

# Health Matters

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## Portion Distortion

By: Mallory Ramos, CHES, Health Educator

With the holidays just around the corner, watching your portion sizes at meals and snacks may be one of the best ways to control your weight.

A “serving” is the amount of food recommended in consumer education materials such as “My Plate”. A “portion” is the amount of a food you choose to eat at any one time—which may be more or

less than a serving.



An easy way to help you understand

how much you should be eating is to translate the serving size into some-

thing that you can easily remember. Instead of trying to memorize lists of ounces, cups, and tablespoons, simply compare the serving sizes of particular foods to familiar objects. For example, a single serving of:

- Vegetables or fruit is about the size of your fist
- Pasta is about the size of one scoop of ice cream
- Meat, fish, or poultry is the size of a deck of cards or the size of your palm (without the fingers)
- Snacks such as pretzels and chips is about the size of a cupped handful
- Apple is the size of a baseball

- Potato is the size of a computer mouse
- Bagel is the size of a hockey puck
- Pancake is the size of a compact disc
- Steamed rice is the size of a cupcake wrapper
- Cheese is the size of a pair of dice or the size of your whole thumb (from tip to base)

Once you get a good sense of serving sizes, you can compare them to the portions you eat and make any necessary changes.

Source: Mayo Clinic

## A Clear and Present Danger to Your Kids

Secondhand smoke from cigarettes is a significant threat to every child's health. It causes numerous health problems in infants and children, including severe asthma attacks, respiratory infections, ear infections, and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). Their lungs grow less than children who do not breathe secondhand smoke, and they get more bronchitis and pneumonia. Wheezing and coughing are common in children who breathe secondhand smoke. Children with asthma who are around secondhand smoke have

more severe and frequent asthma attacks. Children whose parents smoke around them get more ear infections. They also have fluid in their ears more often and have more operations to put in ear tubes for drainage.

You can protect your children from secondhand smoke in the following ways:

- Do not allow anyone to smoke near your child
- Do not smoke or allow others

to smoke in your home or car. Opening a window does not protect your children from smoke.

- Use a smoke-free day care center
- Do not take your child to restaurants or other indoor public places that allow smoking
- Teach children to stay away from secondhand smoke

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



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### HOW HEALTHY ARE WE?

- Life expectancy at birth for females: 80.4 years
- Life expectancy at birth for males: 75.4 years
- Percent of adults 18 years and over who currently smoke: 19%
- Percent of adults 18 years and over who had 5 or more drinks in 1 day at least once in the past year: 23%
- Percent of adults 20 years and over who are obese: 34%
- Percent of adults 20 years and over with high blood pressure: 33%
- Percent of adults 18 years and over who met the 2008 federal physical activity guidelines for aerobic activity through leisure-time aerobic activity: 47%
- Leading causes of death: Heart Disease, Cancer, Stroke

## Distracted Driving

By: Mallory Ramos, CHES, Health Educator

Driving while talking on cell phones—either handheld or hands-free—increases risk of injury and property damage crashes fourfold. Cell phones, however, are not the only cause of distracted driving. Other activities include eating and drinking, talking to passengers, grooming, reading, including maps, using a navigation system, watching a video, and changing the radio station, CD, or MP3 player.

In 2009, 20 percent of injury crashes involved reports of distracted driving. The age group with the greatest proportion of distracted drivers was the under-20 age group—16% of all drivers younger than 20 involved in fatal crashes were reported to have been distracted while driving.

Always keep in mind the following basic suggestions when you are the driver:

**Limit Interaction with Passengers:** Limit talking while driving, keep your eyes on the road and both hand on the wheel

**Avoid Driver Fatigue:** Stay focused on the road and don't drive if you are tired. If necessary, share driving responsibilities

**Don't Drive When Angry or Upset:** Emotions can interfere with safe driving. Wait until you have resolved problems before getting behind the wheel

**Avoid Gawking:** Don't

take your eyes off the road to look at a crash or other activity

**If You Need To Use Your Cell Phone:**

Pull off the road and stop in a safe place to use your phone

Source: CyberDrive Illinois and the US Department of Transportation



**1-866-QUIT-YES**

Call for FREE...7:00am to 7:00pm  
CST Monday through Friday

Smoking is a serious addiction and quitting can be difficult. Becoming smoke-free will take a lot of work and commitment, but you are worth it.

