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Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health *Communicator*

Spring is in the air!

It's finally March and spring is in the air! The children are getting antsy to run and play outside, the pets are itching for longer and warmer walks, and most of us are just happy the snow is gone!

Spring brings a renewed motivation to clean up and catch up on things that we have been putting off throughout the winter. Some of us may immediately think of "spring cleaning" others may think of the things they've put off simply because they don't want to be out in the cold any longer than they absolutely have to.

In March, the Health Department wants to draw your attention to a few things you may have been putting off.

- **Colorectal cancer screening?** Did you know colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the U.S.?
- **Private water well?** If you have a private water well when was the last time you had it tested for bacteria, nitrates, or arsenic? Did you know it's FREE to have it tested? [Click Here!](#) for more information!
- **Healthy eating?** Spring is the perfect time to begin laying out your garden for the summer! We provide nutrition consultations for as little as \$25! [Click Here!](#) for more information!

Department Quick Links



[Visit us on Facebook!](#)



[Follow us on Twitter!](#)

Our department is here to assist and/or provide you information to accomplish all of the above. Let us help you live a healthier life!



WE'RE HIRING!

We are looking for a Public Health, Hospital, & EMS Program Coordinator. This person must have a experience in emergency services, healthcare management, natural sciences, and/or a related field. A good salary, health insurance, and IPERS are part of the package! [Click Here!](#) for a full job description!

Upcoming Happenings:

- March is National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month
- March is National Nutrition Month
- March 19-25: National Poison Prevention Week
- March 20: National Native American HIV/AIDS Awareness Day
- March 22: American Diabetes Alert Day
- March 24: World Tuberculosis Day
- April is Oral Cancer Awareness Month
- April is STI Awareness Month
- **April 3-9: National Public Health Week**
- April 7: World Health Week
- April 10: National Youth HIV and AIDS Awareness Day
- April 22-29: National Infant Immunization Week
- April 23-29: World Immunization Week
- April 24: World Meningitis Day

Like us on Facebook or follow us on Twitter to stay up-to-date on all Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health information. Visit our website at www.cghealth.com

For more information about our services, visit our website at www.cghealth.com.

Take care,

Kara Ruge
Marketing & Public Information Officer
Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health

April 3-9: National Public Health Week!

Public Health: Creating a Healthier Nation by 2030
By: Kara Ruge, Marketing & Public Information Officer

It's National Public Health Week! Historically, public health in the United States has been known for landmark achievements like developing immunizations to prevent infectious diseases, announcing tobacco as a health hazard, fluoridating drinking water, ensuring safer food service, and



Scan this QR code with your smartphone for a direct link to our website.

Senior Health & Blood Pressure Clinics

The Health Department offers Senior Health Clinics to county residents aged 55 and older. There is no charge; however, contributions are accepted.

**The clinic is an annual health screening and does not replace a physician's care.*

To make an appointment, call the Health Department at 641-421-9316. Below is the schedule of upcoming Senior Health Clinics.

SENIOR HEALTH CLINICS

MARCH 20 - Mason City @ The Manor

MARCH 27 - Clear Lake @ United Methodist Church

MARCH 29 - Mason City @ Pilgrim Place

APRIL 5 - Mason City @ Regency Apartments

APRIL 10 - Clear Lake @ Zion Lutheran Church

APRIL 12 - Mason City @ Mason City Senior Center

providing services and education to make healthier mothers and babies. Yet, according to The United Nation (UN) the United States is still ranked 24th out of 191 nations in its overall health status, and 1st out of 191 nations in health care spending.

It continued to note that the United States ranked 64th in the maternal death rate category for every 100,000

births and 40th in the childhood death rate for children under the age of five. It may surprise you that South Korea, Slovenia, Bosnia, and Portugal are amongst those ranked higher than the United States in the maternal death rate category.

The United States received its lowest marks in the categories for deaths related to natural disasters, HIV, suicide, and overall violence. Another potential surprise to you is that Canada, the United Kingdom, and Israel all ranked higher than the United States. According to the Peter G. Peterson Foundation, the United States averaged \$9,024 per capita spending compared to Canada at \$4,506 and the United Kingdom at \$3,971, yet they rank better in overall health status.

As "the land of opportunity" we are thoroughly hindering ourselves by not taking care of our health and making improvement a priority. Less than 3% of all health care spending is on health prevention.

So how can we improve? We can make our next generation's health better. We can promote and fund prevention efforts, build safe and healthy communities, help our young people graduate from high school, increase our economic mobility, achieve social justice and health equality, give everyone the choice of safe and healthy food, prepare for the health effects of climate change, make the healthy choice the easy choice, provide quality health care for everyone, fund and make prevention care a priority, and strengthen our public health infrastructure and capacity. Our children (and the rest of us) deserve it!

The Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health is here to help our residents do these things! We are here as a resource, partner, advocate, and provider to ensure our residents' health is a priority. We work hard every day so our residents are given the opportunities and programs or services to make the healthy choice the easy choice.

We are more than just the organization that provides healthcare for low-income families; we provide healthcare and services for all Cerro Gordo County residents. We ensure those who are underinsured or uninsured receive the same health benefits as those with insurance, but we serve all citizens regardless of their income level. We strive to make our children the healthiest they can be through fitness and nutrition education, immunizations, healthy living environments, and much more.

Every day, Public Health professionals work to protect the health of the entire population. The Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health is one of the top 5 largest public health departments in Iowa. We are a leader in statewide public health change. Our department has been serving county residents for over 25 years. We provide over 50 programs and services to the public to ensure they are kept safe and healthy. It is our mission to optimize the health of all people in Cerro Gordo County - that



APRIL 19 - Rockwell @ Rockwell Community Center

APRIL 24 - Swaledale @ United Methodist Church

BLOOD PRESSURE CLINICS

APRIL 11 - (8:15-9AM) @ First Citizens Bank Heritage Club Movie, Cinema West, 4710 4th St SW, Mason City

APRIL 13- (10:30-11:30AM) @ Mason City Senior Center, 326 4th St NE, Mason City

APRIL 17 - (11:15AM-Noon) @ Rockwell Community Center, 114 3rd St. N, Rockwell

APRIL 18 - (9:15-10AM) @ Plymouth City Hall, 616 Broad St. Plymouth

APRIL 21 - (8-9AM) @ Swaledale Town Hall, 402 Main St, Swaledale

APRIL 25 - (10:30-11:30AM) @ Clear Lake Senior Center, 105 S 4th St, Clear Lake

Severe Weather Awareness Week



Iowans are ever mindful that severe weather may strike at any time. Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management, along with the National Weather Service (Des Moines office) designate the last full week of March as Severe Weather Awareness Week in Iowa.

means YOU! We are here to be a resource for you and your family. Know us before you need us!

For more information on how the Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health can be of assistance to you, contact us at 641-421-9300 or visit www.cghealth.com.

*Alcorn, Chauncey L. (2016). Here's Where America Ranks Among the World's Healthiest Countries. Retrieved March 16, 2017, from the Fortune website: <http://fortune.com/2016/09/22/america-healthiest-country/>

*Frohlich, Thomas C., Kent, Alexander, Lieberman, Mark, 24/7 Wall St. (2015). The Healthiest Countries in the World. Retrieved March 16, 2017, from the USA Today website: <http://www.usatoday.com/story/money/2015/04/03/24-7-wall-st-healthiest-countries/70859728/>

*Centers For Disease Control and Prevention. (2013). Ten Great Public Health Achievements in the 20th Century. Retrieved March 16, 2017, from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website: <https://www.cdc.gov/about/history/tenqpha.htm>

*American Public Health Association. (2017). Healthiest Nation NPHW Fact Sheet. Retrieved March 16, 2017, from the National Public Health Week website: <http://www.nphw.org/fact-sheets>

*Otterson, Kevin. (2013). US & OECD Spending on Prevention & Public Health: 3 Charts. Retrieved March 30, 2017, from The Incidental Economist website: <http://theincidentaleconomist.com/wordpress/us-oecd-spending-on-prevention-public-health-3-charts/>

The goal is to provide Iowans a better understanding about the state's spring weather hazards.

Does your family have a plan in place for different scenarios in the event of a weather emergency? Do your children know where to go in the event of a tornado if you are not home? Do you have supplies prepared should you be stuck in your home or car for a few days? These are all very important things to think about and prepare for BEFORE an emergency strikes.

Checklists and toolkit lists are available at our [website](#).

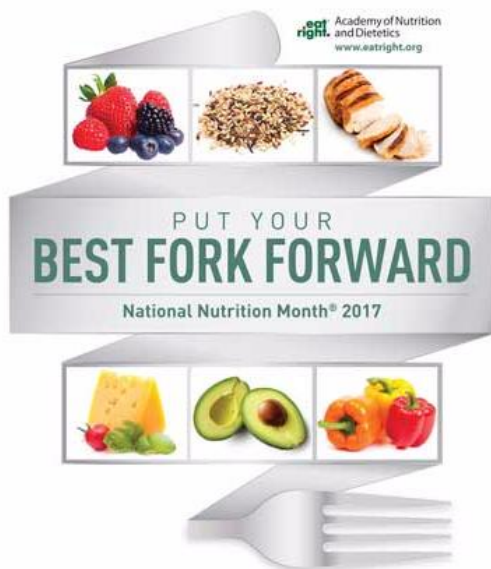
National Nutrition Month: Be Patient. Lifestyle and Diet Change Takes Time.

