Keeping Up With...

Dodge County Public Health

Jan - March 2026

JANUARY 2026

As we welcome the new year, winter reminds us how closely our health is connected to our homes, our routines, and one another. This season's newsletter highlights practical ways we can stay safe, healthy, and resilient throughout the colder months, while also looking ahead to opportunities for prevention and wellness in the year to come.

You'll find information on preventing the spread of influenza and other communicable diseases, along with reminders about simple steps, like vaccination, hand hygiene, and staying home when sick, that protect not only ourselves, but our neighbors as well. Our Public Health Nursing team also shares tips for staying active during winter and recognizing February as American Heart Month, when we focus on small lifestyle changes that can have lasting benefits for heart health.

Winter safety is another key theme in this issue. From fire and carbon monoxide prevention to safe winter travel and child passenger safety, these articles are meant to support families in making their homes and vehicles safer during the season's most challenging conditions. Our Emergency Preparedness section highlights steps you can take now to reduce risks and respond confidently when winter weather impacts daily life.

January is also National Radon Action Month, an important reminder that some health risks aren't visible or seasonal but are entirely preventable. Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that can accumulate indoors and is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States. The only way to know your home's radon level is to test. Dodge County Public Health offers free radon test kits, available at our office at 199 County Road DF in Juneau. Testing is easy, confidential, and one of the most effective steps you can take to protect your household's long-term health.

Thank you for taking the time to read and stay engaged. Wishing you a safe, healthy start to 2026.

Sincerely,

Roman Mullen

Roman Mullen, MS, REHS
Public Health Officer

DODGE COUNTY
WISCONSIN

Newsletter Highlights

MEET OUR TEAM

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

COMMUNITY HEALTH

EMERGENCY PREPARDNESS

PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING

WOMEN, INFANTS & CHILDREN



Scan QR code to receive our newsletters via email!

Meet Our Team!

Jan - March 2026

Roman Mullen	Public Health Officer

Public Health Services:

Matthew Bartol	Emergency Preparedness Coordinator
Olivia Gerritson	Community Health Educator
Karen Greenwald	Public Health Nurse
Leah Neis	Public Health Nurse
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Kaitlyn Seibel	Public Health Nurse

Women, Infants, & Children (WIC) Program:

Isabel Carbajal	WIC/Public Health Technician
Destiny Goldman	Breastfeeding Peer Counselor
Sara Gray	WIC Program Director
Marvella Puga	WIC/Public Health Technician
Maria Ramirez	Breastfeeding Peer Counselor
Ashley Young	WIC Nutritionist



We are hiring! Are you passionate about promoting health and serving your community? Dodge County is seeking a dedicated Public Health Nurse to join our team. Apply by scanning the QR code!

Communicable Disease Highlight

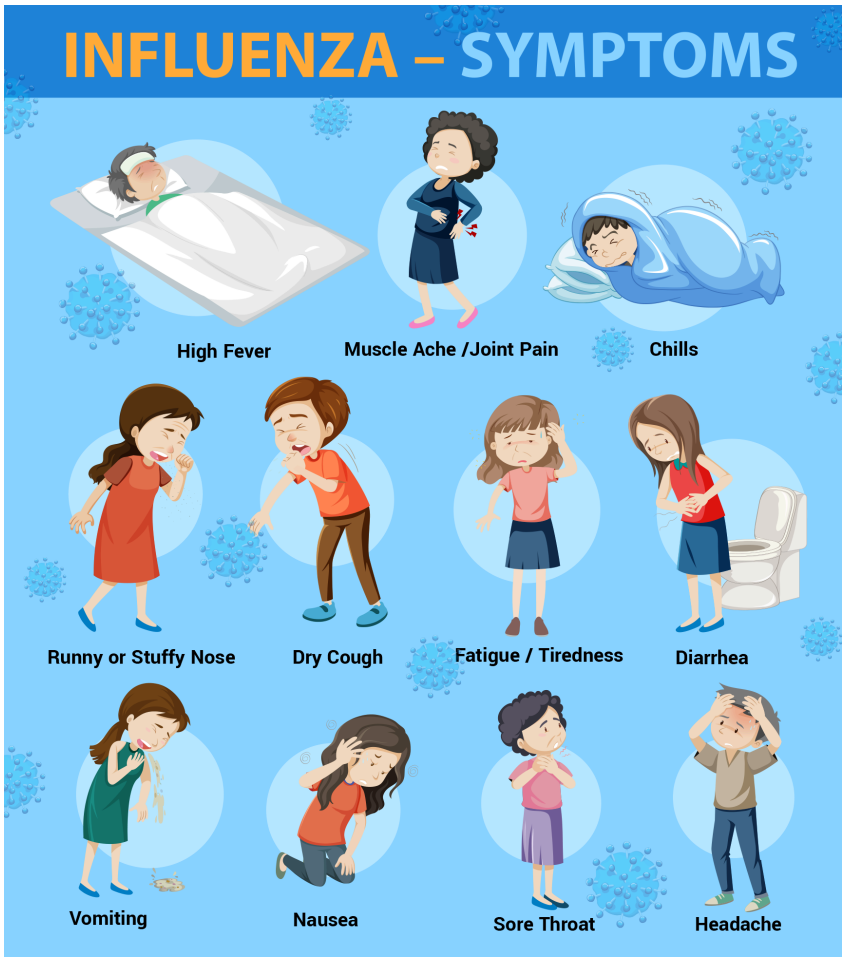
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What are Communicable Diseases?