The Illinois Tobacco Quitline is staffed by Registered Nurses, Respiratory Therapists and Tobacco Addiction Specialists. All services are completely confidential.

To learn more about the Illinois Tobacco Quitline, visit online at [www.lungil.org](http://www.lungil.org)

## Holiday Buffets

A popular way to celebrate holidays or any party occasion is to invite friends and family to a buffet. However, this type of food service where foods are left out for long periods leave the door open for uninvited guests—bacteria that cause foodborne illness. Here are some tips to help you have a SAFE holiday party:

### Safe Food Handling

Always wash your hands before and after handling food. Keep your kitchen, dishes, and utensils clean also. Always serve food on clean plates—not those previously holding raw meat and poultry.

### Cook Thoroughly

If you are cooking foods ahead of time for your party, be sure to cook foods thoroughly to safe minimum internal temperatures. Cook all raw beef, pork, lamb and veal steaks, chops, and roasts to a minimum internal temperature of 145° F. Cook all raw ground beef, pork, lamb, and veal to an internal temperature of 160° F. Cook all poultry to a safe minimum internal temperature of 165°F.



### Use Shallow Containers

Divide cooked foods into shallow containers to store in the refrigerator or freezer until serving. This encourages rapid, even cooling. Reheat hot foods to 165°F. Arrange and serve food on several small platters rather than on one large platter. Keep the rest of the food in the oven.

### The Two-Hour Rule

Foods should not sit at room temperature for more than two hours. Keep track of how long foods have been sitting on the buffet table and discard anything there two hours or more.

### Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold

Hot foods should be held at 140°F or warmer. You can keep hot foods hot with chafing dishes, slow cookers, and warming trays. Cold foods should be held at 40°F or colder. Keep foods cold by nesting dishes in bowls of ice.

Source: United States Department of Agriculture

## Cervical Cancer: Frequently Asked Questions

By: Marcia Dowling, RN, BSN, IBCCP Supervisor

January is Cervical Cancer Awareness Month. Talk to your doctor about Cervical Cancer Screening. The Illinois Breast and Cervical Cancer Program offers free Pap Tests to women ages 35 to 64 years who do not have insurance. Symptomatic younger women may also qualify. For more details call the Logan County Department of Public Health, Illinois Breast and Cervical Cancer Program at 1-800-269-4019.

### What is Cervical Cancer?

Cervical Cancer develops when the cells in the cervix begin to grow out of control and invade the nearby tissue.

### What causes Cervical Cancer?

No one knows exactly why one woman gets Cervical Cancer and another doesn't. However, we do know that one of the most important risk factors for Cervical Cancer is

the HPV (Human Papilloma Virus). HPV is a common sexually transmitted disease which has different subtypes or strains and only certain strains are likely to cause Cervical Cancer. Only a small percentage of women with HPV develop Cervical Cancer. However, almost all cervical cancers have evidence of HPV in them.

### Are there other risk factors for Cervical Cancer?

Several factors may increase the risk of HPV becoming Cervical Cancer. These include smoking, obesity, HIV, Chlamydia infection, and family history.

### Can HPV be prevented?

HPV is a sexually transmitted disease and therefore prevention measures are the same as any other sexually transmitted disease. The major strains of HPV can be prevented by the HPV vaccine Gar-

dasil which is recommended for females 11 through 26.

### Are there early warning signs of Cervical Cancer?

Cervical Cancer in the early stages usually has no signs or symptoms.

### If there are no symptoms how is Cervical Cancer detected?

Cervical Cancer is usually considered a preventable disease as it takes a long time for precancerous lesions to progress to invasive cancer. The most effective method to detect precancerous lesions is the Pap test performed on a regular basis every one to two years.

*Incidence and mortality rates from National Cancer Institute*

[www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov)

*Funding through the Illinois Department of Public Health*



### Crashes are the leading cause of death for children from 3 to 14 years old.

#### Recommendations for all ages

\*Select a car seat based on your child's age, height, and weight\*Keep your child in the car seat for as long as possible, as long as your child fits the seat's height and weight requirements\*All children under 13 should ride in the back seat\*

A Certified Child Passenger Safety Technician can check your car seat for free at the Logan County Department of Public Health. Call 217-735-2317 to make an appointment.