By *Katelyn Nicholson, RDN, LD*

During the month of March, the Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health and the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics encourage individuals all around the country to celebrate National Nutrition Month. The March 2017 theme "Put Your Best Fork Forward" is an excellent reminder to try your best and to expect progress, not perfection with diet and lifestyle change.

It is estimated that when people focus on changing a single behavior at a time, the likelihood that they'll retain their new habit for a year or more is around 80 percent. But what about those who try to change two or more behaviors at once? When people go this route, rates drop as low as 20 percent.

Of course, there's nothing new in the idea that focusing on less helps you achieve more.



FREE Private Well Water Testing Available



The Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health recently received funding to conduct free water tests for private well owners.

The Department is encouraging all private well owners who have not had their well water tested in the past year to contact the Health Department to request a water test. "Maintaining a safe water supply is one of the most important responsibilities of a private

"Habits are highly ingrained behaviors. They are almost automatic. Changing one habit is hard enough. Trying to change more than one at a time is often a recipe for disaster. So, despite the occasional example to the contrary, my advice is to focus on one habit at a time." - Ian Newby-Clark, Guelph University Psychology Professor.

To schedule a nutrition consultation or for more nutrition tips, visit us on Facebook and Twitter, or on our [website](#).

Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

The Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health joins the Iowa Department of Public Health in urging residents to learn more about colorectal cancer, which is the second leading cause of death in Iowa.



Seven out of 10 people diagnosed with colorectal cancer had no signs or symptoms. This speaks volumes as to why screening is so important. When caught in the early stages, colorectal cancer is 90 percent treatable. Unfortunately, late-stage colorectal cancer is less treatable. Everyone should be screened for colorectal cancer beginning at age 50, or earlier if there is a family history of the disease.

WELLNESS CORNER

The Physical Reasons for Lifting Weights

Right now, gravity is hurting you, every single waking second you are alive gravity is bearing down on you; slowly pulling you closer and closer to the earth. There is a reason we BURY the dead. Gravity is going to cause your skin to sag, your joints to break, your bones to become arthritic. Gravity is a war you cannot "win", but you can defy it and do yourself justice.

What resists gravity? **Muscle.**

- Muscle supports immune system.
- Muscle supports cognitive function.
- Muscle supports movement.
- Muscle helps clean your blood.
- Muscle supports fertility.
- Muscle supports digestion.
- Muscle helps you fight infection.
- Muscle helps you defy gravity.



Without muscle, you would be crippled, in a wheelchair, and on the brink of death.

You don't care about muscle? Fine, gravity is going to hurt you that much faster. Your health will break down that much faster; your quality of life will degrade that much swifter. Your health costs will rise, your expenses increase. You'll be dependent upon others, dependent upon a walker, a wheelchair, an oxygen tank.

well owner," said Sophia Walsh, Environmental Health Specialist, Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health. "Water testing is the only way to ensure the safety of a private water supply."

Private wells are not regulated after installation and therefore, it is the well owner's responsibility to maintain a safe water supply. In order to do this, the Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health recommends that private well owners should properly maintain and test their well water annually for bacteria, nitrates, and arsenic. These potentially harmful contaminants are usually colorless, odorless and tasteless and require proper testing to be detected in a water supply. These contaminants can be avoided or removed with proper well maintenance and/or treatment.

Arsenic is a naturally occurring contaminant present in some bedrock in Northern Iowa. The Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health recently completed a grant project funded by a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to perform a five year study about arsenic in groundwater and how to drill new wells that have a reduced risk of unsafe arsenic levels. The information from this project has been used to significantly decrease the risk of drilling a new well with unsafe levels of arsenic in the county.

If you are interested in testing your private well, please contact Sophia at 641-421-9318, or visit

So you ask, muscle really does all that? YES. Muscle does everything. And the less you have, the quicker you age and the quicker you reach disease.

Many of our Western diseases can be avoided through resistance training, clean eating, and exercise. Will you be wishing and wishing and wishing and wishing you'd taken better "care" of yourself? Wishing you had done things differently?

If you're reading this, it's not too late. Leaving your health in your hands is either the best thing in the world, or the worst thing. So are you trained or untrained?

our [website](#) for more information.

Join Our Mailing List!

Help Us Promote Public Health Services

Forward this electronic newsletter to your friends, family, co-workers, and associates. Have them click the "Join Our Mailing List" button!

Our Mission Statement:

The Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health works to optimize the health of all people in Cerro Gordo County.

Our Vision Statement:

We will be the leader in making Cerro Gordo County the healthiest county in Iowa.

Our Value Statement:

We believe in human dignity, respect for individual choices, promotion for wellness and personal safety, protection of the environment, prevention of disease and access to quality health services.



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Cerro Gordo County Dept. of Public Health, 22 N. Georgia Ave. Suite 300, Mason City, IA 50401

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