

WELLNESS WATCH

Across the Lifespan, Across Indiana



OCTOBER

[Domestic Violence Awareness Month](#)

[National Breast Cancer Awareness Month](#)

[National Dental Hygiene Month](#)

[National Down Syndrome Awareness Month](#)

[Sudden Infant Death Syndrome \(SIDS\) Awareness Month](#)

[Eye Injury Prevention Month](#)

[Health Literacy Month](#)

[Mental Illness Awareness Week](#)
10/4 – 10/10

[Bone and Joint Health Awareness Week](#)
10/12 – 10/20

[International Infection Prevention Week](#)
10/18 – 10/24

[Respiratory Care Week](#)
10/25 – 10/31

[National Latino AIDS Awareness Day](#)
10/15

[International Stuttering Awareness Day](#)
10/22

[World Psoriasis Day](#)
10/29

October spotlight: breast cancer awareness

Breast cancer is the second-leading cause of cancer death, and excluding skin cancers, the most frequently diagnosed cancer among women in the U.S. According to the [Indiana Cancer Facts and Figures 2015](#) report, an average of 4,415 Hoosier women were diagnosed with breast cancer, and 882 women died as a result of breast cancer, from 2008 to 2012.

Sex and age are the two greatest risk factors for developing breast cancer. Women have a much greater risk than men, and that risk increases with age. Overall, in Indiana, 79 percent of all breast cancer incidence and 88 percent of breast cancer deaths occur in women over the age of 50.

Modifiable risk factors for breast cancer include weight gain after the age of 18, being overweight or obese, use of menopausal hormone therapy, physical inactivity and alcohol consumption. Research also indicates that long-term, heavy smoking increases breast cancer risk, particularly among women who start smoking before their first pregnancy. Additional risk factors include family history, race, reproductive factors and certain medical findings such as high breast tissue density or type 2 diabetes. In addition, high-dose radiation to the chest for cancer treatment increases risk.

Common signs and symptoms of breast cancer include a new lump or mass; hard knots, or thickening; swelling, warmth, redness, or darkening; change in size or shape; dimpling or puckering of the skin; itchy, scaly sore, or rash on the nipple; pulling in of the nipple or other parts of the breast; nipple discharge that starts suddenly; or new pain on one spot that doesn't go away. Although these symptoms can be caused by things other than breast cancer, it is important to have

them checked by a health-care provider.

Women should have frequent conversations with their health-care provider about their risks for breast cancer and breast cancer screening. In general, women should follow these recommendations:

- Breast self-awareness: Women in their 20s should be aware of the normal look and feel of their breasts, so that they can identify potentially dangerous changes.
- Clinical breast exams: The [American Cancer Society](#) recommends that women in their 20s and 30s have a clinical breast exam by a health care

professional every three years. Asymptomatic women in their 40s should have yearly clinical breast exams.

- Screening Mammograms. The [United States Preventive Services Task Force](#) recommends a screening mammogram every two years for women ages 50-74, which can help detect cancer before a lump can be felt. Women between the ages of 40-49, especially those with a family history of breast cancer, should discuss the risks and benefits of mammography with their health-care provider to determine if it is right for them.

[The Indiana Breast and Cervical Cancer Program \(BCCP\)](#) provides access to breast and cervical cancer screenings, diagnostic testing and treatment for underserved and underinsured women who qualify for services. Eligibility is determined by age and gross income in relation to family size. For more information, contact the BCCP at (317) 233-7448 or dcannon2@isdh.in.gov. Physicians interested in becoming a BCCP provider can contact Judy Kapoun, Chief Nurse Consultant, at (317) 233-7543 or jkapoun@isdh.in.gov.



Tips and tricks for keeping your kids safe on Halloween

Halloween is a fun time for kids and parents to dress in costumes and to go trick-or-treating. However, it can be one of the most dangerous days for children. Kids are more than twice as likely to be hit by a car and die on Halloween than on any other day during the year. [Safe Kids Worldwide](#) and the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) have some easy and effective tips parents can implement to help reduce the risk of injury on Halloween.



