

WARREN COUNTY HEALTH DISTRICT

News and Information



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Bloom and Doom: Managing Spring Allergies

If you're one of the 50 million Americans who suffers from allergies, your symptoms may bloom when the seasons shift. Itchy, watery eyes, a tickly throat, and a stuffy, runny nose can make you dread springing ahead—and falling back. Likely triggers include tree pollen, grass, mold, and ragweed.

What exactly are allergies?

When you come in contact with a substance that you're allergic to, called an allergen, your immune system treats it as an intruder. In response, your immune system releases chemicals such as histamines, leukotrienes and prostaglandins, which cause a cluster of allergic symptoms: runny eyes and nose, itchy, watery eyes, sneezing and coughing. When people who are allergic to it breathe in, pollen that was in the air gets trapped in their nasal passages. The pollen particles stick to mucus membranes, causing inflammation and irritation to the nose and eyes. For those who suffer extreme reactions, their breathing is affected, and they may develop asthma.

Common Seasonal Allergy Symptoms can Include:

Congestion
Sneezing
Itchy eyes, nose and throat
Runny Nose and Eyes
Post Nasal Drip (drainage in the throat)
Fatigue
Coughing

What are the most common seasonal allergens and when do they occur?

Tree Pollen- March/April
Grass Pollen- June/July
Ragweed- Fall
Mold- Fall

How can I deal with my allergies?

Keep windows closed, especially in the evening when air currents can increase pollen circulation. Wash your face and hair (or shower completely) before bedtime to avoid getting pollen on your bedding (pillows). Change clothes after outside activities like cycling or running. Wear sunglasses or eye protection when outside and avoid strenuous outdoor activities when pollen counts are high. Check pollen counts for your area by visiting www.southwestohioair.org.

What's Happening at WCHD?



We are hitting the road this month! To see where we are headed, visit warrencohealthoh.gov/mobile-clinic-calendar



FREE naloxone kits and fentanyl test strips. To set up a time for pick up, call 513-695-1271.



Vaccination Clinics! Adult and childhood vaccines available. Call 513-695-1468 or 513-695-1229 to get scheduled.



Health Education! The Health Education Program keeps the community informed of important health issues and implements services/programs to improve the health, safety and wellness of citizens in Warren County. For more information on programs, services or health presentations available for community groups, please contact 513-695-2475.





Keeping Our Community Safe This St. Patrick's Day: The Truth About Binge Drinking

St. Patrick's Day is March 17th. Because drinking alcohol is a large part of the St. Patrick's Day festivities for many people, this is a good time to be mindful of how alcohol can impact your celebrations and your health.

Some people may binge drink on St. Patrick's Day. Binge drinking is a pattern of drinking that brings blood alcohol concentration (BAC) to a level of 0.08%, the legal limit for driving in the United States, or higher. This typically occurs after **4** drinks for women and **5** drinks for men in about 2 hours.

Binge drinking is dangerous. Serious safety risks include unintentional injuries from car crashes and falls, as well as alcohol-induced blackouts and overdoses (binge drinking also increases the risk of sexually transmitted infections and unintended pregnancies). Even a BAC less than 0.08% can result in memory impairment and attention and coordination issues that may put people at risk for unintentional injuries.

It's important to note that drinking even small amounts of alcohol can pose risks to your health under certain conditions. For example, drinking any amount could pose a risk if you have a chronic health condition, such as high blood pressure or diabetes, or take a medication that interacts badly with alcohol, an effect that can be potentially fatal. It is safest for women to avoid alcohol altogether if they are pregnant or trying to become pregnant.

If you choose to drink on St. Patrick's Day, there are a couple of steps that you can take to ensure that you are consuming alcohol safely, such as alternating between alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, drinking one drink per hour, avoiding participating in drinking games, avoid heavily drinking before going out, and consume mocktails (a cocktail style beverage made without alcohol). To learn more about the risks of binge drinking, visit www.cdc.gov/alcohol/about-alcohol-use/index.html

March is National Save Your Vision Month

March is recognized as National Save Your Vision Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness about the importance of eye health and encouraging people of all ages to take proactive steps to protect their sight. Our vision plays a critical role in nearly everything we do- reading, working, driving, learning, and connecting with others. Many common eye diseases, including glaucoma, macular degeneration, and diabetic eye disease, can develop gradually and without noticeable symptoms in their early stages. By the time changes in vision become apparent, damage may have already occurred. That's why scheduling regular comprehensive eye exams is one of the most important steps you can take to safeguard your eyesight. Eye exams not only assess how well you see but can also detect early signs of chronic conditions such as diabetes and high blood pressure.

There are also everyday habits that can help protect and preserve your vision. When spending time outdoors, wear sunglasses that block 100% of UVA and UVB rays to shield your eyes from harmful sun exposure. Use protective eyewear during sports, yard work, or home improvement projects to prevent injury. If you spend extended time on computers, tablets, or phones, practice the 20-20-20 rule to reduce digital eye strain— every 20 minutes, look at something 20 feet away for at least 20 seconds. Supporting overall health also benefits your eyes; eating a balanced diet rich in leafy greens, colorful fruits and vegetables, and omega-3 fatty acids can contribute to long-term eye health. Managing chronic conditions, avoiding tobacco products, and staying physically active are additional ways to reduce your risk of vision problems.

National Save Your Vision Month serves as an important reminder that healthy vision is essential to quality of life. By taking small, consistent steps today, you can help protect your eyesight and maintain clear, healthy vision for years to come.

Prevent Blindness Ohio provides free vision screenings, comprehensive eye exams, and eyeglasses for uninsured or underinsured residents who meet income guidelines. If you are interested in receiving more information about this program, please contact 513-695-1272 for more information.

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