Communicable diseases are illnesses that spread from one person to another, from an animal to a person, or from a surface or a food. Diseases can commonly be transmitted through: **direct contact with a sick person, respiratory droplets spread from a sick person sneezing or coughing, and contact with blood or other body fluids.**

This quarter's highlighted Communicable Disease is... **Influenza**

Flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses that infect the nose, throat, and sometimes the lungs. It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death. The best way to prevent flu is by getting a flu vaccine each year.



How Flu Spreads:

Most experts believe that flu viruses spread mainly by tiny droplets made when people with flu cough, sneeze, or talk. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby.

Flu Symptoms:

-Fever
-Cough
-Sore Throat
-Runny or stuffy nose
-Muscle or body aches
-Headaches
-Tiredness
-Some people may have vomiting & diarrhea, more common in chidren than adults

Flu Prevention:

The first and most important step in preventing flu is to get a flu vaccine each year. CDC also recommends preventive actions, like staying away from people who are sick, covering coughs and sneezes, frequent handwashing, to help slow the spread of germs that cause illnesses like flu.

https://www.cdc.gov/flu

Community Health

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Puffy Coats and Car Seats

Puffy winter coats affect how the harness in a car seat fits your child. The extra coat padding makes it hard to get the harness to fit correctly. The harness might feel snug, but the extra material will compress in a crash, making the harness too loose. Loose harness straps means your child will not be safe in a crash.

How to know if a coat is safe



Here's a simple way to check whether your child's coat is safe to wear underneath a harness:

1. Put the coat on your child.
2. Sit them in the car seat. Buckle and tighten the harness.
3. Without loosening the harness, unbuckle it, and remove your child from the car seat.
4. Take the coat off.
5. Strap your child back into the car seat without adjusting the straps. If the harness is too loose, the coat is too thick to wear under the harness.

Four inches matters

A puffy coat adds four inches of slack to car seat harness straps. Imagine how loose your pants would be if you added four inches to the waist. A loose car-seat harness greatly increases the risk of injury to your child.

Tips for bundling up:

- Put your child in thin, warm layers like fleece.
- After the child is snug in the car seat harness, layer blankets over the top of the harness, or put the coat on backward over the arms and shoulders.
- For older children in booster seats, buckle the seatbelt, then put the coat on backward over the arms and shoulders.







https://www.safekidswi.org/

Emergency Preparedness

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Winter Safety: Protecting Yourself and Your Home

Winter brings unique safety challenges at home. From preventing fire hazards and carbon monoxide exposure to protecting your home from costly damage, a few simple steps can make a big difference.

Preventing Home Heating Fires:

- Keep anything that can burn at least three feet from all heat sources including fireplaces, wood stoves, radiators, portable heaters or candles.
- Don't plug items such as space heaters and humidifiers into power strips, they are not rated for those items and will over heat.
- Never use an oven to heat your home.
- Have your furnace and fireplace inspected by qualified professionals.

Preventing Carbon Monoxide Poisoning:

- Remove snow from furnace exhaust and fresh air intake pipes to help prevent dangerous carbon monoxide buildup in your home.
- Never let your vehicle warm up in a closed garage, or garage attached to a home. This could lead to fatal carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Install a carbon monoxide detector and check that it has a working battery.

Stay Safe During Winter Travel:

Know before you go:

- Check your local weather and traffic reports before heading out.
- If your roads are not in good shape, consider postponing non-essential travel until the roads are clear.
- Tell others your route and anticipated arrival time.

On the road:

- Make sure your vehicle is in good working condition before you travel.
- Keep your gas tank as full as you can. A full tank will keep the fuel line from freezing.
- Install good winter tires and make sure they have enough tread.
- Keep an emergency supply kit in your vehicle.
- If stranded, run the engine for about 10 minutes per hour to run the heater and charge your cellphone. Open a window slightly to let fresh air in and avoid carbon monoxide poisoning.

