

PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS & VIEWS

A Regional Health Professional Newsletter



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FROM THE MEDICAL DIRECTOR'S DESK

Happy New Year! Welcome to the most recent edition of Public Health News and Views. It is my hope that you were able to spend valuable time with friends and family over the holidays.

As always, this time of the year brings with it increased respiratory illnesses. COVID, Respiratory Syncytial Virus, and Influenza are all prevalent in our communities. It is essential that we remain vigilant and counsel our patients regarding vaccination, the signs and symptoms, and how and when to isolate. As difficult as it is to stay away from family when we are ill, it is essential if we do not want increasing rates of respiratory illnesses.

We need to protect one another. Patients can order at-home testing kits at COVIDTests.gov. Every home can order up to 4 kits. In addition, our agency has testing kiosks at the following locations:

Sturgis 1115 E. Chicago Rd.	Three Rivers 1110 Hill St.	Coldwater 398 N. Willowbrook Rd.
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At the Branch, Hillsdale, and St. Joseph Community Health Agency, we are also noting increasing rates of sexually transmitted infections. Testing has also increased which might be part of the increased rates. Having honest conversations with our patients and addressing risk factors has become even more important for public health. We appreciate your dedication to serving the patients of our counties.

I am always available for conversations and want to know what you are noticing in your practices and hospitals with regard to public health issues. I know that several of us have shared resources and ideas regarding programs that benefit our patients and one another. If you are interested in being a part of a provider round table discussion, please provide your contact information to this form:

<https://forms.gle/Y3waagBTfTr8GB8fA>

2024 COMMUNICABLE DISEASE REPORTING LIST AND BRICK BOOK

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services has released their updated reporting and communicable disease resources for providers. These resources can also be found on our website:

bhsj.org/programs/8.

Brick Book:

<https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/-/media/Project/Websites/mdhhs/CDINFO/MDHHS-Brick-Book.pdf?>

A summary of changes to the Brick Book:

<https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/-/media/Project/Websites/mdhhs/CDINFO/2024-Reportable-Disease-Changes.pdf?>

Reportable Disease List:

<https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/-/media/Project/Websites/mdhhs/CDINFO/MDHHS-Reportable-Diseases-in-Michigan-by-Pathogen-Color.pdf?>

CONGENITAL SYPHILIS:

In Michigan, congenital syphilis (CS) cases have increased by 320% since 2017. A potential outcome of vertical transmission is stillbirth; so far in 2023, three stillbirths have occurred in Michigan, a 200% increase over two years (MDHHS, 2023). In 2022, there were 154 pregnant women diagnosed with syphilis in Michigan, with 37 confirmed cases of congenital syphilis, emphasizing the urgent need for routine testing among pregnant women (MDHHS, 2024).

Be sure to test all pregnant women for syphilis at the first prenatal visit or at the time pregnancy is confirmed. Then repeat screening at 28 weeks, and delivery, especially for those who are considered at high risk for syphilis during pregnancy (e.g., multiple sex partners or drug use) (CDC, 2023). Congenital Syphilis can be prevented by early testing in pregnant women.

Routine testing for all individuals is a great start to decrease infection rates and mitigate the risks associated with syphilis.

If syphilis is detected through testing consider starting treatment immediately with long-acting penicillin G, especially if the patient is pregnant, according to the CDC's STI Treatment Guidelines. Contact us if you have challenges obtaining penicillin G. We can also contact the patient's sex partner(s) to treat and avoid reinfection.