Be a safe pedestrian:

- Teach kids to always walk, not run, on sidewalks or paths. If there are no sidewalks, walk facing traffic as far to the left as possible.
- Cross the street at corners using designated traffic signals and crosswalks. Children should walk on direct routes with the fewest street crossings.
- Pay attention when walking by putting electronic devices down and keeping heads up.
- Watch for cars in the neighborhood that are turning or backing up.
- Look both ways before crossing. Teach kids to make eye contact with drivers before crossing the street.

Trick-or-treat with an adult:

- Children under the age of 12 should not be alone on Halloween night without adult supervision. If kids are mature enough to be out without supervision, remind them to stay in well-lit, familiar areas and travel in groups.

Wear creative and safe costumes:

- Make sure costumes are the right size and fit to prevent trips and falls.
- Decorate costumes and trick-or-treat bags with reflective tape or stickers
- Choose face paint and makeup over masks, which can obstruct a child's vision.
- Avoid carrying sticks, swords or other sharp objects.
- Make it easier for drivers to see kids. Have children carry flashlights or glow sticks or attach them to their costumes.



Keep your home safe for trick-or-treaters:

- Make sure walking areas and stairs are well-lit and free of obstacles to prevent trips and falls.
- Keep candle-lit jack-o-lanterns and luminarias away from walkways, doorsteps, landings and curtains. Keep them out of the reach of small children and pets.

Drive extra carefully on Halloween:

- Drive slowly and be especially alert in residential areas. Children may be walking in driveways, sidewalks and roads.
- Anticipate heavy pedestrian traffic during normal trick-or-treat hours of 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Check the local news for trick-or-treating times in your neighborhood.
- Turn headlights on earlier in the day to spot children from greater distances.
- Take extra time to look for trick-or-treaters at intersections, on medians and on curbs. Back in and out of driveways and alleys slowly and carefully.
- Eliminate any driving distractions to concentrate on the road and your surroundings.

This article provided by the Indiana State Department of Health [Division of Trauma and Injury Prevention](#).

Your bone health: preventing osteoporosis

When women think about their health, we often think about things over which we have control. We can improve our diet, get more exercise and try to sleep a little more. However, there are some common health concerns that we can prevent that fall outside those categories. Bone health is an important consideration, particularly as women age. Our bones are living, growing tissue made from collagen, calcium-phosphate mineral complexes and living bone cells.¹ Much like our heart and other muscles, our bones need a certain amount of care and consideration in order to stay healthy.

As we age, some amount of bone loss is common because we lose more bone than we form. The condition called osteoporosis is a disease of the bones and is not a normal part of aging. It is estimated that one in two women will have osteoporosis or low bone mass in her lifetime. Many experts surmise that by 2025, osteoporosis will be responsible for approximately 3 million fractures and \$25.3 billion in costs each year.¹ Women often experience the effects

of osteoporosis when they are older, but osteoporosis prevention should not begin after menopause. We can prevent bone loss and complications such as osteoporosis if we begin prevention in childhood.



There are a few, key points to remember about osteoporosis and bone health:

- Your lifestyle choices can have a big impact on your bone health. Make sure you, and your children or grandchildren, are getting enough calcium and vitamin D in your diets. There are many sources of these nutrients, including dark green, leafy vegetables, soy products such as tofu, calcium-fortified cereals and juices, nut milks and some low-fat dairy products.² Learn more about achieving a healthy diet

at [ChooseMyPlate.gov](https://www.choosemyplate.gov).

