

HOWELL
COUNTY
HEALTH
DEPARTMENT

MARCH CALENDAR

WIC: 2, 3, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 23, 25, 26, 27, 30, 31

Willow Springs WIC: 4

Mountain View WIC: 24

Family Planning: 5, 19

Immunizations: 3, 10, 17

Food Handlers: 2

Holiday's (closed): None

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Clinic Hours:

Monday-Friday 8-12 & 1-5,
closed for lunch 12-1

Administration Hours

Monday-Friday 8-5

Monthly Monitor

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Don't Leave Your Health to Luck from Dawn Hicks, Health Educator

St. Patrick's Day often brings to mind four-leaf clovers, wearing green, and the "luck of the Irish." While a little luck never hurts, good health isn't about chance — it's about preparation and prevention. There are many ways to take control of your health by being proactive: eating well, getting enough sleep, building healthy habits, and staying up to date on preventive screenings.

Eat Right

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, good nutrition is essential at every stage of life. A healthy diet can help you live longer, lower your risk of obesity, and reduce the chances of chronic conditions like heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and certain cancers. It also helps those with existing conditions better manage their health and prevent complications. However, many Americans fall short. Fewer than 1 in 10 adolescents and adults eat enough fruits and vegetables, and most people consume more sodium than recommended. Talk with your healthcare provider about building a



balanced diet and explore the MyPlate guidelines from the United States Department of Agriculture for helpful tips.

Get Enough Sleep

The United States Department of Health and Human Services emphasizes that sleep keeps both the mind and body healthy. Adults should aim for at least seven hours of quality sleep each night. It's not just about time in bed — it's about restful, uninterrupted sleep. Children and teens need even more:

- Teens: 8–10 hours
- School-aged children: 9–12 hours
- Preschoolers: 10–13 hours (including naps)
- Toddlers: 11–14 hours (including naps)
- Babies: 12–16 hours (including naps)
- Newborns: 14–17 hours

Helpful sleep tips from Harvard University include regu-

lar exercise, keeping your bedroom comfortable, limiting caffeine and alcohol, creating a bedtime routine, and managing stress.

Form Healthy Habits

There's no set timeline for forming a habit, but small, consistent changes add up. Choose one healthy action each day and stick with it. Over time, these choices become second nature. Consider habits like improving brain and heart health, going to bed earlier, managing stress, eating better, staying active, setting boundaries with technology, strengthening relationships, and caring for your overall well-being.

Get Preventive Screenings

Preventive screenings and regular checkups can catch health concerns early, when they're easier to treat. Talk with your healthcare provider about recommended screenings based on your age, health history, and risk factors.

Good health isn't about luck — it's about the choices we make every day. By planning ahead and taking small steps, you can set yourself up for a healthier future.



Kidney Disease affects millions of Americans.

“Discover the Power of Nutrition”



March is National Kidney Month from Christina Parrish, LPN

March is National Kidney Month—a reminder that kidney disease is common, serious, and often silent. Chronic kidney disease (CKD) affects millions of Americans, and many do not know they have it because symptoms may not appear until significant damage has occurred. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, early detection is critical to preventing complications such as heart disease and kidney failure. The kidneys filter waste and excess fluid, regulate blood pressure, and help maintain healthy red blood

cells and bones. The two leading causes of kidney disease are **diabetes and high blood pressure**. When blood sugar or blood pressure is not well controlled, the kidneys' delicate filtering system becomes damaged over time.

You may be at higher risk if you: Have diabetes or hypertension, are over age 60, have heart disease, have a family history of kidney disease or are overweight.

Because early kidney disease often has no symptoms, simple screening tests are essential. A blood test (eGFR) and a urine test (albumin) can detect problems early. The

National Kidney Foundation recommends routine screening for anyone with diabetes, high blood pressure, or other risk factors. Protect your kidneys by: controlling blood sugar and blood pressure, reducing sodium and processed foods, staying physically active, avoiding overuse of NSAIDs and not smoking.

This March, take a proactive step—know your risk, ask about screening, and prioritize healthy habits. For more information and resources, visit the National Kidney Foundation at www.kidney.org.

National Nutrition Month from April Bridges, WIC Nutritionist

Established in 1973 by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, National Nutrition Month® is during the month of March. Everyone is invited to learn about making informed food choices and developing healthy eating and physical activity hab-

its. The 2026 theme is **“Discover the Power of Nutrition.”** Nutrition has the power to help individuals and communities thrive. Discover how food choices can help power your day. Learn tips for accessing healthy foods in your area. And build healthy habits

into your day to help you feel great now and in the future. See tips, recipes and more information about 2026 National Nutrition month at

<https://www.eatright.org/national-nutrition-month>.

Importance of Well Water Testing from Curtis Beaulieu, EPHS

The Department of Health and Senior Services recommends you test your private drinking well water at least once each year and anytime the well is serviced or the water changes in look, smell or taste. If you own a private well, you may want to test your water to make sure it is safe. Since many contaminants are colorless and odorless, testing is the only way to determine whether your well water is safe to drink.

The Bureau of Environmental

Epidemiology's Private Drinking Water Program promotes public health for citizens and guests of the State of Missouri by providing information regarding private drinking water to homeowners and Local Public Health Agencies (LPHA). The program provides technical assistance to homeowners and LPHAs regarding water testing, interpretation of such testing and treatment.

Common Contaminants:

- Microorganisms
- Nitrates
- Heavy Metals
- Arsenic
- Fluoride
- Fertilizers and Pesticides
- Industrial Products and Wastes
- Household Wastes

<https://health.mo.gov/living/environment/privatedrinkingwater/>
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Public Health: Prevent. Promote. Protect.

The mission of the Howell County Health Department is to improve, promote and protect the health of Howell County through awareness, assessment, planning and assurance in order that our community may achieve their fullest health potential.



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

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Spring Forward
Set your clock forward one hour