

# WELLNESS WATCH

Across the Lifespan, Across Indiana



## MARCH

[National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month](#)

[National Endometriosis Awareness Month](#)

[National Kidney Month](#)

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[National Sleep Awareness Week](#)<sup>®</sup> -  
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[Patient Safety Awareness Week](#) -  
3/8 - 3/14

[Brain Awareness Week](#) -  
3/16 - 3/22

[National Youth Violence Prevention Week](#) -  
3/23 - 3/27

[National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day](#) -  
3/10

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3/20

[American Diabetes Alert Day](#)  
3/24

[World Tuberculosis Day](#) - 3/24

## March Spotlight - Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

Colorectal cancer is any cancer that starts in the colon or rectum. It is the third most commonly diagnosed cancer and cause of cancer-related deaths among women in Indiana. In 2015, the American Cancer Society (ACS) estimates that 2,890 Hoosiers will be diagnosed with colorectal cancer, and 1,080 will die because of the disease.<sup>1</sup>

Gender and age are the two greatest risk factors for developing colorectal cancer. During 2008-2012, colorectal cancer incidence rates were 27% higher among Indiana men than women. Additionally during 2012, 91% of cases were diagnosed among Indiana residents ages 50 and older.<sup>2</sup>

Some additional risk factors for colorectal cancer include:

- **Race.** In Indiana during 2008-2012, African-Americans had a higher incidence and mortality rate from colorectal cancer when compared with Caucasians.
- **Personal or family history.** Risk is increased by having a personal or family history of colorectal cancer or polyps, a personal history of chronic inflammatory bowel disease, or certain inherited genetic conditions.
- **Smoking.** According to [The Health Consequences of Smoking – 50 Years of Progress](#), smoking is a known cause of colorectal cancer. In addition, smoking increases the failure rate of treatment for all cancers.

- **Diabetes.** Studies show that individuals with type 2 diabetes are at higher risk.
- **Modifiable risk factors.** Overweight and obesity, physical inactivity, a diet high in red or processed meat and alcohol consumption have been found



to increase colorectal cancer risk.

During early stages of colorectal cancer, there are no symptoms. Late stage signs and symptoms include:

- Rectal bleeding;
- Blood in stool;
- Change in bowel habits;
- Cramping pain in lower abdomen;
- Weakness;
- Extreme fatigue.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, at least 60% of colorectal cancer deaths could be prevented with regular screenings. There are several screening tests available, including simple take home tests. Screening doesn't have to be uncomfortable or expensive. It's important for women to talk to their doctors about which screening option is best.

The U.S. Preventive Services Task

Force recommends colorectal cancer screening for adults ages 50 to 75 using one of the following tests:

- High-sensitivity fecal occult blood test (FOBT) – Once per year;
- Flexible sigmoidoscopy – Every five years;
- Colonoscopy – Every 10 years.

Individuals who have an increased risk of developing the disease should talk to their health care provider about whether earlier or more intensive screening is needed.

Some behaviors that can help reduce your risk include:

- Obtaining regular screenings;
- Avoiding tobacco products;
- Maintaining a healthy weight;
- Adopting a physically active lifestyle;
- Limiting consumption of alcohol;
- Consuming a healthy diet that emphasizes plant sources and includes at least 2 ½ cups of a variety of vegetables and fruit each day, whole grains in preference to processed grains and has minimal processed and red meats.

For more information on colorectal cancer, visit the Indiana Cancer Consortium website at [www.IndianaCancer.org](http://www.IndianaCancer.org).

*This article provided by the [Division of Chronic Disease Prevention and Control](#) at the [Indiana State Department of Health \(ISDH\)](#).*

## Gardening your Way to Good Health

March is National Nutrition Month! In order to recognize the incredible importance of healthy eating and lifestyle choices, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics promotes an annual campaign to provide nutrition education and information to the public. The campaign focuses attention on the significance of making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits.



The theme for 2015 is "[Bite into a Healthy Lifestyle](#)," which encourages everyone to adopt eating and physical activity plans that are focused on consuming fewer calories, making informed food choices and getting daily exercise in order to achieve and maintain a healthy weight, reduce the risk of chronic disease and promote overall health.

