

HealthMatters



• • • In an Emergency Department every second counts. We have to be prepared to treat serious life-threatening conditions immediately. These life and death situations cannot wait, which means you might have to. But you have other options:

For life threatening conditions, severe or rapidly worsening symptoms or major injuries:

Call 111 or go to your nearest **ED / Emergency Department:** Whakatane Hospital, Stewart Street, Whakatane

For minor illnesses or injuries:

Visit a walk-in medical clinic: Whakatane: call Healthline on 0800 611 116 to find out which doctor is on duty. Opotiki and Te Kaha: call (07) 315 8500 to contact the duty doctor.

For infections or persistent symptoms:

Visit your family doctor or health clinic: Visit www.bopdhb.govt.nz to view a full list of local GP practices if you don't already have a family doctor.

For everyday ailments or symptoms:

Visit your local chemist. After hours chemist: Call Healthline on 0800 611 116 to find out which doctors clinic and chemist is on duty.

You might not have to come to ED at all. But we're here if you need us.

--- ARE YOU IN THE RIGHT PLACE?

24-hour free health advice call 0800 611 116



SCAN YOUR
MARTPHONE OVER THIS
CODE FOR MORE INFO: SMARTPHONE OVER THIS





Toxic shellfish warning across the Bay

Since December 2012, 29 people have been reported to health officials with toxic shellfish poisoning from eating contaminated shellfish.

Almost half of these people have become so sick they have been hospitalised, and some of them even spent time in the intensive care unit.

"Paralytic shellfish poisoning can be a very serious illness," says Medical Officer of Health, Dr Phil Shoemack. "While there have never been deaths reported in New Zealand, fatalities have been recorded overseas. Some people have been really sick after eating shellfish from the Bay of Plenty. Please don't collect or eat shellfish from the affected areas until further notice. Testing of local shellfish will continue throughout the year and the health warning will be lifted as soon as we are confident the risk of illness has reduced."

Since August 2012 high levels of paralytic shellfish poison have been found in shellfish along a significant stretch of coastline. A health warning is in place advising against the collection of shellfish from Tairua on the east coast of the Coromandel Peninsula, south to Waihi Beach and along the Bay of Plenty coast to Whakatane Heads in the Eastern Bay of Plenty. The warning includes Tairua Harbour as well as Tauranga Harbour, Maketu and Waihi estuaries,

Matakana and Motiti islands, and all other islands along this coastline.

The health warning applies to all shellfish including mussels, pipi, tuatua, cockles, oysters, scallops as well as catseyes, snails and kina (sea urchin). The toxin that causes the illness comes from algae in the ocean. Shellfish feed on the algae and concentrate the toxin in their flesh. Cooking or freezing the shellfish does not remove the toxin. Paua, crayfish and crabs can still be taken but as always, the gut should be removed before consuming. "Commercially supplied shellfish are safe to eat, so if you want shellfish on the menu over the holidays visit your supermarket or seafood retailer," says Dr Shoemack.

Symptoms of shellfish poisoning

- numbness and tingling around the mouth, face, hands or feet
- difficulty swallowing or breathing
- dizziness
- double vision
- in severe cases, paralysis and respiratory

(These symptoms usually occur within 12 hours of a person consuming affected shellfish.)

Anyone suffering illness after eating shellfish should seek medical attention. For up to date information on health warnings in the Bay of Plenty go to www.ttophs.govt.nz and click on health warnings, or call 0800 221 555 and select option 7 to speak to the on-call Health Protection Officer.

Is your baby safe when sleeping?

Parents and families in the Bay are being reminded of how to keep their babies safe from Sudden Unexpected Death of an Infant (SUDI).

Bay of Plenty District Health Board (BOPDHB) Midwife Leader Margret Norris says there are simple steps parents and caregivers can take to help keep babies

"Babies spend a lot of time sleeping and SUDI can be a frightening topic for new parents," she says. "But there are things parents can do to keep baby safe. With the holidays underway and families traveling and getting together, extra vigilance is needed for

the safety of our babies, especially during sleep."

Margret says babies often end up sleeping in makeshift arrangements when away from home and can be at risk of suffocation.

> "They can get caught under pillows or under covers and blankets so it's important to keep their face and head clear," she says. It's also important for babies to be in a smokefree environment as second-hand smoke can lead to

> > Partners and family members can play an

SUDI."

important role in keeping baby safe. Pediatrician Hugh Lees says new mothers can get tired and sleep deprived from meeting the needs of the baby.

"Support for the new mother is very important," says Dr Lees. "It is very easy for a mother that is tired with an unsettled baby to take it back to bed to try and comfort the baby, but then she herself could fall asleep and the baby could go under the covers or the pillows and suffocate. Partners or a support person can help with an unsettled baby to give the mother some rest time."

For some cultures it is the norm for babies to sleep in the parents beds. Margret says it's important for families to know the risks and ensure baby is safe.

"A safe co- sleeping option is the wahakura, a specially woven basket based on Kaupapa Maori designed to give the baby its own sleeping place," she says. "The basket can be placed in the mother's bed and ensures the baby is kept safe at all times but is close to the parents."

A pepi-pod is a more cost effective alternative to the wahakura.

onto you.

children.

Ways to keep your baby safe from Sudden Unexpected Death of an Infant (SUDI)

- Smokefree environment this means having a smokefree pregnancy and being smokefree around the baby in the house and the car.
- Breastfeeding when feeding during the night, don't have baby in bed, have a chair in the room that you can use.
- Sleeping baby on their back - keeping their face and head clear to prevent suffocation and do not use pillows.
- Room sharing not bed sharing - have baby sleep in your room for the first six months but in their own bed, especially if baby is premature, born small and if your family is not smokefree.

Bay of Plenty DHB Midwife and Lactation Consultant Sue Gulliver-Birkett (left) shows new parents Tim and Lee how to sleep baby Ava in a wahakura. The DHB has purchased some of these baskets to issue to parents of babies who have been identified as being 'at risk'.

SLIP into a long-sleeved shirt and into the shade. Generally, fabrics with a tighter weave and darker colours will give you greater protection from the sun. There are also certain fabrics on the market that have a SPF rating.

SLOP on plenty of broadspectrum SPF30+ sunscreen at least 15 minutes before going outdoors.



SLAP on a hat with a widebrim or a cap with flaps more people get sunburned on their face and neck than any other part of the body.

WRAP on a pair of wraparound sunglasses - UV radiation is just as dangerous to eyesight as it is for the skin.



"Firstly, if it's possible, try to stay out of direct sun during the hours of 10am to 4pm. This is when the sun can do the most damage. Look for natural shade or create your own with an umbrella, tent or other shelter. Then it's important to

Slip, Slop, Slap and Wrap."

Medical Officer of Health Dr

Phil Shoemack says everyone needs to cover-up, especially

Sunburn and skin damage is caused by the sun and it can lead to skin cancer. This is especially important if you are swimming or near water as the sun's rays are reflected www.healthline.govt.nz

PLEASE RETURN

any loaned hospital equipment to Tauranga Hospital's main reception.

Thank you.

For more information about being SunSmart for you and your family visit www.sunsmart.org.nz.