

WELLNESS WATCH

Across the Lifespan, Across Indiana



AUGUST

National Breastfeeding Month

Children's Eye Health and Safety Month

National Immunization Awareness Month

Psoriasis Awareness Month

World Breastfeeding Week 8/1 – 8/7

National Health Center Week 8/9 – 8/15

Contact Lens Health Week 8/24 – 8/28

August Spotlight: Indiana Supports Breastfeeding Mothers

August 1 – 7 is World Breastfeeding Week, and Governor Pence has declared by proclamation that this week is also “Breastfeeding Week” in Indiana. The Office of Women’s Health wants you to know that the Indiana State Department of Health is committed to supporting breastfeeding mothers and helping families reach their breastfeeding goals.

The benefits of breastfeeding are substantial for mothers, babies, communities and workplaces. Unfortunately, Indiana falls well below the 2020

Healthy People goals, as well as the national average, for breastfeeding in every area, including initiation, breastfeeding at six and 12 months and exclusive breastfeeding at three and six months. Increasing the initiation and duration of breastfeeding would positively impact the health of all Hoosier communities and could also have a substantial economic impact on the state. If 90 percent of new infants in the United States were breastfed exclusively for six months, national estimates indicate that the country could save \$13 billion in healthcare costs each year.

In 2014, the Indiana State Department of Health partnered with the National Institute for Children’s Health Quality (NICHQ) to develop a strategic plan for increasing breastfeeding in the state. Indiana wants to lead the way in supporting its mothers and families in breastfeeding and be a leader in reaching Healthy People 2020 goals for all breastfeeding categories. Some important NICHQ goals include:

- Increase the rate of exclusive breastfeeding at three months from baseline of 35.7% in 2011 to 46.2%;
- Increase the rate of exclusive breastfeeding at six months from baseline of 18.1% in 2011 to 25.5%;
- Increase the rate of (any) breastfeeding at six months from baseline of 38.6% in 2011 to 60.6%;

- Increase by 25% from baseline the percentage of infants breastfed exclusively at hospital discharge among underserved populations, including but not limited to:

- Infants of African-American descent;
- Infants of mothers under the age of 20;
- Infants of low-income mothers;
- Infants of mothers who get little or no prenatal care.



In order for these goals to be reached, the state must have community support to encourage and invite mothers to breastfeed their infants. We must all know, support and comply with the laws that Indiana has passed to support breastfeeding.

Indiana [Code § 16-35-6](#) allows a woman to breastfeed her child anywhere the law allows her to be. Indiana Code [§ 22-2-14-2](#) provides that employers with more than 25 employees must provide a private location, other than a toilet stall, where an employee can express breast milk in private and, if possible, to provide a refrigerator for storing breast milk that has been expressed.

Workplaces play a critical role in breastfeeding support. Many mothers feel that they must stop nursing when they return to work or school, but with proper support, women can breastfeed their babies and work. Employers who implement a breastfeeding support program see lower medical costs and health insurance claims (up to three times less for breastfeeding employees), reduced turnover rates, lower absenteeism, improved productivity and higher employee morale.¹

For more information about the Indiana State Department of Health’s efforts to support breastfeeding, visit the [ISDH Maternal Child Health Division](#). To learn about important ways for employers to support breastfeeding employees, reference the [Easy Steps to Supporting Breastfeeding Employees](#) resource from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

A Critical Link: Immunizations and Public Health



Immunizations seem to be in the news frequently, and so naturally a lot of women have questions about the topic. Below, the OWH has compiled a list of common questions and answers about immunizations to guide you and your family down the path of health and preventing disease and illness.

