

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
January 9, 2017

Contact: Anne Bianchi, WIC Director  
Phone: 231-876-3824  
Email: [abianchi@dhd10.org](mailto:abianchi@dhd10.org)

### Prevent Infections for Baby's Protection

As part of National Birth Defects Prevention Month- January 2017, District Health Department #10 aims to help women increase their chances of having a healthy baby by preventing infection before and during pregnancy.

Birth defects are common, costly, and critical. Every 4½ minutes, a baby is born with a major birth defect in the United States. Not all birth defects can be prevented but DHD#10 can help women learn different strategies to prevent certain infections and reduce their risk of having a baby born with a birth defect.

To **prevent infections to protect babies** from infection:

- **Properly prepare food.**
  - Wash your hands before and after preparing food.
  - Do not eat raw or runny eggs or raw sprouts.
  - Avoid unpasteurized (raw) milk and cheese, and other foods made from them.
- **Talk to your healthcare provider.**
  - Talk to your healthcare provider about what you can do to prevent infections, including sexually transmitted diseases, before and during pregnancy.
  - Make sure that you are up-to-date with vaccinations (shots) before getting pregnant.
  - Talk to your healthcare provider about vaccinations that you should receive during pregnancy.
- **Protect yourself from animals and insects known to carry diseases.**
  - Stay away from wild or pet rodents, live poultry, lizards and turtles, and do not clean cat litter boxes while pregnant.
  - When mosquitoes and ticks are active, wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants when outside.
  - Use Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) registered insect repellents with one of the following active ingredients: DEET, picaridin, IR3535, or oil of lemon eucalyptus (para-menthane-3,8-diol).
  - If traveling, take necessary travel precautions to protect yourself from Zika. Text PLAN to (855)255-5606 to learn how to stay protected before, during, and after your travels.

The mission of District Health Department #10 is to promote and enhance the health of our communities and environment through protection, prevention, and intervention. Serving Crawford, Lake, Mason, Missaukee, Oceana, Kalkaska, Manistee, Mecosta, Newaygo, and Wexford Counties.

- **Maintain good hygiene.**

- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially
  - Before preparing or eating foods,
  - After handling raw meat, raw eggs, or unwashed vegetables,
  - After being around or touching pets and other animals,
  - After changing diapers or wiping runny noses.
- Kiss young children on the forehead or cheek instead of the lips.
- Do not put a young child's food, utensils, drinking cups, or pacifiers in your mouth.

To find out how your local DHD#10 office can help women have a healthy pregnancy visit [www.dhd10.org](http://www.dhd10.org). Further information on birth defects can also be found at [www.CDC.gov/ncbddd](http://www.CDC.gov/ncbddd).