



NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2022

# PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS

## WE'RE ACCREDITED!

In August, Wyandot County Public Health was awarded national accreditation through the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). Established in 2007, PHAB is the non-profit organization that administers the national accreditation program, which aims to advance and transform public health practice by championing performance improvement, strong infrastructure, and innovation.

"We are so pleased to be recognized by PHAB for achieving national standards that foster effectiveness and promote continuous quality improvement," Wyandot County Public Health Interim Administrator Kelli Owens said. "We hope this announcement will reassure our community, partners, funders and our elected officials that the services we provide are as responsive as possible and are meeting the foundational needs of Wyandot County."

The national accreditation program, which receives support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, sets standards against which the nation's governmental public health departments can continuously improve the quality of their services and performance. Standards emphasize Foundational Capabilities and are aligned with the 10 Essential Public Health Services. More than 80% of the U.S. population now reap the benefits of being served by a health department that has undergone PHAB's rigorous, multi-faceted, peer-reviewed assessment process to ensure it meets a set of quality standards and measures.



"The value of becoming nationally accredited through PHAB extends far beyond the walls of the health department," said PHAB President and CEO Paul Kuehnert, DNP, RN, FAAN. "People living and working in communities served by these health departments can be assured that their health department is strong and has the capacity to protect and promote their health. Just going through the accreditation process itself helps health departments pinpoint the areas that are critical to improving the work they do for their communities."

Often called the "backbone" of the public health system, public health departments are on the front lines of communities' efforts to protect and promote health and prevent disease and injury. Across the nation, health departments provide services aimed at promoting healthy behaviors; preventing diseases and injuries; ensuring access to safe food, water, clean air, and life-saving immunizations; and preparing for and responding to public health emergencies.

Wyandot County Public Health provides health and safety services that positively impact the well-being of all citizens of Wyandot County. To stay up to date on the latest public health news, follow @WyandotHealth on social media.

## FALL BACK & CHECK YOUR DETECTORS

Daylight Savings Time ends Sunday, Nov. 6, 2022. At the 2 a.m. hour Sunday, clocks will "fall back" to 1 a.m. providing more light in the mornings.

To ease the transition, the Cleveland Clinic recommends:

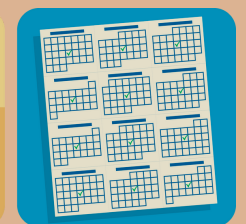
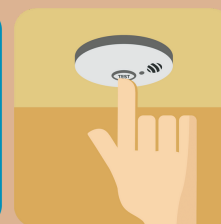
- Preparing your body and mind few days early by adjusting your sleep schedule before the change. Start heading to bed 15 to 30 minutes earlier.
- Sticking to your schedule. Maintain your routines, including eating, social, bed and exercise times. In the mornings, get out and enjoy the extra light.
- Avoid naps. Long mid-day naps make it harder for your body to adjust.
- Avoid coffee and alcohol. Stop drinking caffeine four to six hours before your bedtime. Alcohol disrupts quality sleep and is best avoided before bed.
- Put down your technology. The light from screens stimulates your brain and hinders melatonin production, a hormone that triggers sleepiness.

Fall back is also a great time to check your smoke detectors. The US Fire Administration reports that three out of five home fire deaths result from fires in properties without working smoke alarms. Key word: working. Most of us feel safe knowing that we have smoke detectors in our homes, but are they functioning properly? The risk of dying in a home fire is cut in half in homes with working smoke alarms. According to USFA, 38% of home fire deaths result from fires in which no smoke alarms are present at all.



There is no better time than now to check your alarms. Change the batteries twice a year (hint, hint: daylight saving time). Every bedroom should have a working smoke alarm, and one should be placed on each level of the home.

Test alarms at least once a month. Replace all smoke alarms when they are 10 years old or if they do not sound when tested. When the alarm sounds, get outside and stay outside. Don't wait until it's too late to keep yourself and your family safe from house fires!





## FLU AND COVID-19

Wyandot County Public Health is currently offering flu and COVID-19 vaccinations. Individuals are recommended to receive their flu vaccination by the end of October. However, flu vaccinations will continue to be offered throughout flu season, while supplies last. The CDC has approved most individuals to receive these two vaccinations together. If you have questions about getting both vaccines at once, consult your doctor.

Wyandot County Public Health currently offers the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine. The two-dose primary series is available to those ages six months and older. Individuals ages six years and older may also receive an updated (bivalent) Moderna booster dose.