For additional information on testing and reporting guidelines from MDHHS visit:
https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/-/media/Project/Website/mdhhs/Keeping-Michigan-Healthy/HIVSTI/Perinatal-HIV-STIs/Guidelines_for_Perinatal_Testing_and_Reporting.pdf?rev=6f8b8b9b18934a8087b7eaa7163d40bb&hash=FF4E8246CCAC7C0BDA5F28D49CD10A6D

Perinatal Infection Screening Flow Chart:
https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/-/media/Project/Website/mdhhs/Keeping-Michigan-Healthy/HIVSTI/Perinatal-HIV-STIs/Perinatal_Infant_Infection_Screening.pdf?rev=aa8e3e55f6f1474babde2e5726937fcd&hash=ABEFF7B7F9187935D7B9319228AE5383

What Healthcare Providers Can Do (2023)
Center for Disease Control and Prevention.
<https://www.cdc.gov/std/syphilis/CTAproviders.htm>

PRE-EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS (PREP):

Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) can be taken to reduce a person's chances of getting HIV from sex or sharing drug injection equipment. PrEP is for people who do not have HIV but have the chance of getting it. When a patient is taking PrEP and they are exposed to HIV through sex or sharing drug injection equipment, the medicine can keep the virus from establishing a permanent infection. "Taking PrEP as prescribed by a health care provider can reduce the chances of getting HIV by up to 99% from sex and by at least 74% from sharing drug injection equipment" (MDHHS, 2023). For additional information on prescribing PrEP visit:
<https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/clinicians/prevention/prescribe-prep.html>

<https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/keep-mi-healthy/chronicdiseases/hivsti/prep>

FREE CME- HIV PREVENTION AND PREP:

<https://www.freecme.com/products/hiv-prevention-and-prep-laying-the-foundation#>

If you would like any PrEP brochures or handouts to provide to patients, please contact Your Local Health Department. In addition, we have condoms available to the public for free. If you are interested in providing free condoms at your practice, give us a call, at 517-279-9561 x103. Our staff can provide and deliver educational materials and condoms to your office to distribute to patients.

SEASONAL AFFECTIVE DISORDER:

During winter months patients may be at increased risk for Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). Helping patients identify common symptoms of SAD is important. The common symptoms of SAD include the following:

- Increased sleep and daytime drowsiness
- Loss of interest and pleasure in activities formerly enjoyed.
- Social withdrawal and increased sensitivity to rejection
- Irritability and anxiety
- Feelings of guilt and hopelessness
- Fatigue, or low energy level
- Decreased sex drive
- Decreased ability to focus or concentrate
- Trouble thinking clearly
- Increased appetite, especially for sweets and carbohydrates
- Weight gain
- Physical problems, such as headaches

SAD is also more common in patients who already have Depression or Bipolar Disorder, especially those with Bipolar II Disorder.

In addition, Vitamin D deficiency may exacerbate these problems in people with SAD because vitamin D is believed to promote serotonin activity.

How is SAD treated?

Treatments are available to help people with SAD. They fall into four main categories that can be used alone or in combination:

- Light therapy
- Vitamin D
- Psychotherapy
- Antidepressant medication

Light therapy and vitamin D are typically the most common treatment for SAD. Psychotherapy and antidepressants are typically used to treat depression in general. Discuss with the patient treatment options to find a treatment plan that fits their needs.

Seasonal Affective Disorder. (2023). National Institute of Mental Health.
<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/seasonal-affective-disorder>

MEDICATION-ASSISTED TREATMENT (MAT):

The number of drug overdose deaths increased by more than 16% from 2020 to 2021. Over 75% of the nearly 107,000 drug overdose deaths in 2021 involved an opioid (CDC, 2023). To reduce the number of Opioid-related deaths, Medication-assisted treatment (MAT) is an evidence-based option when combined with counseling and other therapeutic techniques, providing a whole-patient approach. For patients dealing with opioid addiction, medication-assisted treatment (MAT) could help them overcome addiction. If you need to refer a patient, here's a list of MAT providers in the tri-county area.

