

# WELLNESS WATCH

Across the Lifespan, Across Indiana



## FEBRUARY

## February Spotlight - American Heart Month

### American Heart Month

### International Prenatal Infection Prevention Month

### AMD/Low Vision Awareness Month

### Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month

### National Children's Dental Health Month

### Congenital Heart Disease Awareness Week –

2/7 – 2/14

### National Eating Disorder Awareness Week –

2/22 – 2/28

Heart disease, which can lead to heart attack and stroke, has been dubbed the “silent killer” among women.<sup>1</sup> Given women’s busy lives today, often symptoms of heart disease are ignored, or blamed on acid reflux, indigestion or even the flu.

In Indiana, almost one-third of all deaths are caused by heart disease and stroke. During 2013, 13,630 Indiana residents died from heart disease, making it the leading cause of death overall. More than 3,000 Indiana residents died from stroke during that same year.<sup>2</sup>

#### Heart Attack Symptoms

According to the American Heart Association, women should seek immediate medical help if they experience the following symptoms:

- Uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain in the center of your chest, especially if it lasts more than a few minutes, or goes away and comes back;
- Pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach;
- Shortness of breath, with or without chest discomfort;
- Other signs such as breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness.

The most common heart attack symptom for women is chest pain or discomfort. Women are sometimes more likely than men to experience some of the other com-

mon symptoms, particularly shortness of breath, nausea or vomiting and back or jaw pain.



#### Stroke Warning Signs

Stroke is the fourth leading cause of death in the United States and in Indiana. In addition, it’s among the leading causes of long-term disability. It is important for women to recognize signs of stroke, including:

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg – especially on one side of the body;
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding;
- Sudden trouble seeing or blurred vision in one or both eyes;
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination;
- Sudden severe headache with no known cause.

#### Every minute counts!

Experts advise to never wait more than five minutes to dial 9-1-1 if you or a loved one experience even one of the signs above. In addition, the responding emergency medical technician or ER nurse at the hospital will need to know when the

first symptom occurred, so if possible, make note of the time when symptoms first start.

#### Lifestyle Changes are the Key

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), modifying your lifestyle can cut your chances of having a heart attack or stroke. By maintaining a healthy diet with plenty of fruits and vegetables and exercising regularly, women can reduce their chances of heart disease and stroke. In addition, limiting the use of alcohol and quitting the use of tobacco products can decrease risk.

The CDC’s Million Hearts Pledge outlines actions that can help reduce heart attacks and strokes. The Pledge encourages women to:

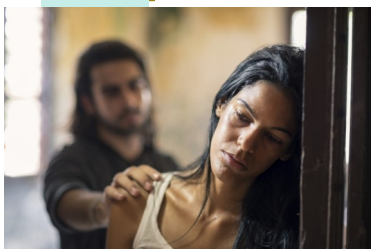
- Prevent heart disease and stroke by understanding the risks;
- Get up and get active by exercising for 30 minutes on most days of the week;
- Know your ABC’S: Appropriate aspirin therapy, Blood pressure control, Cholesterol management and Smoking cessation.

For more information, visit the Indiana State Department of Health website at [www.in.gov/isdh/24970.htm](http://www.in.gov/isdh/24970.htm).

*This article provided by the Division of Chronic Disease Prevention and Control at the Indiana State Department of Health.*

## Domestic and Intimate Partner Violence - What you Need to Know

Lately the topic of domestic violence has been in the news. Most people realize that domestic and intimate partner violence are ongoing and widespread problems across the nation. But, would you recognize it if you saw it or experienced it? Domestic violence is when one person in a relationship purposely hurts another person physically or emotionally.<sup>3</sup> It can look like physical abuse, sexual violence or psychological/emotional abuse.<sup>4</sup> It can happen to anyone of any race, age, sexual orientation, religion or gender. Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) can involve former partners, spouses, dating couples and those who are living together. Both domestic violence and IPV affect people of all socio-economic backgrounds and education levels.



The issues of domestic and intimate partner violence are more common than most women realize. Nationally, nearly three in 10 women and one in 10 men have experienced rape, physical violence and/or stalking by a partner. Of the 2,340 domestic violence-related deaths in the U.S. in 2007, 70% were women.<sup>5</sup> In Indiana, domestic violence is also a significant problem. On September 17, 2013, the National Census for Domestic Violence Services did a one day survey of Indiana's 47 domestic violence service providers. On that day alone, 1,107 domestic violence victims (including 559 children) were given refuge in domestic violence shelters or transitional care homes, 601 individuals received non-residential services and 581 hotline calls were answered.<sup>6</sup>

Domestic and intimate partner violence have a large impact on individuals, families and entire communities. Children who are exposed to domestic violence may exhibit symptoms of anxiety, depression, aggression, fearfulness, difficulty sleeping and attention problems. Young children may also show physical symptoms such as stomachaches or headaches, or they may cling to caregivers.<sup>7</sup> Witnessing abuse in the childhood home is the most common risk factor for becoming an abuser as an adult.<sup>4</sup> For adults who experience domestic violence, the trauma can result in post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety, drug or alcohol use, smoking or behaviors such as overeating. Domestic and intimate partner violence does not just occur in youth or young adults. Older adults may experience domestic violence as well, perhaps having grown up or married during a time when domestic violence was tolerated or ignored, having endured abuse for many years already, feeling obligated to care for an aging partner or feeling scared to live alone after being with an abuser for many years.<sup>3</sup>

