



Warren County Health District

News and Information
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Health Commissioner

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Winter Mental Health Wellness

During the winter months, many people can begin feeling a little down due to it being cold outside, it gets darker earlier in the day, and many people stay inside more frequently. There are many steps that you can take to not feel as down, including maintaining physical activity, eating nutritious foods, practicing mindfulness, and maintaining social support systems.

Physical Activity: Routine physical activity is a great way of relieving stress, and exercising even 30 minutes a day can help your body release endorphins, your body's natural "happy hormones".

Eating Nutritious Foods: It is important throughout the year, especially in the winter months, to maintain a healthy, well rounded and balanced diet. Studies have even found that a healthy diet can help manage symptoms of anxiety and depression!

Practice Mindfulness: Activities such as going for a quick walk in the park, yoga, or meditation, can help improve your mental health. Even a quick 10 minute session of meditation can allow you to check in with your body and relax a little bit!

Maintaining Social Support Systems: Keeping in touch with your family, friends, and other people that matter in your life can strengthen your sense of community and provides you with a support system for when you feel down.

For more information about mental health wellness, visit: <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/nutritional-psychiatry-your-brain-on-food-201511168626>

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/let-the-sun-shine-mind-your-mental-health-this-winter-2017012311058>

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/consumer-health/in-depth/mindfulness-exercises/art-20046356>

National Hand Washing Week

The week of December 4th is National Handwashing Week. Handwashing is one of the best ways to protect yourself and your family from getting sick. Learn when and how you should wash your hands to stay healthy. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), here are five steps that you can follow to effectively wash your hands:

1. Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
2. Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
3. Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice.
4. Rinse your hands well under clean, running water.
5. Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.



National Safe Toys and Gifts Month

December is National Safe Toys and gifts Month. With the holiday season upon us, it is important to be aware of safe gift giving practices. The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) urges families to stay safe this holiday season by following these tips for gift giving guides for children:

- Follow age guidance and other safety information on toy packaging and choose toys that match each child's interests and abilities.
- Get safety gear, including helmets, for scooters and other riding toys—and make sure that children use them every time.
- Keep small balls and toys with small parts away from children younger than age 3, and keep deflated balloons away from children younger than age 8.
- Once the gifts are open, immediately discard plastic wrappings or other packaging on toys before they become dangerous play items.

WCHD will be closed on **December 26** in observance of **Christmas** and **January 2** for **New Year's**



Impaired Driving Prevention

December is National Impaired Driving Prevention Month. In 2019, there were 210 drunk driving related deaths during Christmas and New Year's holidays, all of which were preventable. If you're celebrating and drinking this holiday season, always remember to plan ahead with a sober driver to take you home.

If you're the designated driver, it's important to take the role seriously and don't consume alcohol. In Ohio, any blood alcohol concentration (BAC) over .08 will result in someone getting charged with a DUI. But, if someone has a BAC at .05, the risk of someone getting in a car crash increases by 40%.

Here are some safety tips:

- Never drink and drive.
- Don't let someone get behind the wheel if that person has been drinking.
- If you're hosting a gathering, make sure everyone has a sober ride home.
- Always wear your seat belt. It's your best defense against impaired drivers.
- Call 911 if you see a drunk driver

The chart below describes the level of impairment one experiences as their BAC increases. To learn more about impaired driving, visit <https://www.nhtsa.gov/campaign/drive-sober-or-get-pulled-over>