- **What are immunizations?** Our bodies have an immune system designed to protect us from infectious disease. However, there are some diseases that can overwhelm our immune systems and cause real harm. Scientists have developed vaccines that direct a person's immune system to produce immunity to a specific disease. These immunizations help guide our immune system to protect us against diseases that can be harmful to us and those around us.
- **Why does everyone need to be immunized?** We usually think of just giving vaccinations to our infants and children, but in truth, everyone needs to be up to date on their immunizations. While many diseases are becoming very rare in the United States, they are not completely eliminated. If some people choose not to get vaccinated, diseases can come back and spread through our population again. Our Hoosier children, older adults and people with weakened immune systems (such as those on chemotherapy) are the most vulnerable to these diseases, but anyone can get sick. Vaccines prevent new infections and help us limit the spread of disease from person to person.
- **What would happen if we stopped vaccinating?** The only way for us to consider this question is to look at our past. In 1964-65, an outbreak of rubella (German measles) infected 12.5 million Americans, killed 2,000 babies and caused 11,000 miscarriages. Because of vaccinations, in 2012, only nine cases of rubella were reported to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).² In the United States, our disease rates are manageable and low. But, as we have seen in recent years, when we remove the group protection that vaccinations provide, we put ourselves at risk for serious diseases, and many people can get sick or die.
- **Some people say immunizations are not safe. Is this true?** The United States currently has the safest, most effective vaccines in its history. All vaccine supplies must be approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which tests the vaccines to ensure safety and effectiveness. In addition, companies that develop vaccines must painstakingly test all of their products before they even get to the FDA. Millions of vaccines have been given in the United States, and any side effects are identified during testing. However, just to be safe, the U.S. Vaccine Safety System tracks possible rare side effects identified during studies and testing to help continue to ensure safety.³ There has been no evidence to support the myth that vaccines such as MMR cause autism.⁴
- **How do I know if I or my child needs vaccines?** There are many resources available to you if you are unsure whether you or your child needs vaccinations or booster shots. August is National Immunization Awareness Month, and the American Academy of Pediatrics will be highlighting information each week to help everyone in your family stay healthy and safe. From prenatal vaccinations to pre-teens and flu vaccines, the information available to you will help you get on track and protect your family. To learn about vaccine schedules and immunization resources for all ages, visit the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#).

For more information about immunizations and resources in Indiana, including 2015-2016 school immunization requirements, visit the [Indiana State Department of Health \(ISDH\) Immunization Division](#).

Indiana Child Fatality Review: Prevention Through Understanding

When a family has to endure the tragic loss of a child, the entire community is impacted. Whether the cause is injury or illness, all Hoosiers want to know why and what can be done to help. The Indiana State Child Fatality Review (CFR) Program has been asking those questions for more than 10 years. By gathering community leaders together, CFR teams across the state are taking steps to protect the lives of Indiana children.

CFR teams are found in 89 of the 92 Indiana counties. They are made up of law enforcement officials, doctors, Department of Child Services representatives, fire and EMS personnel, school representatives, coroners and local health departments. These concerned professionals volunteer their time and talk about the children lost in their communities, with the goal of understanding what risk factors were present. Risk factors are any exposures that increase the likelihood that a child will lose his/her life. From these lessons, the team can then identify issues that are impacting Indiana children and put plans in place so that no other Hoosier children and families experience the same circumstances.

Examples of important lessons that have come as a result of CFR work include:

- **“Back to Sleep” and safe sleep environment campaigns** – Patterns emerged in

Sudden Unexplained Infant Death (SUID) cases that helped us learn how to most safely put babies to bed. Since the start of the campaign, SUID rates have decreased by almost 50 percent. However, SUID remains the leading cause of death for infants one month to one year of age.

injury from bicycle crashes. Bicycle helmets have been proven to reduce the risk of head and brain injury when a crash occurs by as much as 85 percent to 88 percent, so children and adults should wear a bicycle helmet every time they ride a bike.

Child Fatality Review works to take the heartbreak of a child death and turn it into a positive activity that we can use to keep other kids safe. CFR teams give Hoosiers the tools needed to create prevention programs through the understanding of risk factors.



- **Motor vehicle safety** – Laws about seatbelt use, car seat regulations and texting while driving came about when CFR teams identified how many children were injured in motor vehicle accidents. 73 percent of car seats are not used or installed correctly. However, used correctly, child safety seats can reduce the risk of death by as much as 71 percent.
- **Bicycle safety** – Review of bicycle-related incidents has shown that children ages five to 15 are at greater risk of death and serious

To learn more, visit the [Indiana State Department of Health \(ISDH\) Child Fatality Review division](#). For additional information about safe sleep for your infant, visit the [Indiana Department of Child Services](#). To learn about how ISDH is working to prevent injuries for all Hoosiers, visit the [Division of Trauma and Injury Prevention](#).

