

# Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission

[www.middlebrookhealth.org](http://www.middlebrookhealth.org)

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## October 2023 Newsletter

### National Dental Hygiene Awareness Month

Dental hygiene extends far beyond a sparkling smile and fresh breath—it is essential for overall health and well-being. According to the [National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research](#), tooth decay is the most common chronic disease in children and adults in the United States. Three oral conditions that affect quality of life the most are untreated cavities, severe gum disease, and severe tooth loss. Symptoms from these conditions cause pain that may make it difficult to eat, speak, and concentrate. Regular dental care visits can detect oral disease early making them easier to treat.



Maintain a healthy mouth and strong teeth:

- Practice dental hygiene. Brush teeth thoroughly twice a day and floss daily.
- Limit sugar consumption – [Be Sugar Smart](#)
- Do not use any tobacco products. If you smoke, call **Quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW** to get free confidential coaching or visit [cdc.gov/quit](http://cdc.gov/quit)
- Avoid excessive alcohol consumption

For more information on oral health, visit: [cdc.gov/oralhealth/basics/](http://cdc.gov/oralhealth/basics/)

### Breast Cancer Awareness Month

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month! It is a time to raise awareness about one of the most prevalent cancers affecting women and, in rare cases, men.



The two most common factors linked to breast cancer include being a woman and getting older. Being aware of your family's medical history can provide insights into other potential genetic risk factors. Share this information with your healthcare provider. Regular screening and early detection is key. Schedule regular mammograms and clinical breast exams as recommended by your healthcare provider.

Although signs of breast cancer are not the same for all women, awareness of breast cancer symptoms is crucial for early detection. While symptoms may vary, some warning signs include:

- **New Lump or Tissue Thickening:** Feeling a lump in the breast or underarm or thickening in the breast tissue.



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- **Changes in Breast Appearance:** Noticeable changes in the size, shape, or appearance of the breast.
- **Nipple Changes:** Changes in the nipple, such as inversion, discharge, or pain.
- **Skin Changes:** Irritation or dimpling of breast skin.

**If you are experiencing any signs or symptoms, be sure to see your doctor right away.**

Spread awareness and encourage regular screenings for you and your loved ones. Breast Cancer Awareness Month reminds us that we can make strides toward early detection and support for those affected. Let's stand strong in the fight against breast cancer, not just this October, but throughout the year.

For more information, visit [www.cdc.gov/cancer/breast](http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/breast)

## Red Ribbon Week

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Red Ribbon Week is just around the corner, taking place from October 23rd to October 31st. The Red Ribbon Campaign is the largest drug-abuse prevention campaign in the country and provides a powerful reminder to prevent substance use and abuse. The Theme for 2023 is ***Be Kind to Your Mind. Live Drug Free.*** This year's theme is a reminder that everyday Americans across the country make significant daily contributions to their communities by being the best they can be because they live Drug-Free!



Sponsored by National Family Partnership  
[www.redribbon.org](http://www.redribbon.org)

**Take the Pledge** by visiting: [redribbon.org/pledge](http://redribbon.org/pledge)

During Red Ribbon Week, we encourage you to take the pledge to live drug-free. This simple yet impactful commitment reinforces your dedication to a healthier, happier, and more fulfilling life. By taking the pledge, you join a community who understand the importance of living a purposeful life. Help spread awareness and share with a friend!

For more information, visit: [redribbon.org/](http://redribbon.org/)

## Safety Tips for this Fall

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### Furnace Maintenance

As winter is approaching, it is time to focus on one of the most crucial aspects of home safety and comfort: your furnace. Regular furnace maintenance is essential to ensure the reliable and safe operation of the vital appliance in your home. Start by cleaning or replacing the filters in your furnace. Clogged filters can reduce efficiency and even pose a fire hazard. Clean filters ensure that your furnace runs smoothly, keeps your indoor air quality high, and minimizes energy consumption.



