



# SAFETY DISPATCH

AUTUMN 2015



**"Autumn is a second Spring when every leaf is a flower."**  
Albert Camus

## CHECK IT OUT

Humans and wildlife are affected each Autumn, whether it be the hope for a Pirate pennant, the angst for hockey & football returning, or the changes to the black-capped chickadee's tiny hippocampus (the part of the brain that is involved in memory forming, organizing, & storing). It enlarges by 30%, which enables it to remember where it collected seeds in different spots in trees and on the ground.



## AUTUMN HIGHLIGHTS

**INFO FOR CITYFIT EVENTS:** [city.fit@pittsburghpa.gov](mailto:city.fit@pittsburghpa.gov) or 255-2383 & check out our website located at <http://pittsburghpa.gov/personnel/cityfit/>

- **FLU SHOTS** offered in October, call 255-2403 for info
- **PAYROLL FAIR**, CCB Lobby, September 8th, 11am - 2pm
- **CITYFIT WELLNESS FAIRS** starting September 9th
- **CITYFIT BOWLING** starts September 13th, Registration Deadline September 18th
- **GREAT RACE**, September 27th
- **JOIN VENTURE OUTDOORS** for only \$10 a year for an individual or family membership
- **BLOOD DRIVES** @ City-County Building 9/15 & 12/15
- **YMCA TRIAL WEEK** 10/4 thru 10/10



## Hand Safety this Autumn

- Always use potholders when *handling* your hot entrees at Thanksgiving to avoid burns;
- Flu season is fast approaching so wash your hands regularly, especially before preparing or consuming meals;
- Never leave knives in the soapy sink water;
- When making Thanksgiving crafts, never *hand* a pair of scissors to someone; set them down for another to pick up.



## Hey ladies, September is Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month

Ovarian cancer is the 9th most common cancer for women but 4th most fatal, mostly affecting women over 55. Some risk factors include family history, being overweight, taller women, certain hormone therapies & medications. The symptoms of ovarian cancer can be difficult to distinguish from many other conditions but include a bloated abdominal section, persistent pain or pressure in the pelvis or abdomen, difficulty eating or becoming full too easily, urinary abnormalities, & a change in bowel habits. It is recommended to consult with your OB/GYN if you are exhibiting symptoms for longer than a 2 week duration.



## For the guys, September is also Prostate Cancer Awareness

Prostate cancer is the most common form of cancer for men.

It is recommended to have a prostate exam when you turn 50, sooner if you are in a higher risk group. Symptoms include discomfort while urinating & the straining/ inability to completely evacuate all of your urine. There is now a blood test that can be done in lieu of the traditional test (*Hooray!*). Although prostate cancer is the most common form of cancer in men, only 1/35 die from it because of proactive measures such as screenings. If you are a candidate for a prostate cancer screening, attend one of our CityFit Wellness Fairs to have the blood test done at no cost to you while checking out other health & safety resources for City of Pittsburgh employees.

## What's The Bottom Line?

Based on 2010-2012 data, at some point of their lifetime approximately 14.0 percent of men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer & approximately 1.3 percent of women will be diagnosed with ovarian cancer.

## AUTUMN SAFETY TIPS



### For those who choose not to rake, leaf-blowers require added safety measures

- Be sure to wear safety eyewear when using this equipment or else you are likely to have eye irritation from the smaller debris blown around;
- Particulates spewed into the air by leaf-blowers can aggravate respiratory & allergy problems; if this is an issue, a face mask can be used or have someone without health issues clear your lawn;
- Leaf-blowers can produce sound levels over 100 decibels & the user should always wear hearing protection;
- Non-electric leaf-blowers that run on fuel pose additional exhaust hazards; compared to an average large car, one hour of operation of a leaf-blower emits 498 times as much hydrocarbons, 49 times as much particulate matter & 26 times as much carbon monoxide;
- Additional tips on raking leaves safely were presented in the Autumn 2011 Safety Dispatch; find it in the Archives.



## September is National Yoga Awareness Month

Yoga can be a great way to help increase stamina, flexibility, respiratory health, & fortify your psyche. The increase in flexibility can help reduce injuries & promote well being. Reducing stress helps lead people to better cardiovascular health and overall improved well being. There are different styles of yoga, group classes, individual exercises... no matter what level of fitness you have achieved there is a yoga that is right for you. Contact your local YMCA and see when the next class is scheduled!



Warrior Pose



Pumpkin Pose



Lotus Pose

## After kneeling to pick up those leaves, you may need something to hold on to

- When you become lightheaded or dizzy after kneeling and standing up, you are experiencing what is referred to as *orthostatic hypotension*: a temporary drop in blood pressure that occurs when the body moves from a reclining position to an upright standing position;
- When you stand up, gravity causes blood to pool in your legs. This decreases blood pressure as there is less blood circulating back to your heart to pump;
- Contributing factors include having low blood pressure, dehydration, alcohol use & other underlying health conditions;
- Occasional incidents are not cause for worry but should you experience frequent symptoms of *orthostatic hypotension*, let your doctor know because they sometimes can point to more-serious problems;
- To prevent injury & incidents of *orthostatic hypotension*, get up slowly, have a hand-hold available to hold on to should you feel lightheaded, exercise regularly, drink plenty of water & stop kneeling down to talk to your children & pets; they can hear you perfectly fine when you're standing.



**Daylight Savings Ends Sunday, November 1, 2015** Turn clocks back, sleep an extra hour & replace the batteries in your smoke & carbon monoxide detectors. Time flies...It seems like just yesterday we were jumping ahead an hour into warm weather.