March is a great time for women to think about their nutrition habits. Many women find that gardening is a great way to spend leisure time by providing some exercise, time spent outdoors and a way to provide affordable and healthy food for the family. Springtime is approaching quickly, which means increased opportunities to get outside and get an early start on a garden. And, don't worry, you do not have to have a green thumb to grow some of your own produce.

If you do not have a lot of space, consider having raised garden beds. Also called garden boxes, raised garden beds are great for growing small plots of vegetables and flowers. They keep pathway weeds from your garden soil, prevent soil compaction, provide good drainage and serve as a barrier to pests such as slugs and snails. The sides of the beds keep your valuable garden soil from being eroded or washed away during heavy rains.

If you are planning your own garden this year, here are a few things to keep in mind:

- **Sunlight** - Have you chosen the right spot to achieve a flourishing garden? In order for vegetables to grow successfully, they need at least six hours of direct sunlight each day.
- **Space** - Some plants need a lot of space to grow, while others can grow in a small container. Take some time to plan your gardening area and determine what you can successfully grow in the space that you have.
- **Selection** - Make sure you plant vegetables and fruits that your family will enjoy and that you can easily maintain. If you have tomatoes only once a year, you probably won't need 10 tomato plants in your garden!

Once you have answered these questions, you have got a good start on planning your garden. For more gardening help, check out the [Home Gardener's Guide](#) from Purdue University Extension. Want to make a difference and provide fresh produce for your community? Find out more about starting a [Community Garden](#).



For local information on how to improve your eating habits, get more physical activity and avoid tobacco, please visit the [INShape Indiana](#) webpage. For additional resources on healthy eating, visit <http://womenshealth.gov/fitness-nutrition/how-to-eat-for-health/>. To learn more about guidelines for physical activity and health, visit <http://www.health.gov/paguidelines/pdf/paguide.pdf>.

*This article provided by the [Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity](#) (DNPA) at ISDH.*

# Spotlight on Women's Health: Maternal and Child Health in Indiana

Each year in late January, the Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs (AMCHP) gathers state maternal and child health organizations in Washington D.C. to address family-centered, culturally competent, community-based systems of care that utilize funds from the Title V Block Grant.

Title V, established with the passing of the Social Security Act in 1935, has remained steadfast in its focus to improve the health, safety, and well-being of mothers and children. This year, ISDH sent seven representatives to participate in skill-building trainings, workshops, exhibits, poster sessions and networking opportunities related to infant mortality reduction, women's health, reproductive health, children

and youth with special health care needs, early childhood services, birth defects / genetics and surveillance. Indiana representatives were invited to present about three topics:

- How ISDH's Maternal and Child Health Division links data in order to evaluate prenatal care coordination effectiveness;
- Indiana's implementation of the Baby & Me Tobacco Free program in order to address Indiana's high rate of women who smoke while pregnant, and;
- Indiana shared a promising practice

currently funded in Bloomington that trains women from the community to become doulas in order to optimize childbirth outcomes.

The theme of this year's conference was "[United to Build Healthier Communities](#)." All seven Indiana participants returned with a renewed passion and evidence-based strategies in hand. The Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs and Maternal and Child Health Divisions will continue to collaborate with agency partners and community stakeholders to achieve results for our most vulnerable Hoosier women and children.

## A Lesson in History: Tobacco Marketing and Women



The tobacco industry has been making women history for years. Over the last 50

years, a woman's risk of dying from smoking has more than tripled and is now equal to men's risk.<sup>3</sup> The tobacco companies have long understood the importance of women and girls. Tobacco companies have conducted extensive market research on the attitudes of women and girls, and by focusing their research on how females view themselves, their aspirations and the social pressures they face, the cigarette

companies have developed some of the most aggressive and sophisticated marketing campaigns in history. The consequences of these campaigns are staggering, as smoking among girls and young women increased dramatically in the 1990's.

