

---

# CLEVELAND COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

---

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Date: April 3, 2014

Contact: DeShay Oliver, PIO  
Cleveland County Health Department  
704-484-5199  
[Deshay.oliver@clevelandcounty.com](mailto:Deshay.oliver@clevelandcounty.com)

---

## **April 7-13 is National Public Health Week**

*Public Health: Start Here*

(Shelby, NC)-- During the first full week of April each year, the American Public Health Association (APHA) brings together communities across the United States to observe National Public Health Week as a time to recognize the contributions of public health and highlight issues that are important to improving our nation. Every year, the Association develops a national campaign to educate the public, policymakers and practitioners about issues related to each year's theme. This year's theme is *Public Health: Start Here*. Each day of public health week is marked by a different topic intended to help people start to live healthier lives. The daily topics and respective health tips are as follows:

**Monday, April 7<sup>th</sup>: Be healthy from the start.** Public health starts at home. From family nutrition and maternal health to safety precautions and disaster preparedness, the first steps a community takes toward public health are in the comfort of their own home. **Start here** for actions you can take to get on the path of better health at home:

- Improve your meal planning.
- Go for a walk, ride your bike, and do other physical activities with your family.
- Conduct safety upgrades.
- Prepare for emergencies.
- Mothers—get proper prenatal care to help ensure you and your baby are healthy and breastfeed your babies for optimal health.

**Tuesday, April 8<sup>th</sup>: Don't Panic.** Public health professionals help communities withstand the impact of a natural or man-made disaster by planning ahead, acting as a source of information during the crisis and helping to relieve the long- and short-term effects. **Start here** to prepare yourself and your family for disasters and hazards:

- Gather your household for a night of emergency preparedness: make plans for putting together an emergency stockpile kit, create a crisis communication plan, designate an emergency meeting place and hold household emergency drills.
- Keep at least a three-day supply of food and water stored in your home, with at least one gallon of water per person per day and a week's supply of food that doesn't require refrigeration.
- CDC recommends a yearly flu vaccine for everyone 6 months of age and older as the first and most important step toward protecting against the flu virus.

**Wednesday, April 9<sup>th</sup>: Get out Ahead.** Prevention is now a nationwide priority, and as the public health system evolves, there are more options than ever when it comes to preventive health measures. **Start here** for preventive steps you can take to get ahead of disease and illness:

- Make simple lifestyle changes such as eating more healthily and being more physically active. This can help prevent conditions such as diabetes and heart disease.
- Get tested for HIV and other communicable diseases at your healthcare provider local health department.
- Learn about cancer screening guidelines and make sure you and your family are following them.
- Get your recommended yearly physical.
- Stay up-to-date with your recommended preventive immunizations.
- Refrain from smoking, excessive alcohol use, misuse of prescription medications, and abuse of other drugs.

**Thursday, April 10<sup>th</sup>: Eat Well.** The system that keeps our nation's food safe and healthy is complex. There is a lot of information to study in order to understand food labels and to learn the best practices during a food borne illness outbreak. Public health professionals can help guide people through their choices. **Start here** to begin making better food choices:

- Balance the calories you eat with physical activity to manage weight.
- Consume more of certain foods and nutrients such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, fat-free and low-fat dairy products, and seafood.
- Consume fewer foods with sodium, saturated fats, trans-fats, cholesterol, added sugars and refined grains.
- Educate yourself on how to properly read and understand food labels.
- Start your day with a healthy, balanced breakfast.
- Reduce portion sizes by eating 5-6 mini meals throughout the day, rather than 2-3 large meals every day.
- Make sure cold foods are kept cold and hot foods are kept hot to prevent the spread of food-borne illnesses.

**Friday, April 11<sup>th</sup>: Be the Healthiest Nation in One Generation.** For the first time in decades, the current generation isn't as healthy as the one that came before. Communities

need to band together to take a stance against this disturbing trend to make sure children and young adults have bright and healthy futures.

The U.S. spends far more on health care than any other country, with such costs rising tenfold from 1980 to 2010 and expected to rise faster than national income during the foreseeable future. However, investing just \$10 per person each year in proven, community-based public health efforts could save the nation more than \$16 billion within five years. To help improve the current health status of our nation, begin by taking better care of yourself. Begin taking your first steps to better health by participating in National Public Health Week by trying some of the health tips above.

Your local health department encompasses many disciplines and services. We are far more than an agency that provides “healthcare to low-income families.” To learn more about the services offered by the Cleveland County Health Department, or for more information on preventive steps you can take to help improve your health, **Start Here:** [www.clevelandcounty.com/cchd](http://www.clevelandcounty.com/cchd) or call 704-484-5100.

###

