

Health Highlights



Information for Schools & Childcare

American Heart Month

American Heart Month takes place every February. Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. But you can do a lot to protect your heart. [Learn more about heart-healthy living.](#)

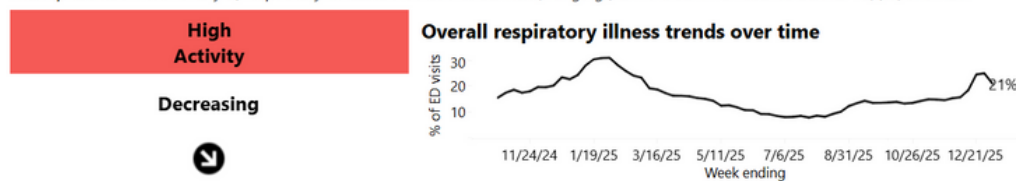
Practicing self-care can keep our hearts healthy. Being physically active, eating healthier foods, getting enough sleep, not smoking, and finding healthy ways to reduce stress can help prevent heart disease. And, when we take care of our hearts, we set an example for those around us to do the same.



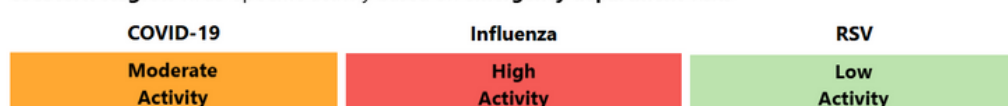
The [Cardi-O Heart Character Series](#) has toolkits and graphics available to help spread the word on American Heart Month. Please join us in spreading the message on heart health!

Respiratory Illnesses Snapshot

Western Region respiratory illness activity based on **emergency department (ED)** visits
This represents a wide variety of respiratory illnesses that lead to ED visits, ranging from the common cold to COVID-19, flu, and RSV.



Western Region virus-specific activity based on **emergency department** visits



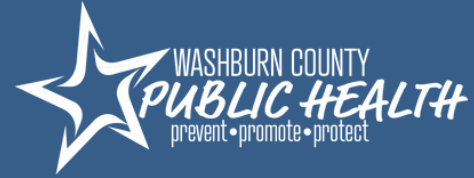
As of 1/10/2026, the Western Wisconsin region virus-specific activity based on Emergency Department visits:

- COVID-19 activity is **MODERATE** and **stable**
- Influenza activity is **HIGH** and **decreasing**
- RSV activity is **LOW** and **stable**

Even when respiratory illness levels are very low or low, it is important to keep up with prevention strategies. Follow these [tips](#) to help keep you and your loved ones healthy:

- Stay home if you are sick.
- Cover coughs and sneezes.
- Stay up-to-date with vaccines.
- Wash your hands and practice good hygiene.

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Stay Safe While Traveling This Winter

Travel during the winter has unique risks, especially if you travel by car. Being prepared can help you “expect the unexpected” so your trip isn’t ruined by common problems travelers face in the winter.

Tip #1: Know Before You Go:

- From blizzards to ice storms, be aware of the winter risks in places you visit.
- Check the local weather forecasts and warnings before heading out.
 - Visit National Weather Service for up to date forecasts and download the FEMA App for alerts in up to five locations.
- 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 cleared.
 - If you do have to go out, make sure you are prepared in case you become delayed while traveling.
- Tell others your route and anticipated arrival time.

Tip #2: Practice Caution While 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 also keep the fuel line from freezing.
- When driving, increase your following distance from 3-4 seconds to 5-6 seconds. It takes longer to slow down and stop on icy roads.
- Every vehicle should have an emergency supply kit in the trunk. Kits should be checked every six months and expired items should be replaced regularly.
- Keep family and emergency phone numbers, including your auto insurance provider and a towing company in your phone.
- Consider keeping a power bank for your phone in your car in case your car loses power.
- 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 (CO) poisoning.

For more information, the Ready.gov #WinterReady campaign has additional graphics and information available.



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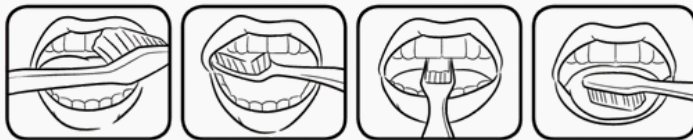
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Children's Dental Health Month

Oral health is an integral part of overall health and it's key to children's growth and development. Yet, **one in three Wisconsin children are living with untreated dental decay**, the most preventable chronic disease in the United States. Children and youth with special health care needs (CYSHCN) are twice as likely to have unmet dental needs, and there are disproportionate levels of access to oral health care in minority and low-income populations.

The American Dental Association has resources and coloring sheets available to promote dental health that can be accessed [here](#).

Please feel free to share the February brushing calendar with the families you work with. 2026 monthly calendars can be downloaded [here](#).



Place the toothbrush at a 45-degree angle to the gums and move the brush back and forth gently in short strokes.

Brush the outer surfaces, the inside surfaces and the chewing surfaces of all teeth.

To clean the inside surface of the front teeth, tilt the brush vertically and make several up-and-down strokes.

Brush your tongue to remove bacteria and keep your breath fresh.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 [tooth icon] [heart icon] [star icon]	2 [tooth icon] [heart icon] [star icon]	3 [tooth icon] [heart icon] [star icon]	4 [tooth icon] [heart icon] [star icon]	5 [tooth icon] [heart icon] [star icon]	6 [tooth icon] [heart icon] [star icon]	7 [tooth icon] [heart icon] [star icon]
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Too Sick for School?

DPI has a [one-page infographic](#) that can quickly help parents, along with school and child care staff, determine when a child/student needs to stay home. The recommendations are based on guidelines provided by the CDC and state public health professionals. The [Wisconsin Childhood Communicable Diseases chart](#) can also provide guidance.



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911 - 211 - 988

Help is 3 numbers away. 911 for emergencies, 988 for suicide and crisis support, and 211 for information and community resources.



For more information on 211, visit <https://211wisconsin.communityos.org/>

For more information on 988, visit <https://988lifeline.org/>

Additional Resources

- [Forward Health](#) - Health care and nutritional assistance benefit programs with the goal of improving health outcomes for members and creating efficiencies for providers.
- [Prevent Blindness Wisconsin](#) - Vision resources for children and adults.
- [Wisconsin Wayfinder](#) - Free and confidential supports for families of children with delays, disabilities, special health care needs, and mental health conditions.
- [Well Badger Resource Center](#) - Wisconsin's health information and referral service, connecting you to the social, health, and government programs available in your community.
- [Children's Health Alliance of WI](#) - Children's Health Alliance of Wisconsin advocates for families and actively works to create programs to build healthier communities.
- [Healthy WashCo](#) - The mission of the Healthy WashCo collective is to help create a happier, healthier and safer Washburn County.

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OUR MISSION

Promoting, protecting, and improving the lifelong health of individuals and communities in Washburn County.

OUR VISION

Healthy People. Healthy Places.