

WELLNESS WATCH

Across the Lifespan, Across Indiana



JANUARY

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January Spotlight - Cervical Health Awareness Month

January is designated as National Cervical Health Awareness Month. Cervical cancer is an abnormal growth of cells on the cervix, or that began in the cervix. Cervical cancer is one of the few cancers that is almost 100% preventable through routine screening, avoidance of controllable risk factors and vaccination against the human papillomavirus (HPV). According to the American Cancer Society (ACS), in the United States, an estimated 12,360 cases of invasive cervical cancer cases were diagnosed in 2014 and 4,290 deaths occurred.¹ According to the Indiana Cancer Registry, approximately 240 new cases of cervical cancer and 100 cervical cancer-related deaths occurred in 2012 among Hoosier females.²

The greatest risk factor for cervical cancer is exposure to HPV. Approximately 14 million new cases of sexually transmitted HPV occur in the U.S. each year, with at least 79 million people estimated to be currently infected. Most people with HPV do not know that they are infected.³ Two high-risk HPV strains account for more than 70% of all cervical cancer cases, according to the National Cancer Institute. Another significant risk factor is smoking. According to the ACS, women who smoke are twice as likely to develop cervical cancer when compared to non-smokers.

To address the HPV strains that most frequently lead to cervical cancer, two vaccines, Gardasil and Cervarix, have been developed to provide protection against most cervical cancers. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends vaccination for females and males ages 11 through 26.



There are also two screening tests that can help prevent cervical cancer, or find it at an early stage when treatment is most successful. The Pap test looks for cell changes on the cervix that might become cancerous if they are not treated appropriately. The HPV test looks for the virus that can cause these cell changes. The United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommends screening for cervical cancer in women ages 21 to 65 years with a Pap test every three years; or, for women ages 30 to 65 who want to lengthen the screening interval, screening with a combination of a Pap test and an HPV test every five years. Each woman should talk to her primary care provider to determine

what screening schedule is appropriate for her.

The Indiana Breast and Cervical Cancer Program (IN-BCCP) provides access to breast and cervical cancer screenings, diagnostic testing and treatment for underserved and underinsured women who qualify for services. To find out if you qualify for this program, call the Indiana Family Helpline at 1-855-HELP-1ST (1-855-435-7178).

If you are interested in learning more about cervical cancer, the Indiana Cancer Consortium (ICC) Early Detection Committee and the Indiana University Melvin and Bren Simon Cancer Center will host an educational event entitled, *This Just In: Emerging Trends and Research in Cervical Cancer and HPV Vaccination*. Learn more about this educational event at [This Just In Registration Information](#). For additional resources about cervical cancer, please visit <http://www.in.gov/isdh/19854.htm>.

Content for this article provided by the Breast and Cervical Cancer program at the Indiana State Department of Health.

Love, Life and Stress: The Caregiver's World

Caregiving is defined as providing help to another individual in need. Frequently this involves helping with activities of daily living, finances, cooking, shopping and/or medication management. At some point in their lives, nearly 80% of Americans provide informal caregiving (not professional in nature), with 61% of those caregivers being female.⁴ Of adults in their 40s and 50s, 47% have a parent age 65 or older and are either raising a young child or financially supporting a grown child. One in seven middle-aged adults are providing financial support to both an aging parent and a child. In addition, 59% percent of informal caregivers have jobs in addition to caring for another person.



For many women, this means caring for small children, elderly parents, disabled relatives or neighbors alongside working and maintaining their own lives. Many women feel great fulfillment in helping those they love. However, caregiving can be challenging and stressful at times, for even the most dedicated. Caregivers experiencing high levels of stress are more likely to have symptoms of depression or anxiety, have a long-term medical problem, have higher levels of stress hormones, spend more days sick with an infectious disease, have higher levels of obesity and may be at higher risk for problems with memory and attention.⁵

If you or someone you know is feeling stressed, overwhelmed, frustrated or guilty about a caregiving role, consider the following strategies:

- Do not dismiss your feelings. It is okay to feel overwhelmed or upset when you have many responsibilities. Share your feelings with someone you can trust, like a close friend, counselor or faith leader.
- Take an active role in problem-solving. Do not just accept that “things are the way they are.” Identify the problem, consider all your solutions, gather resources, seek support and try one solution to see if it works. If it does not, try another solution.
 - Ask for and accept help. Be assertive and have a list of simple tasks on hand that others can do to help you.
 - Learn to say no. Accept that it is okay to say no to additional responsibilities. Saying no is a very powerful way to take care of yourself. Practice first with small things like telling your child you cannot take him/her to the mall, and then practice saying no to larger items such as hosting a birthday party or cooking a holiday meal.
 - See your doctor regularly. Your doctor can help you manage stress by coaching you on ways to be physically active, eat right or manage depression. Your doctor can also monitor your health and identify concerns before they become problems.
 - Schedule time each week to do something for yourself. You can take a bath, see a movie, read a book or go out with friends. Taking care of your own needs can help keep you happy, healthy and able to provide help to others.
 - Find support and use it. No matter your situation, there are other women who are going through the same thing. Actively find support for yourself in your community. Many hospitals, libraries, churches, neighborhood and community centers have support and programming for those caregiving for others.⁴



There are many resources for informal caregivers that are available to help you. If you are caring for an older adult or an individual with a disability, reach out to your local [Agency on Aging \(AAA\)](#). You can also find a local [support group](#) targeted toward your specific needs. For more information about caregiver stress and additional resources, review this [fact sheet](#) from the National Office on Women's Health.

