



June 2010

Dear Subscriber:

On this year's 4th of July, you will likely see many people lighting fireworks in celebration of Independence Day. However, July 4 is also the last day smokers in Wisconsin will be able to light up in indoor public places, including taverns and restaurants. On July 5, Wisconsin joins 32 other states, including Illinois, Iowa and Minnesota, with indoor smoking bans. If you are a smoker, consider taking advantage of the resources Dr. Loomis discusses below to help you quit. It's not too late to experience the benefits!

Now that it's starting to feel like summer, you'll hopefully have a chance to get out and go for a few walks. However, is your walk helping you lose weight? And, if you're walking in the woods, what do you do if you find a tick? See below for information about both of these topics.

Enjoy the sunshine!

The Team at Luther Midelfort

Celebrate Your Freedom From Nicotine!

With only about a month to go before the Wisconsin Clean Indoor Air Act goes into effect on July 5, it is the perfect time to think about freeing yourself from dependence on nicotine. Despite the overwhelming evidence of harmful effects,



Paul Loomis, MD

Luther Midelfort
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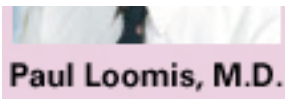
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one in five Wisconsinites still smokes. Smoking costs our state more than \$1.6 billion in healthcare every year and contributes to nearly one in five deaths from all causes.



Paul Loomis, M.D.

Every day in my clinic practice, I witness someone who suffers from harmful effects related to tobacco use. Many problems are not obvious, such as back pain from osteoporosis, emotional distress from feeling captive to a cigarette and insomnia caused by nicotine cravings in the night.

We all know smoking is harmful to our health, so why do so many people still smoke? As they say in life, "it's complicated." It's complicated because in addition to the difficult physical addiction to nicotine, social and cultural factors make smoking acceptable, and marketing portrays tobacco as sexy, cool and refreshing.

In the short term, smoking causes immediate effects on heart blood vessels, raises blood pressure and numbs our senses of taste and smell. The long-term health effects of smoking are so well documented, there isn't space to list them all here. But, suffice to say, there is simply no organ system in the body that is not affected by smoking. You name it, smoking harms it!

The good news is that help is available to smokers and families who support their efforts.

To find out more about these resources, [click here](#).

Tick Tips

The tick season started early this year, says Janie Rhody, a family nurse practitioner with Luther Midelfort Express Care. Janie and her Express Care colleagues began seeing patients with tick bites only two weeks into spring.

"We saw patients a couple weeks earlier than normal, but that's not that surprising considering the early spring we had," Janie says. "We'll see the highest concentration of tick activity in the spring, but people need to remember that ticks are active all summer long and into



Janie Rhody, N.P.

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fall.” Janie offers the following advice for people concerned with tick bites:

Be prepared when venturing into tick habitat:

- Ticks are most likely to be found in forested settings or in tall grass.
- Wearing light-colored clothing will help you notice ticks on you.
- Tuck pant legs into socks, and tuck in shirts if walking through tick habitat.
- Consider applying an insecticide, such as permethrin or insect repellent containing DEET, to your clothing.
- Check yourself, or have a family member check you after being in tick habitat.

Remove ticks safely to minimize the transmission of Lyme disease:

- The bacteria that causes Lyme disease resides in the tick’s stomach. Don’t squeeze the tick’s abdomen as this might force the bacteria into the host.
- Use a tweezers to grab the tick at skin level, then tug out gently.
- Wash the bite area with soap and water, or apply an antibacterial ointment to reduce the chance of infection.
- Don’t cover the tick with Vaseline in an attempt to smother or suffocate the tick.
- Saving the tick for testing doesn’t tell the provider whether the Lyme disease bacteria actually was transmitted to the patient.

Recognize when to see a healthcare provider for a tick bite:

- Tick bites can become infected and should be treated with antibiotics. An infected tick bite might appear red or swollen, be hot to the touch or emit a liquid discharge. A person with an infected bite might have a fever or feel unusually fatigued.
- Deer and bear ticks can carry bacteria that cause Lyme disease. Left untreated, Lyme disease can cause arthritis, as well as heart and spinal cord problems.
- Symptoms of Lyme disease include fever, headaches, muscle aches, fatigue and a rash. Lyme disease can be treated with oral antibiotics.
- Luther Midelfort Express Care has two locations in Eau Claire and is open seven days a week to treat people with tick bites.

[back to top](#) ↑

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