

CHRONIC DISEASE CONNECTIONS

This quarterly e-bulletin from Iowa HHS was created for healthcare systems and providers working to prevent and manage chronic disease.

Health Observances

MAY

- Arthritis Awareness Month
- Blood Pressure Education Month
- National Stroke Awareness Month
- Natl Women’s Health Week (12-18)
- Older Americans Month
- Speech-Language-Hearing Month
- World No Tobacco Day (31)

JUNE

- Alzheimer’s & Brain Awareness Mo.
- Men’s Health Month
- National Cancer Survivors Day (2)
- PTSD Awareness Month

JULY

- Americans With Disabilities Act Anniversary (26)
- Minority Mental Health Month
- National Breastfeeding Month
- UV Safety Awareness Month



Contact Us: To submit webinars, events, funding opportunities, or health promotion news, contact mckyla.carson@idph.iowa.gov.

View previous Chronic Disease Connections E-Bulletin issues [here](#).

National Speech-Language-Hearing Month

May is National Speech-Language-Hearing month, formerly known as Better Speech and Hearing Month. National Speech-Language-Hearing Month is observed in May each year to increase awareness about communication disorders and hearing health, including receptive and expressive communication disorders and hearing healthcare. Founded by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), this month also provides an opportunity to honor the roles of ASHA members in providing treatment to those affected by speech and hearing disorders. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and ASHA annually raise awareness regarding speech and hearing problems, and encourage people to think about their own hearing concerns and get their hearing checked. The month also provides an opportunity to recognize the 1.5 billion individuals globally who live with hearing loss. The [ASHA website](#) provides social media graphics, videos, quizzes and more that can be used to help educate consumers and allied professionals about conditions, educational information and additional information related to speech, language, and hearing awareness.

The role of the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) program at Iowa HHS is to support building a strong foundation for communication by ensuring that all babies are screened and monitored for hearing differences, as required by Iowa law. The EHDI program ensures families of children that do not pass their initial hearing screen are moved through the hearing healthcare journey and that providers are trained on recommended best practices. EHDI Family Support provides resources and education to families, empowering them to make communication choices that best support their needs.

More resources and information can be found from the [CDC](#), the [ASHA](#), [Hearing First](#) for family resources, and [National Today](#).



Upcoming Events:

- 7th Annual [Older Adult Mental Health Awareness Day Symposium](#) - May 2
- American Heart Association [Central Iowa Heart Walk](#) - May 18

7 Tips to Get An Accurate Blood Pressure Reading

May is High Blood Pressure Education Month and provides an opportunity to educate patients, and remind providers to review proper blood pressure monitoring techniques.

Nearly half of the adults in the U.S. have hypertension, but only 1 in 4 with hypertension have it under control. Self-measured blood pressure monitoring (SMBP) offers a way to empower patients to learn about their blood pressure and managing it. SMBP can also improve timely and accurate hypertension diagnosis, improve patient engagement, and enhance service for existing chronic disease programs.

To make sure that blood pressure is being measured accurately, remind your patients of the seven simple tips for accurate readings:

1. Use the correct cuff size
2. Put the cuff on a bare arm
3. Support arm at heart level
4. Keep legs uncrossed and feet flat on the floor
5. Support the back
6. Empty bladder first
7. Sit quietly 5 minutes before and during reading

It is important to model accurate blood pressure measuring technique in office visits for patients and answer questions about how they can measure their BP at home.

For more information, visit [TargetBP.org](https://targetbp.org).

Powered by Connection - Older Americans Month

Connectedness plays a vital role in supporting independence and aging in place. This year's Older Americans Month theme of "Powered by Connection" recognizes the important impact meaningful relationships and social connections have on our health and well-being.

In May 2023, the U.S. Surgeon General released an advisory calling attention to the public health crisis of loneliness, isolation, and lack of connection in our country. Loneliness and isolation increase the risk for heart disease, stroke, dementia, mental health challenges, and premature death.

Older Americans Month is a time to promote resources that help older adults build meaningful relationships, and also challenge professionals to prioritize meaningful connections in their own lives. The 7th Annual [Older Adult Mental Health Awareness Day Symposiums](#) is a free online training on May 2 and provides an opportunity to expand your understanding of older adults and their mental health needs. Register for the National Council on Aging event at <https://connect.ncoa.org/oamhad2024>.

Find more information and resources from the Administration for Community Living (ACL) [Older Americans Month 2024](#) website, and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) [Mental Health Awareness Month Toolkit](#).

2024 Cancer in Iowa Report Released

The Iowa Cancer Registry's annual [2024 Cancer in Iowa Report](#) is now available. Two major take-aways from the report include:

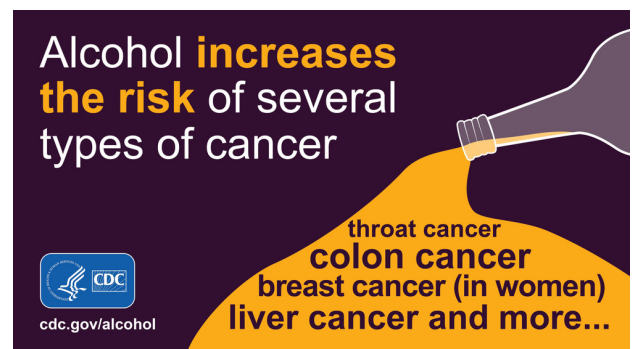
- Iowa continues to have the second highest and fastest growing rate of new cancers in the U.S.
- Alcohol consumption is a modifiable risk factor identified for Iowans that may be contributing to higher cancer rates.

This [one page brief](#) from the Iowa Cancer Registry describes the four cancers that largely explain Iowa's high and increasing cancer incidence.

A new study from the CDC suggests that limiting alcohol use can reduce cancer deaths in the US. About 80% of the cancer deaths caused by alcohol use that occurred during 2020 and 2021 could have been prevented if adults consumed at the recommended daily limits of two or less drinks for men and one or less drinks for women, according to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Alcohol use increases the risk of cancers of the liver, breast in women, colon, throat, mouth, and other sites in the body.

Access the 2024 Cancer in Iowa Report at:

<https://shri.public-health.uiowa.edu/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/cancer-in-iowa-2024.pdf>



This e-bulletin is supported by Cooperative Agreement #DP23-0004 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the CDC, the U. S. Department of Health & Human Services, or the Iowa HHS.