

June 2026

HEALTHY CONNECTIONS



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Welcome to the Central Connecticut Health District's Healthy Connections newsletter, aimed at helping you make healthy lifestyle choices and providing the latest community health information.

Hiking & Walking Safety Tips From the National Parks Service

PLAN BEFORE YOU GO

- Check the weather forecast
- Review trail maps and conditions
- Tell someone where you're going
- Choose trails that fit your ability level

PACK THE ESSENTIALS

- Water & mix, nuts, dried fruit, jerky, energy bars, and nut butter pouches
- Map or GPS
- First aid kit / Sunscreen & bug spray
- Flashlight or headlamp
- Fully charged phone

DRESS FOR SAFETY

- Wear sturdy shoes or hiking boots
- Dress in layers and wear bright or reflective clothing when walking near roads

STAY AWARE

- Stay on marked trails
- Watch for uneven ground, rocks, and roots
- Avoid cliff edges and slippery areas
- Take breaks and know your limits

RESPECT WILDLIFE

- Do not feed animals
- Keep a safe distance

HEAT & WEATHER SAFETY

- Drink water every 30 minutes
- Start hikes early in hot weather
- Watch for signs of heat exhaustion
- Turn back in storms or dangerous conditions

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

- Stay calm
- Call 911 if needed
- Share your location if possible and stay where rescuers can find you

“Take only pictures, leave only footprints.”
For more trail safety information visit:
[National Park Service Hiking Safety](https://www.nps.gov/visiting/learnmore/leave-no-trace/hiking-safety)

Hantavirus Update: What to Know Right Now

The CDC is currently responding to a deadly outbreak of Andes virus among passengers and crew on an international cruise ship. The good news is that the risk to the general U.S. public remains very low, and health officials are closely tracking the situation.

Hantaviruses are a family of viruses that can cause severe illness. They are primarily spread by breathing airborne particles from dried rodent feces, urine, and saliva. One type, the Andes virus, is the only hantavirus known to spread from person to person, and even then, transmission is usually limited to people who have very close contact with someone who is already ill.

Important to Note

- As of May 2026, the Andes virus is not found in the wild in the United States.
- Cases detected here have been in U.S. residents returning from the cruise ship outbreak, not from local exposure.
- The virus is typically found in South America and is not endemic to the U.S.
- Andes virus can cause a serious lung disease known as Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome (HPS).

Public health officials continue to monitor the situation closely, and the risk to the general U.S. population remains low.

As always, staying informed and looking out for one another helps keep our whole community healthy and prepared.

To learn more:

www.cdc.gov/hantavirus/about/andesvirus.html

Best Websites for Central CT Trails

Connecticut Trail Finder: For filtering by difficulty, surface type, accessibility, dog-friendly trails, and distance.

Connecticut DEEP Hiking Guide: CT state park trail maps and hiking information.

<https://trailsday.org/> :CT Trail Days on June 6 and 7 to find a hike near you.