If you or a loved one are struggling with the loss of a child, visit [First Candle](#) for support, information and resources, or call [1-800-221-7437](tel:1-800-221-7437) to speak for free with a grief counselor 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Spotlight on Women’s Health: The Health Needs of Girls and Teens

Being a girl in today’s world can be awfully tough. Our girls must navigate a world of their own changing bodies, relationships and friendships, intense emotions, internet safety, bullying, drugs and alcohol and increasing expectations at home and at school. If you have a young girl or teen in your life, it is important to guide her to safe and reliable resources so she is best equipped to make healthy choices. A few great resources for girls are below:

- [Girlshealth.gov](#) – This HHS Office on Women’s Health website is a great resource for all teen and young girls, offering information from grief and dating to sleep to nutrition. It is

simple to navigate and is a safe online environment for girls and young women to explore their own health.

- [Girls Inc.](#) – With resources for girls and parents, this website stands up to its message, “I Am. I Can Do. I Can Be. I Belong.” It highlights goal setting, skill building and education and is a safe place for girls to learn about themselves.
- [Girl Scouts](#) – This website provides fun activities and great educational tools for girls. It is broken down into age groups (ages 5 – 9, ages 10 -12 and teens 13 – 17). This website is a safe and welcoming environment for

exploration and learning.

- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) BAM!](#) – This interactive website is great for girls and boys and has information on everything from diseases to physical activity and bullying. The kid-friendly features and navigation make it a winner for both parents and children.
- [CDC Kids’ Quest](#) – This website is designed to help children learn about disabilities and health in a straightforward and compassionate way. This website has a higher reading level, so a parent or guardian might need to help younger children.



Indiana State Department of Health

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Office of Women's Health

2 N. Meridian St., 3M

Indianapolis, IN 46204

Phone: 317-233-9156

Fax: 317-233-8199

E-mail: Ichavez@isdh.in.gov

Thank you for subscribing to the Office of Women's Health (OWH) Wellness Watch Newsletter. The Office of Women's Health wants to ensure that each woman in Indiana is aware of her own health status, risks and goals, and can achieve optimal health through access, education and advocacy.

- **For more information about OWH's programs and initiatives, please visit:** <http://www.in.gov/isdh/18061.htm>.
- **Follow OWH on Twitter at @inwomenshealth.**
- **Follow this link to manage your subscription or to subscribe to the OWH Wellness Watch Newsletter.**

Upcoming Events

Indiana Health Care Association
[2015 IHCA Convention and Expo](#)
8/17 – 8/19

Indiana Perinatal Network
[Regional Training – Bloomington – Birth Trauma and Perinatal Mood Disorders](#)
8/18

Indiana Rural Health Association
[2015 Leadership Seminar](#)
8/25

[Indiana State Department of Health Trauma Tour](#)
8/11 – District 8 – Columbus
8/13 – District 5 - Indianapolis

Indiana State Fair
[2015 State Fair – Year of the Farmer](#)
8/7 – 8/23

Metro Indianapolis Lactation Coalition
[\(MILC\) Kick-Off Event](#)
8/29

[P & G Gymnastics Championships](#)
8/13 – 8/16

The Milk Bank
[The Milk Bank Turns TEN! Event](#)
8/8

References

¹Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health. Easy steps to supporting breastfeeding employees. Retrieved from <http://www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding/government-in-action/business-case-for-breastfeeding/easy-steps-to-supporting-breastfeeding-employees.pdf>.

²Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2014). *Immunization: The basics*. Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vac-gen/imz-basics.htm>.

³Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2013). *Ensuring the safety of vaccines in the United States*. Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/patient-ed/conversations/downloads/vacsafe-ensuring-bw-office.pdf>.

⁴Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2013). *Understanding MMR vaccine safety*. Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/patient-ed/conversations/downloads/vacsafe-mmr-bw-office.pdf>.