



Allegan County Public Health Newsletter

Public Health Updates

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WINTER SAFETY!

When exposed to cold temperatures, your body begins to lose heat faster than it can be produced. Prolonged exposure to cold will eventually use up your body’s stored energy. The result is hypothermia, or abnormally low body temperature. Body temperature that is too low affects the brain, making the victim unable to think clearly or move well. This makes hypothermia particularly dangerous because a person may not know it is happening and won’t be able to do anything about it.

Hypothermia is most likely at very cold temperatures, **but it can occur even at cool temperatures (above 40°F) if a person becomes chilled from rain, sweat, or submersion in cold water.**

Recognizing Hypothermia

Warnings signs of hypothermia for Adults: shivering, exhaustion, confusion, fumbling hands, memory loss, slurred speech, and drowsiness. Infants: bright red, cold skin and very low energy.

What to Do

If you notice any of these signs, take the person’s temperature. If it is below 95°, the situation is an emergency—get medical attention immediately.

If medical care is not available, begin warming the person, as follows: Get the victim into a warm room or shelter, if the victim has on any wet clothing, remove it, warm the center of the body first—chest, neck, head, and groin—using an electric blanket, if available. Or use skin-to-skin contact under loose, dry layers of blankets, clothing, towels, or sheets, warm beverages can help increase the body temperature, but do not give alcoholic beverages. Do not try to give beverages to an unconscious person, after body temperature has increased, keep the person dry and wrapped in a warm blanket, including the head and neck, and get medical attention as soon as possible.

A person with severe hypothermia may be unconscious and may not seem to have a pulse or to be breathing. In this case, handle the victim gently, and get emergency assistance immediately. Even if the victim appears dead, CPR should be provided. CPR should continue while the victim is being warmed, until the victim responds or medical aid becomes available. In some cases, hypothermia victims who appear to be dead can be successfully resuscitated.

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- Did you know that Allegan County has a Community Action Team that wants to bring healthy back to our community. Do you feel passionate about a certain issue that you feel would increase the wellbeing of our community email ajoynes@allegancounty.org and she will provide you with the next meeting date and location.



IMMUNIZATIONS UPDATE!



Thank you to all Allegan County VFC Provider Office Staff (draft)

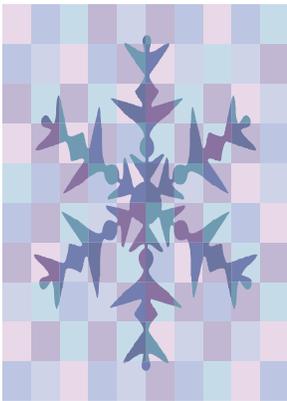
Immunization protects the entire community as well as the individual persons receiving vaccine. An important component of an immunization provider practice is ensuring that the vaccines reach all children who need them.



The Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program is vital to increasing childhood immunization rates and ensuring that all children are protected against vaccine-preventable diseases. Allegan County has nine provider offices who actively participate in the VFC program:

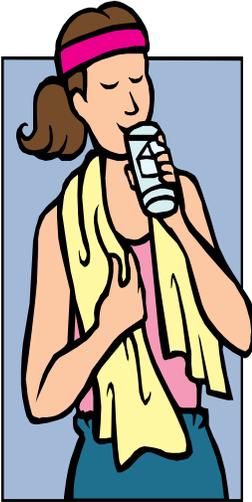
- Metro Health Wayland
- InterCare Community Health Network Pullman
- Allegan Medical Clinic
- Otsego Medical Center
- Holland Pediatric Associates, PLC
- Borgess Family Medicine Plainwell
- Macatawa Family Medicine, P.C.
- Gun Lake Tribal Health Center

Fennville Family Medicine



Participation in the VFC program is voluntary. Some Allegan County provider offices have been participating in the VFC program since 1995. VFC provider offices work very hard to comply with all VFC program requirements. The Allegan County Health Department Immunization Program appreciates the commitment each VFC Provider Office to offer VFC vaccines to eligible children who are part of their practice.

“Thank you for your continued efforts with immunizing the children of Allegan County!”



WORKING TOWARDS A HEALTHIER YOU!

Walk Your Way to Fitness

A regular walking workout can benefit your overall health. Find out why fitness walking is so important and how you can get started.

By [Chris Iliades, MD](#)

Medically reviewed by [Christine Wilmsen Craig, MD](#)

Retrieved from Everyday Health

How to Start Your Walking Workout



The speed and distance of your walking workout are not as important as the time you spend walking at a brisk pace. If you have any health issues talk to your doctor first and find out what is a safe pace for you. Start gradually and walk only as far and as long as is comfortable. Follow these fitness walking guidelines:

- Work up to at least 30 minutes of brisk walking a day.
- Warm up by walking at your normal pace for about 5 minutes and then pick up the pace for about 15 minutes.
- While you walk, swing your arms and maintain good posture.
- Take long strides, but don't strain yourself.
- Slow down at the end of your walk and do some gentle stretching.



Every week you should try to add about 5 more minutes to the brisk part of your walking workout until you can get it to over 30 minutes.

Don't forget the Healthier You Michigan's 4 x 4 plan to wellness!

Visit the website below to sign up for free emails, recipes, and tips towards becoming healthier. Let's make Michigan's obesity and overweight rates drop. **Allegan County's overweight/obesity rate is currently at 69%!! Let's Change That Together!**

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE UPDATE!

Monthly CD Report link:

http://www.allegancounty.org/docs/HD/ED/HDED_CommunicableDiseases.pdf

An increase in cases of gastrointestinal illness, or norovirus-like illness, has been noted in Southwest Michigan. Symptoms include vomiting, diarrhea, muscle aches and sometimes fever. Symptoms usually last 24-72 hours. It is important to **stay home** if you or your child is vomiting, having diarrhea or feeling too ill to participate in daily activities. Hand washing and proper environmental cleaning are key factors in helping to prevent transmission and outbreaks. For more information please go to: http://www.allegancounty.org/docs/HD/PH/HDPH_FactSheet_Norovirus.pdf.

Flu activity levels in Michigan increased from 'sporadic' to local activity this week with the most increased activity in the Southeast region of Michigan. Both A and B strains of influenza have been found in Michigan. The majority of cases are caused by the 2009 H1N1 strain, which is in this year's seasonal flu vaccine. It is not too late to get a flu shot if you have not gotten one yet, flu season usually peaks between January and March and you can protect yourself and others by getting vaccinated.

