers and community!
- ◆ Similar programs in other cities have found increased customer satisfaction with participating restaurants.
- ◆ The program promotes Eat Well Berkeley restaurants to the public (for free)!

- ◆ Your restaurant's community image is enhanced.
- ◆ Your employees will enjoy a healthier workplace and will have one more reason to take pride in working for you.
- ◆ The program offers you free nutrition consultation and support.

What does my restaurant receive when I am part of the program?

- ◆ Eat Well Berkeley window decals.
- ◆ Stickers of digital logos to use on menus to highlight "Eat Well Options".
- ◆ Table tents.
- ◆ A certificate of recognition.
- ◆ Listing on the Eat Well Berkeley website.
- ◆ Listing in the Eat Well Berkeley brochure that is distributed by the Berkeley Public Health Department.

Do I have to make big changes to become an Eat Well Berkeley restaurant?

Not necessarily. You may already fulfill many of the criteria. Additionally, if you do not currently meet enough of the criteria, an Eat Well Berkeley dietician consultant can come meet with you to help you figure out simple, affordable changes you can make.

Do I get credit for the good things I'm already doing?

Yes! In fact, your restaurant may already qualify.

Is there a fee to be part of the program?

Not currently. During this pilot period, there is no charge to join.

What am I committing to do when I join the program?

Once you are accepted to the program, you commit to:

- ◆ Inform restaurant staff about your restaurant participation in the program.
- ◆ Post window decals and/or a certificate of participation so that customers can identify you as an Eat Well Berkeley restaurant.
- ◆ Advertise specific "Eat Well Options" menu items in any way that fits with your restaurant.
- ◆ Continue to meet the criteria.

How long does the process take?

Eat Well Berkeley's goal is to register you within 4-6 weeks of receiving your completed application. If we have a waiting list, we will inform you of the length of the expected delay.

How do I get started?

You can go to the Eat Well Berkeley web site at www.cityofberkeley.info/publichealth, and fill out an application or call (510) 981-5300.



Hand Washing

Why should I wash my hands?

Washing your hands is one of the single most important things you can do to prevent illness. Clean hands can help protect you from infectious and food-borne illnesses. If you are sick, it can help to keep you from passing your illness to others.

Hand washing protects your health by helping to remove dirt and germs that get on your hands during almost any activity. If you don't wash your hands, the germs on your hands can get into your mouth, nose, eyes, cuts and scrapes, and food you are preparing. It may then make you and others sick. Even if your hands look and feel clean they can still have germs on them.

Wash your hands the right way by using warm running water and soap for 20 seconds. Use extra care to wash the areas between your fingers and under your nails where germs hide. When finished, use a paper towel to dry, and be sure you don't sully your hands by touching the bathroom door on the way out.

Wash your hands BEFORE:

- ◆ Eating
- ◆ Touching or handling foods
- ◆ Touching or bandaging a cut or scrape
- ◆ Inserting or removing contact lenses



Wash your hands AFTER:

- ◆ Eating
- ◆ Touching or handling foods-especially raw meat, poultry, fish and eggs
- ◆ Using the bathroom
- ◆ Sneezing, coughing or blowing your nose
- ◆ Touching cuts, sores or rashes
- ◆ Handling garbage
- ◆ Smoking



Publisher/Editor: Environmental Health Staff

City of Berkeley
Health & Human Services Dept.
Environmental Health Division
1947 Center Street, 3rd floor
Berkeley CA 94704

510.981.5310 main
510.981.5305 fax
510.981.6903 TDD
Email: envhealth@ci.berkeley.ca.us

Protecting public health.