- While there are many benefits, exercise can help strengthen bones and slow bone loss. No matter your age, it is vital that you find ways to work physical activity into your daily routines. It is best to start when you are younger, but there are benefits for women of every age. Find help getting active at [Letsmove.gov](https://letsmove.gov).
- It can be difficult to tell if you are experiencing bone loss because you cannot feel your bones getting weaker. If you notice changes in your posture (i.e. you are getting shorter or your back is getting curved) make sure that you talk to your doctor immediately. If you need help preparing for your appointment, visit the [Mayo Clinic](https://www.mayoclinic.org) for tips.

For more information about osteoporosis and bone health, visit the [National Osteoporosis Foundation](https://www.nationalosteoporosis.org). To learn how the Indiana State Department of Health is working to reduce falls and other injuries, visit the [Division of Trauma and Injury Prevention](https://www.in.gov/health/division-of-trauma-and-injury-prevention).

Spotlight on women's health: living with psoriasis

Autoimmune diseases occur when a person's own immune system mistakes the body's healthy cells as invaders and then repeatedly attacks them. These diseases can impact any part of the body, including entire organ systems.³ Common autoimmune diseases include arthritis, inflammatory bowel disease, lupus, multiple sclerosis and psoriasis. Autoimmune diseases may be invisible to us, but they can be very challenging for the women that suffer from them. It is important for everyone to understand autoimmune conditions in order to help reduce stigma and support women experiencing these diseases.

Psoriasis causes skin cells to build up rapidly on the surface of the skin causing scaling or itchy, red patches that can be painful.⁴ These patches can be anywhere on the body, but typically appear on the scalp, elbows, knees, face, palms and feet. Psoriasis is not a condition that can be caught from another person, even if it might look contagious.⁵ Anyone can get psoriasis, though it appears more frequently in adults age 15 to 30 and 50 to 60. Like many autoimmune diseases, it can be challenging to diagnose because it can mimic other conditions. Many individuals indicate that they first noticed symptoms of psoriasis after experiencing a stressful event, getting strep

throat, taking certain medications, experiencing cold/dry weather or after getting a cut, scratch or bad sunburn.⁶

If you or someone you love are experiencing signs of psoriasis such as raised, red patches on the skin or problems with your nails (such as nails crumbling or falling off), contact your physician for an appointment. For more information, visit the [National Psoriasis Foundation](https://www.nationalpsoriasis.org).





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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

Indiana Chamber

[Indiana Health and Wellness Summit](#)

10/7 – 10/8

Indiana Commission on the Social Status of Black Males

[15th Annual Black Males State Conference](#)

10/12 – 10/13

Indiana State Department of Health

[Local Public Health Leadership Symposium](#)

10/14

Indiana Council of Community Mental Health Centers, Inc.

[Understanding Alternative Payments Systems](#)

10/14 – 10/16

Latino Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence

[2015 Indiana Latino Conference: Healthy Generation, toward Communities Without Violence](#)

10/15

Indiana State Department of Health

[Indiana Long Term Care Leadership Conference](#)

10/22

Office of the Indiana Attorney General

[6th Annual Prescription Drug Abuse Symposium](#)

10/28 – 10/29

References

¹National Osteoporosis Foundation. (2015). *Learn about osteoporosis*. Retrieved from <http://nof.org/learn/>.

²Mayo Clinic. (2014). *Diseases and conditions: Osteoporosis*. Retrieved from <http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/osteoporosis/basics/prevention/con-20019924>.

³National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS). (2015). *Understanding autoimmune diseases*. Retrieved from http://niams.nih.gov/Health_Info/Autoimmune/default.asp.

⁴Mayo Clinic. (2015). *Psoriasis*. Retrieved from <http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/psoriasis/basics/definition/con-20030838>.

⁵American Academy of Dermatology. (2015). *Psoriasis*. Retrieved from <https://www.aad.org/dermatology-a-to-z/diseases-and-treatments/m--p/psoriasis>.

⁶National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS). (2015). *What is psoriasis?* Retrieved from http://www.niams.nih.gov/Health_Info/Psoriasis/psoriasis_ff.asp.