Hello Again!

We hope that you and your loved ones are staying safe and healthy. Like many of you, we are trying to find ways to help others during this crisis. To help out we developed a follow-up survey focused on the pandemic.

- *The pandemic questionnaire aims to understand:*
  - *How COVID-19 is affecting Tonawanda and Grand Island communities*
  - *How social distancing is affecting us*
  - *How previous medical conditions and environmental exposures may impact the severity of COVID-19.*
- *Help us understand how this virus is affecting your community by clicking the email link and responding to the survey. Email us with any questions!*

University at Buffalo
Environmental Health Study
for Western New York

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COMMUNITY OUTREACH – AVAILABLE ONLINE

Our education and outreach team have been creating community workshops, display cases, and tabling at events on many health and environmental issues in the communities. Three workshops have been created so far that focus on green cleaning, pesticides and safer lawn and garden care, and nutrition We polled some of our participants to see what other topics interest them. See our findings below:

If you are interested in seeing our educational materials at home, please visit our website ehstudy.buffalo.edu and click on “Resources” and then “Environmental Health Resources” for more information. We are working on posting all of the workshops and materials online.

When it’s safe, we look forward to getting back out in the community with you!

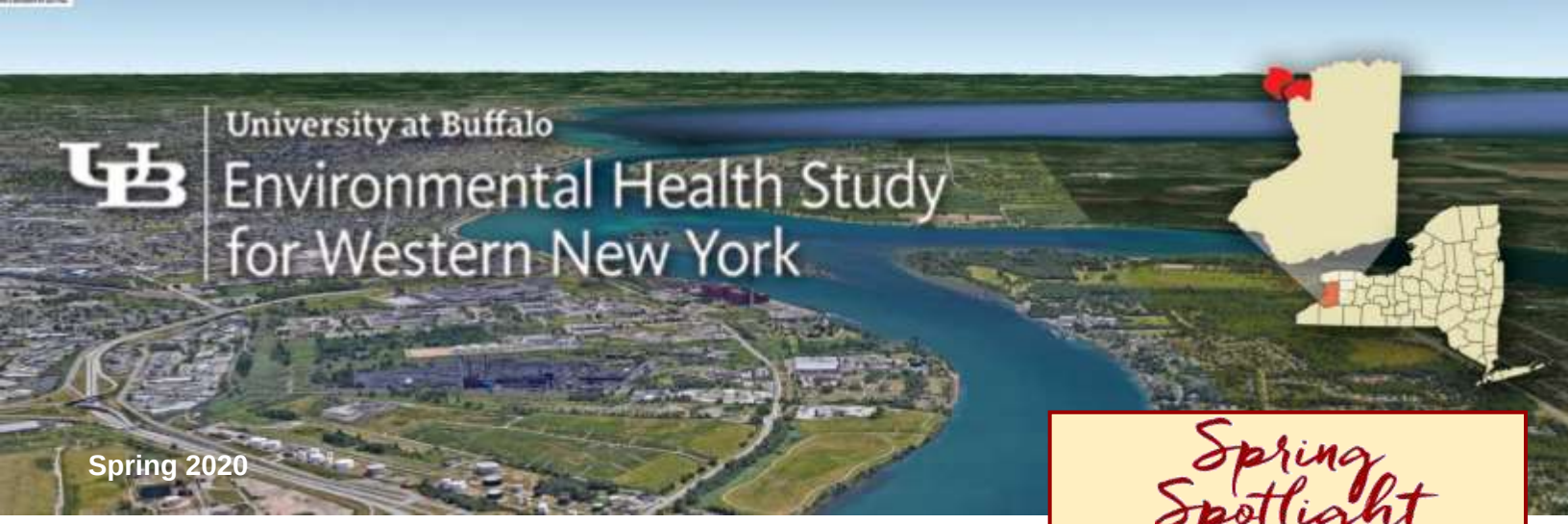
HEALTH TIP: *Handwashing is one of the best ways to protect yourself and your family from getting sick. Wash your hands often!*

CHILDREN’S PORTION OF THE STUDY

Once it is safe to do so, we will begin welcoming children to enroll in the study. This portion of the study will be led by Lina Mu, PhD, MD, associate professor of Epidemiology and Environmental Health at UB. One of Dr. Mu’s primary research areas is studying air pollution and potential health impacts.

