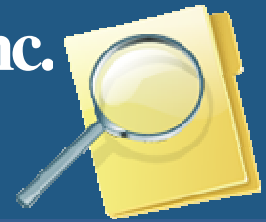


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"I think the environment should be put in the category of our national security. Defense of our resources is just as important as defense abroad. Otherwise what is there to defend?" ~Robert Redford, Yosemite National Park dedication, 1985

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Why is it important to understand TETANUS?

Especially with increased summer outdoor activities.....

>Tetanus is a medical condition characterized by prolonged contraction of skeletal muscle fibres.

>A neurotoxin produced by *Clostridium tetani*.

>Occurs through wound contamination often involving a cut or deep puncture wound.

>As infection progresses, muscle spasms in the jaw develop, hence the common name, lockjaw.

>Followed by difficulty swallowing and general muscle stiffness and spasms in other body parts.

>In recent years 11 % of reported tetanus cases have been fatal.

>Highest mortality rates are in unvaccinated persons and people over age 60.

>Mild cases can be treated with Tetanus immune globulin either intravenous or intramuscular and other medications such as Valium.

>Severe cases require admission to intensive care to include vaccine, valium, tracheostomy and mechanical ventilation for 3-4 weeks.

PREVENTION: Vaccination.

The CDC recommends adults receive booster every ten years and standard practice is to give booster to any patient with puncture wound who is unsure of last vaccination or if he/she has had fewer than 3 lifetime doses of the vaccine. The booster cannot prevent a potentially fatal case of tetanus from the current wound because it can take up to two weeks for tetanus antibodies to form.

Association with rust: This is a misleading concept especially with rusty nails.

Objects that accumulate rust are often found outdoors or in places that harbor anaerobic bacteria but the rust itself *does not cause* tetanus...but acts as a *prime host* for the *C. tetani* bacteria. A puncture wound allows *C. tetani* to thrive in an environment without oxygen.

DISASTERS: What happens when water and food are contaminated?

CHOLERA: Epidemic cholera is an infectious gastroenteritis caused by the bacterium *vibrio cholera*. Transmission to humans occurs through the process of ingesting contaminated water or food. This is a Gram-negative bacterium that produces cholera toxin whose action on the mucosal lining of the small intestine is responsible for the characteristic massive diarrhea of the disease. In its most severe forms, cholera is one of the most rapid fatal illnesses known, and a healthy person may become hypotensive within an hour of the onset of symptoms; infected patients may die within three hours if treatment is not provided. In a common scenario the disease progresses from the first liquid stool to shock in 4-12 hours, with death following in 18 hours to several days without oral rehydration therapy. --- CDC

ECO-QUIZ of THE MONTH: How much energy could have been saved by recycling all of the nation's aluminum cans in 2005?

ANSWER: The nearly 50 billion cans trashed in 2005 could have saved enough energy to power 1.3 million American homes if they had been recycled. Each can tossed wastes as much energy as pouring out half a can of gasoline. - Sierra Club 2008