Public Health Nursing

Jan - March 2026

February is American Heart Month

Heart disease causes about 2,200 deaths each day in the U.S.—nearly one every 40 seconds—and claims more lives than all cancers combined.

The good news? Nearly 80% of cardiovascular disease is preventable. American Heart Month is a great time to encourage healthy habits like not smoking, staying active, eating well, maintaining a healthy weight, and managing blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar.

Take control of your health! Keep your blood pressure in check by borrowing an electronic blood pressure monitor from various locations around Dodge County! Including:

- **Any Dodge County Library**
- **Dodge County Health & Human Services**
- **TAG Center in Mayville**
- **YMCA of Dodge County**
- **The Watermark in Beaver Dam**



6 Tips to Stay Active this Winter

Winter can make staying active challenging, but regular movement supports your mental and physical health and helps you stay on track with your fitness goals. Check out these 6 tips to stay active this winter:

1. **Take nature walks:** When the weather allows, set aside time to enjoy a walk in a safe neighborhood or local park.
2. **Plan around the weather:** Check the forecast ahead of time, dress appropriately, and plan your activities to match the conditions.
3. **Dress in layers:** Wearing layers lets you adjust as you warm up and helps prevent overheating or getting too cold.
4. **Try online workouts:** Follow TV, online, or social media workout classes for cardio, strength, or stretching at home.
5. **Stay active indoors:** When it's too cold outside, chores like vacuuming, sweeping, and cleaning can help keep you moving.
6. **Volunteer actively:** Help others while staying active by walking dogs, shoveling snow, or assisting neighbors.

sophe.org/focus-areas/heart-conditions cdc.gov/physical-activity

Women, Infants, & Children (WIC)

Jan - March 2026

The Importance of Vitamin D

Vitamin D is needed for healthy bones and for muscles and nerves to work properly. Vitamin D helps your immune system fight off disease and infections.

How much vitamin D do we need each day?

Vitamin D is measured in micrograms (mcg) and International Units (IU).

- Babies from birth to 12 months need 10 mcg (400 IU)
- Children 1 to 13 years need 15 mcg (600 IU)
- Teens 14 to 18 years need 15 mcg (600 IU)
- Adults 19 to 70 years need 15 mcg (600 IU)
- Adults 71+ need 20 mcg (800 IU)
- Pregnant and breastfeeding women need 15 mcg (600 IU)



Our bodies also make vitamin D when our skin is exposed to the sun!

With less sun in the winter, getting vitamin D from the foods you eat becomes even more essential.

Few foods have natural vitamin D. Most of the vitamin D in American diets comes from fortified foods like milk.

Natural sources of vitamin D:

- Fatty fish like salmon, tuna and mackerel are some of the best natural sources of vitamin D.
- Beef liver, cheese and egg yolks have small amounts of vitamin D.
- Mushrooms have some natural vitamin D.

Fortified sources of vitamin D:

- Almost all of the milk in the U.S. is fortified with 400 IU of vitamin D per quart. Plant based milks like soy milk and almond milk are often fortified too.
- Some breakfast cereals, orange juices, yogurts and margarine may be fortified with vitamin D. Check the label.

With WIC's new food package, you can eat more protein and nutrient rich food. Fish in cans and pouches are available for everyone aged 12 months and older!

FISH

BUY: (WIC APPROVED)

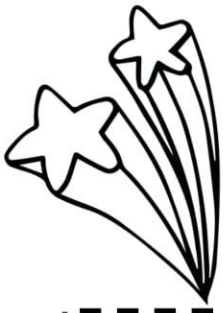
- Any size cans, cups, or pouches
- Any brand or type of chunk light tuna, pink salmon, mackerel, or sardines unless listed as DO NOT BUY
- Any combination of types of fish and sizes
- Packed in water or oil
- Added sauce or flavorings, such as tomato sauce, mustard, lemon, herbs, etc. are allowed
- May include bones or skin



DO NOT BUY: *

Albacore, white or yellowfin tuna; red salmon; jack or king mackerel; fillet or brisling sardines; gourmet or premium brands like Blue Harbor, Fishwife, King Oscar, Mina, Reese, Safecatch, Wild Planet; organic; packaged with beans, rice or pasta; salad.

*(NOT WIC APPROVED)



NEW YEAR'S DAY

Word Search

P A R T Y F A V O R S V E U L V D C R
X N E I P T C D Q P N E L F A Y G H E
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