Know the warning signs, and keep yourself and your loved ones safe against domestic and intimate partner violence. You may be experiencing abuse if someone:



- Calls you names, insults you or continually criticizes you;
- Doesn't trust you and acts jealous or possessive;
- Tries to isolate you from family or friends;
- Punishes you by withholding affection;
- Expects you to ask permission;
- Damages property when angry (throw objects, punch walls, kick doors, etc.);
- Pushes, slaps, bites, kicks or chokes you;
- Traps you in your home or keeps you from leaving;
- Hurts your children;
- Accuses you of cheating or appears jealous of your outside relationships;
- Insults you in sexual ways or calls you sexual names;
- Ever forced or manipulate you into to having sex or performing sexual acts.<sup>8</sup>

To learn more about domestic violence and the risks and warning signs in relationships, please visit the Office on Women's Health resource page at <http://womenshealth.gov/violence-against-women/index.html>. To learn more about violence against older adults and what you can do to prevent it, visit <http://www.ncea.aoa.gov/>. For local resources on domestic violence, visit the Indiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence's website at <http://www.icadvinc.org/>. If you or a loved one is in an abusive relationship, please call the Indiana Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-332-7385, (TTY) 1-800-787-3224, or the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) or 1-800-787-3224 (TTY).

## Spotlight on Women's Health: Achieving a Healthy Smile

When women think of getting healthier, we often consider diet, exercise and reducing stress. But, did you know that your oral health can have a significant impact on the health of your entire body?

Oral health refers to the health of your teeth, gums, jawbone and supporting tissues. Two of the biggest risks for poor oral health involve cavities and gum disease. Cavities, or tooth decay, are holes in teeth that are produced by bacteria that naturally live in the mouth. Gum disease, such as gingivitis, is an infection that occurs due to bacteria, mucus and plaque on teeth. Anyone can develop gum disease, but

women who smoke, have diabetes, HIV/AIDS or use some types of illicit drugs are at higher risk.<sup>9</sup> The health risks for women who develop gum disease might include a higher likelihood of developing heart disease or more trouble controlling blood sugar. Some research even draws a correlation between gum disease and preterm labor and low birth weight babies. The symptoms of gum disease can include:

- Bad breath that won't go away;
- Red or swollen gums;
- Tender or bleeding gums;

- Painful chewing;
- Sensitive or loose teeth;
- Receding teeth or longer-appearing teeth.<sup>10</sup>

If you experience any of these symptoms, or are concerned about your oral health, you should see a dentist as soon as possible. For more information and resources about dental care, where to find a dental provider and programs in Indiana that support oral health, visit the Indiana State Department of Health's Division of Oral Health webpage at <http://www.in.gov/isdh/18695.htm>.

## Fight Cancer by Taking Charge of your Health



Indiana has made great strides over the past several decades in fighting cancer. Although the

cancer rates have seen decreases, cancer is still the second leading cause of death in Indiana. Approximately two in five Indiana residents now living will eventually have cancer, suggesting that every Hoosier has or will have a personal connection to cancer in some way.

February is National Cancer Prevention Month, providing the perfect opportunity

to educate women about reducing cancer risk by:

- Obtaining recommended early detection screenings;
- Living tobacco free;
- Avoiding secondhand smoke;
- Limiting alcohol consumption;
- Maintaining a healthy weight throughout life;
- Consuming a healthy diet that emphasizes plant sources, includes five or more servings of a variety of vegetables and fruit each day;
- Including whole grains in preference to processed (refined) grains, and has minimal processed and red meats;

- Adopting a physically active lifestyle and;
- Protecting yourself from too much sun exposure.

Talk to your primary health care provider about any potential signs and symptoms of cancer, including unexplained weight loss, fever, fatigue, pain and skin changes. Vaccines may also be available to you that can reduce your risk for developing cancer, like hepatitis B and human papillomavirus (HPV).

To join the fight against cancer, or for more information about reducing your cancer risk, visit the Indiana Cancer Consortium at [www.IndianaCancer.org](http://www.IndianaCancer.org).

## Is Sleep a Distant Dream to You?

One of the most basic needs of every woman is a good night's sleep. Most women need between seven and nine hours of sleep per night, but the average woman only gets a little over six and a half hours per night.<sup>11</sup> Sleep can be impacted by sleep disorders, menstrual cycles, pregnancy, menopause symptoms, stress, depression or intense emotional feelings.<sup>12</sup> The impact of chronic sleep loss has been associated with increased risk for hypertension, diabetes, obesity, depression, heart attack and stroke.<sup>13</sup> Follow these tips to get a better

night's sleep:

- Establish a sleep schedule;
- Give yourself a break. If you cannot fall asleep within 15 minutes, get up and do something relaxing until you feel tired;
- Create a bedtime routine;
- Get physical. Being physically active during the day can help you fall asleep faster and achieve deeper sleep;
- Practice coping techniques to manage your stress;
- Watch your diet. Do not go to bed

very full or very hungry, and try to avoid nicotine, caffeine and alcohol.<sup>14</sup>



For more resources about how to improve your health and get a better night's sleep, visit <http://www.womenshealth.gov/mental-health/good-health/#c>.





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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

[Health Care Education & Training – Providing Expedited Partner Therapy for Sexually Transmitted Diseases training](#)

February 11, 2015

[American Heart Association, Go Red for Women – Luncheon](#)

February 20, 2015

[Timmy Global Health – 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Event: Small Beginnings, Big Impact](#)

February 27, 2015

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