

The Noble County Health Monitor

A monthly publication sponsored by the Noble County Health Department

January is Cervical Cancer Awareness Month



Cervical cancer is the easiest gynecological cancer to prevent with regular screenings test and follow-up. It is also highly curable when found and treated early. Although cervical cancer occurs most often in women over the age of 30, all women are at risk for cervical cancer.

What puts a woman at greater risk for cervical cancer? The main cause of cervical cancer is the human papillomavirus (HPV), a common virus that can be passed from one person to another during sex. Many people will have an HPV infection at some time in their lives, but because HPV usually goes away on its own, few will get cervical cancer. Some types of HPV have also been linked to cancer of the vulva, vagina, penis, and anus. Other factors that may affect your risk of developing cervical cancer include: smoking, Having HIV, or another condition that makes it hard for your body to fight off health problems, using birth control pill for a long time, and/or having given birth to three or more children.

What are the symptoms of cervical cancer? Early on, cervical cancer may not cause any signs or symptoms. Advanced cervical cancer may cause bleeding or discharge from the vagina that is not normal for you, such as bleeding after sex. The symptoms can be caused by something else, but the only way to know is to be checked.

How can a woman prevent or lower the risk of cervical cancer? There are many ways to prevent or reduce your risk for cervical cancer: Get the HPV vaccination, continue pap test screenings regularly starting at age 21, if 30 years or older there are 3 options- 1) continue pap test only, if normal repeat every 3 years, 2) have HPV test only, if normal repeat in 5 years, 3) or have pap & HPV together, if normal repeat in 5 years. Always follow-up if pap test or HPV results are not normal, do not smoke, use condoms during sex, and limit the number of sexual partners.

The Southeastern Ohio Breast & Cervical Cancer Project (BCCP) is a grant funded program that provides free pelvic exams and pap test for those who qualify. Women must meet insurance, income, & age guidelines. Please call our toll-free number at 1-800-236-6253 if you would like to be enrolled into the BCCP program to fund this very important screening.

For more health information contact:
NOBLE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
740-732-4958
www.noblecohd.org

Interesting Fact

During Prohibition, moonshiners wore “cow shoes”- fancy footwear that left hoofprints instead of footprints, which helped distillers and smugglers evade police.

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January 1st– New Year’s Day

January 18th– MLK Jr. Day

January 20th– Inauguration Day

Your life only gets better when you do. Work on yourself and the rest will follow.

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Preventive Steps to Prevent the Flu

Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends a yearly flu vaccine as the first and most important step in protecting against flu viruses. Everyone 6 months of age and older should get annual flu vaccine. Getting a flu vaccine during 2020-2021 will be more important than ever. Flu vaccines will not prevent COVID-19, but they will reduce the burden of flu illnesses, hospitalizations and deaths on the health care system and conserve scarce medical resources for the care of people with COVID-19. Most flu vaccines protect against the four flu viruses that research suggests will be most common. Flu symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people also may have vomiting and diarrhea. People may be infected with flu and have respiratory symptoms without a fever. Visit the CDC's website to find out what to do if you get sick with flu.

Preventive actions to stop the spread:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- If you are sick, limit contact with others as much as possible
- Cover your coughs and sneezes
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Clean and disinfect highly touched surfaces.
- Take flu antiviral drugs if your doctor prescribes them.



January is National Birth Defects Prevention Month

Not all birth defects can be prevented. But you can increase your chances of having a healthy baby by managing health conditions and by adopting healthy behaviors before and during pregnancy. Taking care of yourself and doing what's best for you is also best for your baby! Here are 5 Tips for Preventing Birth Defects:

Be sure to take 400 micrograms of folic acid every day.

Folic acid is important because it can help prevent some major birth defects of the baby's brain and spine. These birth defects develop very early during pregnancy when the neural tube—which forms the early brain and the spinal cord—does not close properly. You need to start taking folic acid at least one month before becoming pregnant and continue during pregnancy. In addition to eating foods with natural folate, you can: Take a vitamin that has folic acid in it every day, eat fortified foods and you can find folic acid in some breads, breakfast cereals, and corn masa flour.

Book a visit with your healthcare provider before stopping or starting any medicine.

Many women need to take medicine to stay healthy during pregnancy. If you are planning to become pregnant, discuss your current medicines with a healthcare provider. Creating a treatment plan for your health condition *before* you are pregnant can help keep you and your developing baby healthy.

Become up-to-date with all vaccines, including the flu shot.

Vaccines help protect you and your developing baby against serious diseases. Get a flu shot and whooping cough vaccine (also called Tdap) during *each* pregnancy to help protect yourself and your baby.

Before you get pregnant, try and reach a healthy weight.

Obesity increases the risk for several serious birth defects and other pregnancy complications. If you are underweight, overweight, or have obesity, talk with your healthcare provider about ways to reach and maintain a healthy weight before you get pregnant. Focus on a lifestyle that include healthy eating and regular physical activity.

Boost your health by avoiding substances that are harmful during pregnancy.

Alcohol: Alcohol can cause problems for a developing baby throughout pregnancy, it's important to stop drinking alcohol when you start trying to get pregnant.

Tobacco: Smoking during pregnancy can harm the developing baby can cause certain birth defects. Quitting smoking will help you feel better and provide a healthier environment for your baby.

Other Drugs: Using certain drugs during pregnancy can cause health problems for a woman and her developing baby. If you are pregnant or trying to get pregnant and can't stop using drugs, seek help. A Healthcare provider can help you with counseling, treatment, and other support services.

January Is National Stalking Awareness Month

January 2021 marks the seventh National Stalking Awareness Month. Stalking impacts over 1 in 6 women and 1 in 17 men in the United States. Stalking is defined as a pattern of behavior directed at a specific person that causes fear. Many stalking victims experience being followed, approached, monitored and/or threatened – including through various forms of technology. Victims and survivors often suffer anxiety, social dysfunction, and severe depression as a result of their victimization.

If you feel you are in imminent danger or fear a threat of harm, please call 911 immediately!

People who stalk can be very dangerous. Stalkers can threaten, attack, sexually assault, or even kill their victims. Stalkers' behaviors can escalate from more indirect ways of making contact (i.e. like phone calls or texts) to more direct contact (i.e. delivering gifts or showing up where you are at). While victims cannot control the stalking behavior, they should feel empowered to take steps to keep themselves, their families, and their loved ones safe.

Tips to Consider

- Trust your instincts.
- Call the police if you feel you are in any immediate danger.
- Keep a record or log of each contact with the stalker. Be sure to also document any police reports.
- Stalkers often use technology to contact their victims. Save all emails, text messages, photos, and postings on social networking sites as evidence of the stalking behavior.

Sometimes big changes start with small shifts

Whether you're trying to eat better, get more active or ward off germs, a healthier you doesn't have to mean a total lifestyle makeover. At the beginning of every year people set up goals for the year to become healthier. It always starts with good intentions but a major overhaul at once can be hard to keep up with. Try adapting a few small manageable changes at a time to help improve your success with sticking with it. Here are some small manageable changes to get you started:

- Take brisk walks around your office-building complex during your break
- Practice deep breathing to reduce stress
- Eat healthy bites (like mandarin oranges, nuts, and granola)
- Drink water in the morning before your usual cup of joe
- Establishing a sleep schedule and sticking to it
- Paying closer attention to how food affects your body
- Sit up straight
- Stretch daily
- Wake up 15 minutes before the rest of the household to give yourself a bit of "me time"



Have an upcoming event?

If you would like it in the monthly health monitor please contact Samantha Hesson at 740-732-4958 or Samantha.Hesson@noblecohd.org.

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