Children are rapidly developing and it is possible that exposures to chemicals present in air pollution before and after birth can affect their development and health. Since children are smaller than adults, the relative dose they experience will be greater, which may affect health outcomes.

If you indicated on your survey that you have children and may be interested in having them participate, we’ll contact you when we return to our planned follow-up activities.



COVID-19 AND HOW OUR STUDY CAN HELP

On March 22, 2020 our communities started social distancing practices in order to help reduce the spread of the novel virus, SARS-CoV-2, which causes COVID-19. We recently sent out a survey focusing on COVID-19 and social distancing. If needed, email us at sphhp-ehstudy@buffalo.edu for a survey link.

- **COVID-19 Questionnaire**
  The questionnaire will assess what symptoms people in the community are having, social distancing practices, and what barriers we are still facing in the community.
- **Prior medical conditions and exposures to pollutants**
  Given the historical exposures to industrial pollutants in the area, and the population's existing medical conditions, COVID-19 may have a different effect on the local community. We aim to find out with this survey.
- **Social distancing: Are people actually doing it?**
  The new survey aims to understand how social contacts have changed since March 22, 2020 and what they look like now. Where are individuals going and how are we protecting ourselves?
- **How is social distancing affecting individuals?**
  We aim to find out how social distancing is affecting our ability to work, pay bills, find household goods and food, access healthcare, exercise, and its impact on mental health.

BIOSPECIMENS: *Due to SARS-CoV-2, we stopped collection of biospecimen samples. We will reach out to you to re-schedule your appointment at a future date. The safety of the study participants and staff is our primary concern. Some tips to keep your healthy: wash your hands frequently, avoid crowds, stay home as much as possible, enjoy time outdoors in your yard. For more information about COVID-19, please visit:* https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html

Research staff exercising together before quarantines, February 2020

Help us keep in touch!

People move.
Email addresses change.
Cell phones replace landlines.

Please let us know if any of your contact information changes.

Even if you move out of the study area, you are still eligible to continue participating in the study.

Call or email us to update your info!

Spring Spotlight

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY & YOUR HEALTH

- Every movement counts, especially now; aim for 30 minutes every day
- Even low intensity activities (e.g. washing dishes) have health benefits
- Every 1-5 minutes of exercise count toward your 30-minute goal
- The greatest benefit comes from moderate to vigorous activity (brisk walking, gardening, biking)

These results are from a recent study looking at sedentary time and mortality risk. The study also found that less-active individuals have the most to gain.

Replacing 30 minutes of sedentary time with 30 minutes of physical activity of any intensity substantially reduces mortality risk in less-active individuals.

Diaz et.al. (2019). Potential effects on mortality of replacing sedentary time with short sedentary bouts or physical activity: A National Cohort Study. American Journal of Epidemiology, vol. 188, No.3.

BENEFITS OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- Everyday tasks are easier to do
- Lowers your risk of many diseases such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and cancer
- Reduces symptoms of anxiety, depression, and arthritis
- Helps keep diabetes and high blood pressure under control

Centers of Disease Control
https://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/basics/pa-health/index.htm

Check out this great resource to learn how to get active your way:

https://health.gov/moveyourway/

University at Buffalo
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Website: ehstudy.buffalo.edu
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Do you know anyone who would like to participate in the study? If they are 18+ years old, lived or worked in Grand Island or the City or Town of Tonawanda, they can visit ehstudy.buffalo.edu, click on "Sign Up."