Branch:

Pines Behavioral Health
517-278-2129

Hillsdale:

Hillsdale Health and Wellness
517-437-7040

Center for Family Health
(Jackson)

517-748-5800

Victory Clinical Services
(Jackson)

517-784-2929

St. Joseph:

Covered Bridge Healthcare & Pharmacy
269-467-3228

Pivotal

269-467-1000

Understanding the Opioid Overdose Epidemic (2023) CDC.
<https://www.cdc.gov/opioids/basics/epidemic.html>

CHILDREN'S SPECIAL HEALTH CARE SERVICES:

Your Local Health Department offers many services for the public beyond immunizations and WIC, one of these services is Children's Special Health Care Services (CSHCS). CSHCS enrolls persons, **newborn to 26 years of age**, who have any one of 2,700 medical diagnoses that are chronic, severe, and require treatment by a specialist. Persons with a diagnosis of cystic fibrosis, hemophilia, and sickle cell disorders may be eligible to be enrolled for life. CSHCS does not cover developmental, behavioral, or intellectual conditions. CSHCS is not income-based and can complement private insurance. This program provides families and individuals with:

- Coverage and referral for specialty services based on the person's health problems.
- Family-centered services
- Community-based services
- Culturally competent services
- Coordinated services to pull together the services of many different providers who work within different agencies.

If you know of a family or individual that could benefit from CSHCS services, please have them contact us at:

Branch - 517-279-9561 ext. 146
Hillsdale - 517-473-7395 ext. 146
St. Joseph County - 269-273-2161 ext. 210

Visit our website for more information on CSHCS:
<https://bhsj.org/programs/11>

PRESCRIPTION ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS:

Medications can be very costly for patients, sometimes insurance hardly covers the cost of the prescription. Prescription assistance programs, that patients can enroll in, may assist with the cost of the medication. First, always have the patient check with the drug manufacturer's website. In addition, some pharmacies offer discount programs. If they are still looking for assistance with lowering the cost, these websites may be helpful:

- [costplusdrugs.com](https://www.costplusdrugs.com)
- [RxAssist - Patient Center](https://www.rxassist.com)

HIGH BLOOD LEAD LEVELS IN CHILDREN CONSUMING RECALLED CINNAMON APPLESAUCE POUCHES AND POTENTIAL CHROMIUM EXPOSURE:

The following companies have voluntarily recalled certain lots of the following products that were tested and found to contain high levels of lead:

- WanaBana brand apple cinnamon fruit purée pouches
- Schnucks brand cinnamon-flavored applesauce pouches
- Weis brand cinnamon applesauce pouches

Additional testing by the FDA has also identified a potential for chromium exposure with this recall. The CDC is still trying to determine if chromium is type (III) or type (VI).

Recommendations for Clinicians:

For Possible Lead Exposure:

- Counsel patients and/or their caregivers and guardians not to eat cinnamon-containing apple purée or applesauce products named in the FDA recall announcements.
- Educate patients and/or their caregivers and guardians about the health effects of lead exposure in children.
- Obtain a blood lead level (BLL) in all patients who have consumed a recalled applesauce pouch product using either a capillary or venous blood sample. Laboratory testing for BLL is available through most clinical laboratories.
- Refer to CDC's guidance on [testing children for lead exposure](#) and the American Academy of Pediatrics [clinical guidance for managing lead exposure in children](#).