Spotlight on Women's Health: Rape Prevention Education in Indiana

The Office of Women's Health at the Indiana State Department of Health receives and administers a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) grant for Rape Prevention Education (RPE). This grant provides funds to promote sexual violence primary prevention across the state.

In Indiana in 2012, an estimated 125,000 Hoosiers reported unwanted sexual advances or forced sexual activity. The trauma of sexual violence impacts all areas of an individual's and his/her family's lives, from mental health to chronic disease susceptibility. The Indiana RPE program supports two contractors which

provide primary prevention services and sub-grant funds to eight local programs. From February 1, 2014 through November 31, 2014, programs in the Indiana RPE program reported 73 professional educational sessions that served 1,612 community professionals, as well as 498 public educational sessions that provided sexual violence primary prevention training to 7,834 community members. Hotline services funded reported answering 837 hotline calls related to sexual violence. Hoosier communities were engaged in coalition-building and social norms change designed to prevent initial

perpetration and victimization of sexual violence. The Indiana RPE program provides all Hoosiers with the tools and skills needed to recognize sexual violence in their own communities and homes, and the resources to eliminate it.

If you would like to learn more about the Indiana Rape Prevention and Education program, the CDC's sexual violence prevention initiatives or additional resources on sexual violence prevention, please visit the Office of Women's Health webpage at <http://www.in.gov/isdh/23820.htm>.

Healthy Eating: Small Changes Can Make a Big Impact



The new year is often when many women consider improving their eating habits and commit to making

changes for the better. But changing established habits and behaviors is hard, and it can be frustrating to start off strong and then lose momentum when it gets challenging. Follow these simple tips to get you started on the right track:

- Figure out why you eat. Sometimes women eat out of boredom or for emotional comfort. Track your food

intake for three days and see how it measures up to your schedule, mood and activities. Once you know your eating patterns, you can work to change them.

- Overhaul your pantry. Stock your pantry with items that require preparation. You might be less likely to eat out of boredom or eat emotionally if you have to cook and do the dishes.
- Snack wisely and treat yourself. Have on hand snacks that are nutrient-dense and filling. Nuts, fruits, vegetables and dip and homemade snacks are easy to grab when you need a boost.
- Accept that sometimes you might get off track. Everyone has bad days, and sometimes chocolate cake seems in-

evitable. If you have a bad day, just accept it, forgive yourself and start over the next day.

- Recruit help. Is your family a barrier? Your friends? Make healthy eating a competition or a game. Create rewards or prizes each week for the winner. Healthy eating can be a great way to explore new restaurants, books or recipes, so the more the merrier!

For more information about how to improve your eating habits, increase activity or quit smoking, visit the Indiana State Department of Health's INShape Indiana webpage: <http://www.inshapeindiana.org/70.htm>.

Influenza: Mitigate your Risk

A recent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) flu activity report for the 2014-2015 flu season shows that flu season in the United States has begun. Reports of flu illnesses, hospitalizations and deaths are elevated.⁶ In Indiana, Hoosiers are also feeling the impact of the flu. "Influenza is always unpredictable, but indications are that this season could be severe, so Hoosiers should be prepared," said State Health Commissioner Jerome Adams, M.D., M.P.H. "Although the vaccine's ability to protect against the H3N2 strain of flu

this season may not be as high as we would like, the vaccine will protect against other strains of circulating flu virus, and those who get vaccinated may have a milder case of flu if they do get it." All individuals over six months of age are recommended to get vaccinated. State health officials also encourage influenza vaccination of health care workers, and household contacts and caregivers of children less than six months of age, as well as household contacts of people at high risk for flu complications.⁷ You can also prevent the spread

of the flu by washing your hands, staying home from work or school when you are sick, covering

your cough/sneeze and seeing a healthcare provider. For information about flu symptoms, prevention and treatment, please visit the CDC's Influenza website: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/>.





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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](https://twitter.com/inwomenshealth).

Follow this link to manage your subscription or to subscribe to the [OWH Wellness Watch Newsletter](#).

Upcoming Events

Mental Health America of Greater Indianapolis
[SafeTALK Suicide Prevention Training](#)
1/20/15

MESA Winter Multicultural Gathering
[Re-Visioning a World Without Sexual Violence](#)
1/29/15 – 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Indiana Primary Health Care Association
[The Growing Numbers of STD's in Indiana](#)
1/30/15 – 12:00 p.m. (Webinar)

Indiana Cancer Consortium (ICC) Early Detection Committee and the Indiana University Melvin and Bren Simon Cancer Center

[This Just In: Emerging Trends and Research in Cervical Cancer and HPV Vaccination](#)
1/22/15 - 9:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

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