Plan your trip to Wyandot County Public Health:

- **Monday and Friday clinics:** Open by appointment only. Routine vaccinations and flu shots are available to all who are eligible. COVID-19 vaccines are available only for ages six months to 17 years. Don't forget insurance cards and COVID-19 vaccination cards to be updated. To schedule call 419-294-3852.
- **Walk-In Wednesdays:** Open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. to those 18 years and older only. No appointment necessary. Flu shots and COVID-19 vaccinations are offered. High dose flu shots are available to those ages 65 and older. Bring insurance and COVID-19 vaccination cards.

## TEST BEFORE THE HOLIDAYS

Wyandot County Public Health has COVID-19 at home test kits available for free to the public. Test kits may be picked up during health department hours from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, excluding holidays.

In preparation for the holidays, Wyandot County Public Health is encouraging families to test themselves for COVID-19 ahead of family gatherings and parties. Two test kit events are planned.

• *Testgiving: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Nov. 18 at Wyandot County Public Health. Pick up test kits for yourself and the whole family ahead of Thanksgiving. Kits available while supplies last.*

• *Merry Testmas: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Dec. 16 at Wyandot County Public Health. Be sure you're spreading cheer (and only nothing else) at your holiday gatherings! Limited number of test kits available!*



## HOLIDAY BLUES ARE KNOCKING AGAIN

Many people can experience feelings of anxiety or depression during the holiday season. People who already live with a mental health condition should take extra care to tend to their overall health and wellness during this time. Extra stress, unrealistic expectations or even sentimental memories that accompany the season can be a catalyst for the holiday blues. Some can be at risk for feelings of loneliness, sadness, fatigue, tension and a sense of loss.

A lot of seasonal factors can trigger the holiday blues such as, less sunlight, changes in your diet or routine, alcohol at parties, over-commercialization or the inability to be with friends or family. These are all factors that can seriously affect your mood. However, there are certain things you can do to help avoid the holiday blues. The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) suggests the following:

- Stick to normal routines as much as possible.
- Get enough sleep
- Take time for yourself, but avoid isolating. Spend time with supportive, caring people.
- Eat and drink in moderation. Avoid alcohol when you're feeling down.
- Get exercise. Even a little bit will help. Try taking a short walk.
- Make a to-do list. Keep things simple as much as possible.
- Set reasonable expectations of yourself for holiday activities such as shopping, cooking, entertaining and sending holiday cards.

## SAFE TRAVELS

Holiday celebrations go hand in hand with increased traffic on the roadways. As you're getting out and about, keep safety in mind. Buckle up, every trip, every time and be sure to find a sober ride home if your holiday celebration includes any impairing substances — spiked eggnog or otherwise.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Association, no matter the time of day, driving or riding without a seat belt is deadly. During the 2020 Thanksgiving weekend, 51% of passenger vehicle occupants killed in crashes at night were unbuckled, compared to 55% during the day. Additionally, approximately one-third of all traffic crash fatalities in the United States involve drunk drivers (with BACs at or above .08). In 2020, there were 11,654 people killed in drunk-driving crashes.

Are you traveling with a child in a car seat? It's important to bundle young

ones up against the cold, but bulky winter clothes may also create extra room in their car seat harness causing a loose fit and putting the child at risk for injury in a crash, according to the National Highway Traffic Association.

In place of puffy winter coats, lightweight fleece layers will keep a child warm while also ensuring a snug fitting harness. Once the child is safely in the car seat, add a blanket or backwards coat over the harness. Remember to utilize the pinch test on the car seat harness at the child's shoulder above the chest clip.

Need help ensuring your child is traveling safe? Wyandot County Public Health offers car seat checks by appointment. To schedule call 419-294-3852.

Wyandot County Public Health also offers car seats at a reduced cost through the Ohio Buckles Buckeyes Programs. Families that qualify financially may receive new car seats at a nominal price. For more information, give us a call.

### WHAT ARE THE HOLIDAY BLUES?

In a survey on the Holiday Blues

**64% say they are affected**

and 24% say the holidays affect them a lot.

**So, what are they?**

The Holiday Blues are temporary feelings of anxiety or depression during the holidays that can be associated with extra stress, unrealistic expectations or even memories that accompany the season.

<b>This might include:</b>	<b>Fatigue</b> <b>Tension</b> <b>Frustration</b>	<b>Loneliness or isolation</b> <b>Sadness</b> <b>A sense of loss</b>
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The difference between the holiday blues and clinical anxiety or depression is that the feelings are temporary. However, short-term problems must still be taken seriously because they can lead to long-term mental health conditions.

- Set a budget for holiday activities. Don't overextend yourself financially in buying gifts.
- Listen to music and find other ways to relax.