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## Fireplace and Chimney Maintenance

If you have a fireplace, it's essential to make sure it is safe and ready for use:



- **Annual Chimney Inspection:** Schedule a chimney inspection and cleaning by a certified chimney sweep to remove debris and creosote buildup, reducing the risk of chimney fires.
- **Fire Screens:** Use fire screens to prevent sparks and embers from escaping the fireplace.
- **Never Leave Unattended:** Always supervise your fireplace when it's in use, and never leave it unattended.

By taking proactive steps to service your furnace, prioritize fire safety, and maintain your fireplace, you can ensure a warm and secure home throughout the winter season.

### Fire Safety Reminders:

- **Check Smoke Alarms:** Ensure your smoke alarms are working correctly. Replace batteries if needed and test them regularly to guarantee early detection of any potential fire hazards.
- **Family Fire Preparedness Meeting:** Gather with your family to discuss fire safety and prepare an emergency plan if a house fire occurs. Acknowledge specific needs in your family, such as pets, older adults, or family members with disabilities, and create a plan tailored to your household in case of emergency. For more information visit: [www.ready.gov/home-fire-escape-plan](http://www.ready.gov/home-fire-escape-plan).
- **Fire Extinguisher:** Have a fire extinguisher readily accessible in your home. Make sure you and your family members know how to use it. Click here to view a Fire Extinguisher Safety Training Document or scan the QR.



For more information on home fire safety, visit: [www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/fire.html](http://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/fire.html)

## Community Flu Vaccine Clinics

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The Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission and Green Brook Family Medicine will be providing:

- Flu Vaccines for ages 5 years and older.
- Senior Flu Vaccines for age 65 years and older.
- Updated 2023-2024 Pfizer COVID-19 Vaccines for ages 12 years and older.

**\*\*PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED\*\***

Here is the schedule:



**Wednesday, November 1**

3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Warren Township Court Committee Room  
44 Mountain Boulevard, Warren, 07059

[Register Here: warren-vax.timetap.com/](http://warren-vax.timetap.com/)



**Thursday, November 2**

4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Warren Township Court in the Committee Room  
44 Mountain Blvd., Warren, 07059

[Register Here: bridgewaterhealthdeptvax.timetap.com/](http://bridgewaterhealthdeptvax.timetap.com/)

**For most insurance plans, there is no cost for the Flu vaccine.** Please note, we are unable to accept HMO's that require a doctor's name on the card or Medicaid Insurance.

For the clinic:

- Please bring **all insurance cards** to the clinic to determine eligibility.
- Cash Price for the Flu vaccine is \$40.00.
- A parent/guardian is required to be present with children under the age of 18.
- A provider from Green Brook Family Medicine will be available at the clinic to address any Influenza Vaccine related questions.

Please call the Health Commission for assistance at **732-968-5151** if you have trouble with the online registration. For more information on the Influenza and COVID-19 Vaccines, please visit:

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/vis/vis-statements/flu.pdf>

[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/stay-up-to-date.html#UTD](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/stay-up-to-date.html#UTD)

## Rabies Clinics

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Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission offers several rabies clinics in the fall to assure availability of **free** rabies vaccines for our cat and dog owners.

Here is the Schedule:



- **November 4, 2023**  
9:00 am to 10:00 am  
Green Brook Municipal Building  
111 Green Brook Rd, Green Brook, 08812
- **November 18, 2023**  
9:00 am to 10:30 am  
Finderne Fire House  
672 E. Main St., Bridgewater, 08807

QR 1 Scan for Web Flyer



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- **December 2, 2023**  
9:00 am to 10:00 am  
Watchung Fire House  
57 Mountain Blvd., Watchung, 07069

**No registration is needed.** Pets must be at least 6 months of age. All cats must be held in a carrier and all dogs must be leashed. Please call the Health Commission at **732-968-5151** with any questions.

To learn more about rabies, visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/rabies/animals/index.html>

**Follow the Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission on Social Media!**