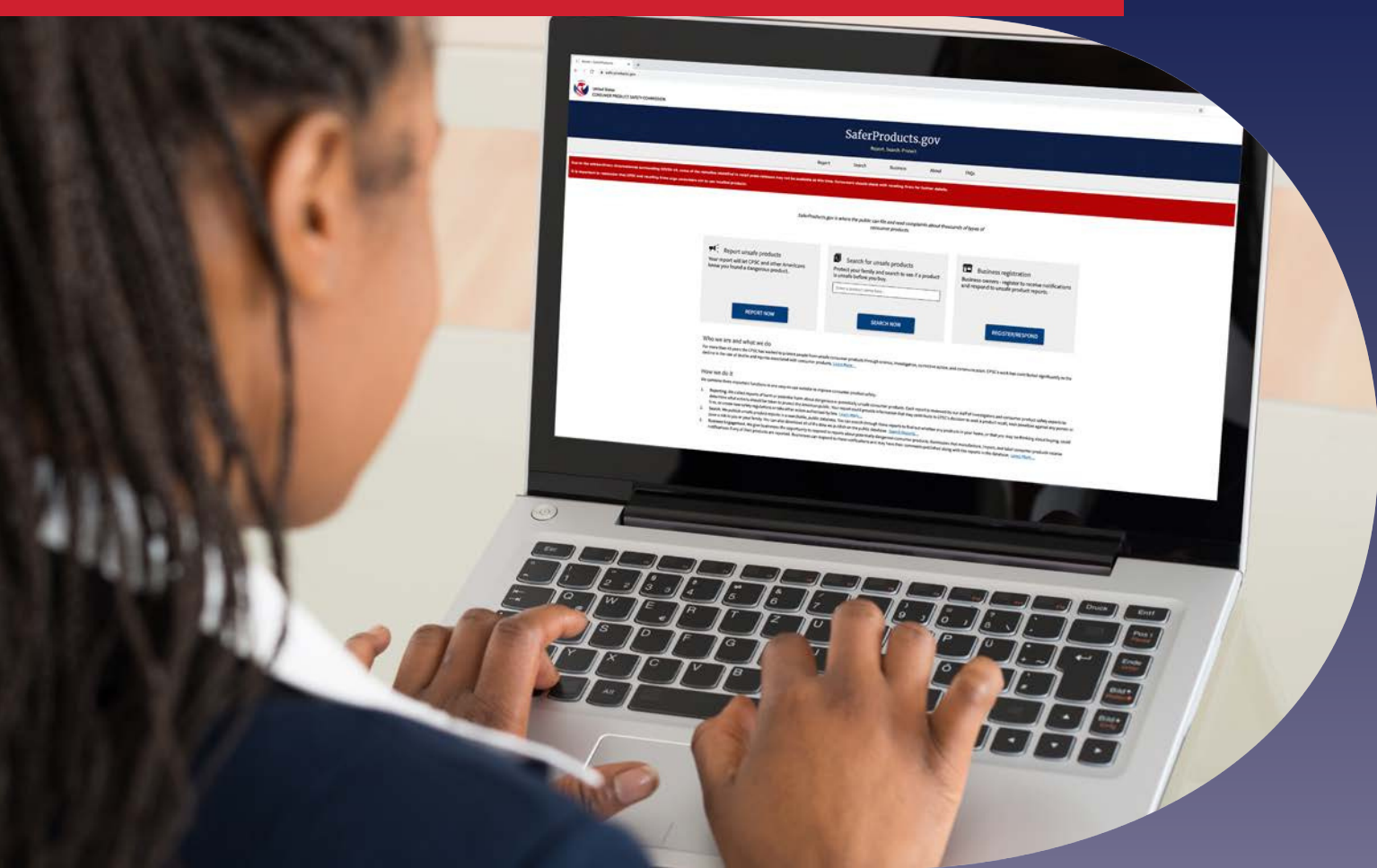
Contact us at 269-273-2161 ext. 209 to report cases of individuals with BLLs above the reference value of 3.5 µg/dL.

For Possible Chromium Exposure:

- Consider obtaining a urinalysis and comprehensive metabolic panel (CMP) including electrolytes, liver enzymes, and BUN/creatinine to assess for hepatic and renal injury.

Update on High Blood Lead Levels in Children Consuming Recalled Cinnamon Applesauce Pouches and Potential Chromium Exposure. (2024). CDC Clinician Outreach and Communication Activity. <https://emergency.cdc.gov/newsletters/coca/2024/010524.html>

Please see below for flyers with QR codes that can connect patients to Consumer Product Safety and U.S Department of Agriculture recalls:



Report unsafe products:
SaferProducts.gov
(800) 638-2772
or (301) 595-7054
 (for deaf or hard of hearing individuals and/or individuals with speech and language disorders)

Log on for the Power to Get Unsafe Products Out of Your Home

SaferProducts.gov

 **Report** an unsafe product

 **Search** for recalls and reports

 **Protect** your family and home

The information you report or share about an incident with a product will help identify unsafe products and help the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission act faster to keep your family and friends safe from unreasonable risks of injuries or death associated with consumer products.

**SCAN THE QR
CODE FOR
USDA FOOD
RECALL LIST:**

