



ONEIDA COUNTY
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Oneida County Raises Awareness of Cancer Prevention

Health Department Educating Public Throughout February

The Oneida County Health Department has been spending February raising awareness of cancer prevention through several educational initiatives.

Many factors can contribute to a cancer diagnosis, but there are positive steps that can be taken at any age to help decrease risk. With February being Cancer Prevention Month, Oneida County is reminding its employees and residents to consider modifying certain key behaviors in order to reduce cancer risk.

“The key to prevention lies within each of us,” said Oneida County Executive Anthony J. Picente Jr. “It means making daily choices to promote our own long, healthy life.”

According to the most recent American Cancer Society statistics, each week in Oneida County approximately 28 individuals are diagnosed with cancer and approximately 11 will die from the disease. However, research shows more than 40 percent of all cancers diagnosed, and nearly half of all deaths from cancer in the United States, can be attributed to preventable causes like smoking, excess body weight, physical inactivity and excessive exposure to the sun.

“Each of us, either personally or through family, friends or loved ones, has been affected by cancer in some way,” said Oneida County Director of Health Phyllis D. Ellis, MS, F.A.C.H.E. “The Health Department’s Cancer Prevention in Action program educates the public and promotes initiatives that help to stop this deadly disease, not just in February, but all year long.”

The Health Department’s recommendations include:

- **Staying Away from Tobacco:** Avoid the use of all tobacco products, get help quitting tobacco and keep your kids tobacco free.
- **Eating healthy:** Eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains and legumes. Limit the consumption of salty foods, red meat and alcoholic drinks and avoid processed meat and sugary drinks.

- **Getting active:** 150 minutes of moderate intensity or 75 minutes of vigorous intense activity spread throughout the week for adults. At least one hour of moderate or vigorous, intense activity each day for children and teens.
- **Being sun smart:** Apply sunscreen, seek shade during peak UV times, cover exposed skin and avoid tanning beds or sun lamps.
- **Following cancer screening guidelines:** Get regular check-ups and appropriate vaccinations, know your family history and seek medical care if something doesn't seem right.

Some of the county Health Department's prevention initiatives include:

- **Promoting paid leave policies for cancer screenings:** Educating employers and staff about the importance of paid leave policies. Meeting with business leaders to discuss administration of policies
- **Increasing awareness of new tanning booth law:** Providing information to high schools and health care providers about the new state law prohibiting anyone younger than 18 from indoor tanning.
- **Promoting sun safety practices:** Working to provide sunshade structures, sun safety policies and sunscreen dispensers for area schools and day care centers. Providing informational booths at high schools and colleges on sun safety and UV protection
- **Promoting the Human Papillomavirus Vaccine:** Educating high schools and college students at informational events about how the HPV vaccine protects children from six types of cancer, and providing support and information to health care providers.

The county Health Department also provides free smoking cessation classes throughout the year in conjunction with area health care providers.

For more information about Oneida County Health Department programs, visit www.ocgov.net/oneida/health.