While rates have since declined, 13% of Hoosier high school girls and 20% of adult women still smoke.<sup>4</sup> The tobacco industry's targeted marketing of women can be traced back to the 1920s. One of the earliest and most famous cigarette advertising campaigns directed at women was Lucky Strike's "Reach for A Lucky Instead of A Sweet." Philip Morris successfully introduced Virginia Slims in 1968 with the catchy tag lines such as the infamous

"You've Come A Long Way Baby." Six years after the introduction of Virginia Slims and other brands aimed at the female market, the smoking initiation rate of 12 year-old girls had increased by 110 percent.<sup>5</sup> In 2007, R.J. Reynolds introduced Camel No. 9 cigarettes, aimed directly at women. Spending on the campaign was between \$25 and \$50 million and marketing included "ladies' nights" and other bar events that created excitement and buzz around the sleek new product. Visit these links to learn more about [tobacco marketing to women](#) as well as [smoking and women/girls](#).

*This article provided by the [Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Commission](#) at ISDH.*

## Are you Feeling the Heat?

Menopause may be a normal transition for women, but for many moving through this journey, uncomfortable symptoms come along for the ride. One of the most common symptoms of menopause is hot flashes. The severity and duration that a woman experiences hot flashes can vary, but there are many options available to help alleviate your discomfort.

If your symptoms are mild or moderate, you may be able to make simple lifestyle changes that will provide relief. Some reasonable options may include:

- **Change your body:** Women who are overweight have more hot flashes, so work on losing weight and exercising daily;
- **Change your behavior:** Avoid cigarette smoking, alcohol and caffeine;
- **Reduce your stress:** Meditate or try yoga, tai chi, biofeedback or massage;
- **Cool off at night:** Sip cool water and keep a cold ice pack under your pillow at night;
- **Dress for success:** Wear layers and try to dress in breathable, comfortable clothing.<sup>6</sup>

If your symptoms are more severe, you can still make lifestyle changes, but also talk to your doctor about additional nonprescription or prescription options to help reduce your discomfort. For more information about hot flashes and other menopause information, visit the North American Menopause Society's webpage at <http://www.menopause.org/for-women>.







# Indiana State Department of Health

Indiana State Department of Health  
Office of Women's Health  
2 N. Meridian St., 3M  
Indianapolis, IN 46204  
  
Phone: 317-233-9156  
Fax: 317-233-8199  
E-mail: [lchavez@isdh.in.gov](mailto:lchavez@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](https://twitter.com/inwomenshealth).
- Follow this link to manage your subscription or to subscribe to the **OWH Wellness Watch Newsletter**.

## Upcoming Events

The Indiana Youth Institute

[Safe Dates Training](#)

3/6/15

PESI

[Hoarding Disorder: Effective Approaches to Assessment, Diagnosis and Treatment Seminar](#)

3/12/15 - Ft. Wayne, IN; 3/13/15 - Indianapolis

Indiana State Department of Health

[2015 Injury Prevention 101 Conference](#)

3/13/15

Indiana Rural Health Association

[Spring into Quality Symposium](#)

3/13/15

Indiana Chamber of Commerce

[Indiana Safety and Health Conference and Expo.](#)

3/16/15 - 3/18/15

## References

- <sup>1</sup>Indiana State Cancer Registry Statistics Report Generator. (2015). Retrieved from [www.in.gov/isdh/24360.htm](http://www.in.gov/isdh/24360.htm).
- <sup>2</sup>American Cancer Society. (2014). *Colorectal Cancer Facts & Figures 2014-2016*. Retrieved from <http://www.cancer.org/acs/groups/content/documents/document/acspc-042280.pdf>.
- <sup>3</sup>U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2014). *The Health Consequences of Smoking: 50 Years of Progress. A Report of the Surgeon General*. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health. Printed with corrections, January 2014.
- <sup>4</sup>Indiana State Department of Health. (2013). *2013 Indiana Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Indiana statewide survey data*. Retrieved from <http://www.in.gov/isdh/reports/brfss/2013/toc.htm>.
- <sup>5</sup>Pierce, JP, Lee, L, & Gilpin EA. Smoking initiation by adolescent girls, 1944 through 1988: An association with targeted advertising. *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)* 271:8, 1994
- <sup>6</sup>National Institute on Aging. (2010). *Menopause: Time for a change*. Retrieved from <http://www.nia.nih.gov/health/publication/menopause-time-change/what-can-you-do-hot-flashes-and-other-menopausal-symptoms>.