## Got Mice?

It is getting colder outside—rodents may enter your home for food or shelter! Seal up holes or gaps in your home, trap any existing rodents, and clean up any sources of food or water and items that might provide shelter for them.

Mice and rats are pesky critters that can enter your home through small holes or gaps. Mice can squeeze through a hole the size of a nickel, and rats can squeeze through a hole the size of a half dollar!

Worldwide, rats and mice are the cause of over 35 diseases! In the

US, rodents can spread diseases like rat-bite fever, leptospirosis, and lymphocytic choriomeningitis virus, a virus that poses a particular risk for pregnant women. If rodents invade your home this fall or winter, here are a few steps to protect yourself and your family.

If you find signs of rodents or their droppings in your home, take precautions to clean up the area safely.

- **Seal Up** holes or gaps in your home to prevent rodents from returning

- **Trap** rodents in and around your home using an appropriate snap trap
- **Clean up** any sources of food or water, and items that might provide shelter for rodents.

Source:  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention





**Public Health**  
Prevent · Promote · Protect

**Logan County Department of  
Public Health**

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Lincoln, IL 62656-0508  
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Hours: Monday-Friday  
7:30am-4:30pm

**We're on the Web!**  
Check us out at...  
[www.lcdph.org](http://www.lcdph.org)

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**The Logan County Department of Public Health offers the following services:**

**Chronic Health**

- Case Management
- Home Visits (call for the latest income requirements)
- Screening and monitoring of high blood pressure, anemia, and diabetes
- Health supervision and counseling
- Vision and hearing screening
- Foot care clinics

**Communicable Disease**

- Follow-up to prevent spread of contagious or sexually transmitted diseases
- Anonymous HIV/AIDS testing and counseling
- Tuberculosis Services
- Flu, pneumonia, and foreign travel immunizations
- Hepatitis B vaccination

**Maternal Health**

- Breastfeeding Education
- Free pregnancy testing
- High risk infant follow-up
- SIDS follow-up

**Child Health**

- Blood lead level testing
- Childhood immunizations
- Vision/hearing screenings
- Communicable disease surveillance in schools
- Car seat program

**Dental Services**

- Preventative care including complete exams, x-rays, and hygiene service
- Restorative dental care including fillings, root canals, extractions, and dentures

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# Public Health Preparedness

## WINTER PREPAREDNESS IN YOUR VEHICLE

By: Shana Bean, BS, CHES



### Be Prepared Before the Storm Strikes!

Plan your travel and check the latest weather reports to avoid the storm!

**Fully check and winterize your vehicle** before the winter season begins.

### Carry a Winter Storm Preparedness Kit

Cell Phone	Blankets	Flashlights
First Aid Kit	Knife	Extra Clothing
Shovel	Ice scraper	Tool kit
Tow Rope	Water	Sand for traction
Non-perishable food	Paper towels for sanitation	
Large empty can to use as emergency toilet		

**Keep your gas tank near full** to avoid ice in the tank and fuel lines

**Avoid traveling alone** and inform someone of the routes you will travel.



### When Caught In a Winter Storm

#### Stay in vehicle:

- You will become quickly disoriented in wind-driven snow and cold
- Run the motor about 10 min. each hour for heat.
- Open the window slightly for fresh air.
- Make sure the exhaust pipe isn't blocked.

#### Be visible to rescuers:

- Turn on the dome light at night when running the engine.
- Tie a bright colored cloth to your antenna or door.
- After snow stops falling, raise the hood to indicate you need help.

#### Exercise:

- From time to time, move arms, legs, fingers and toes vigorously to keep blood circulating and to keep warm.

Source: *National Weather Service*

## Maintaining Your Water Supply

Extreme cold can cause water pipes in your home to freeze. When very cold temperatures are expected:

- Leave all water taps slightly open so they drip continuously.
- Keep the indoor temperature warm.
- Improve the circulation of heated air near pipes. For example, open cabinet doors beneath the kitchen sink.

If you cannot thaw your pipes, or if the pipes are ruptured, use bottled water or get water from a neighbor's house. As an emergency measure, snow can be melted for water. Bringing water to a rolling boil for three minutes will kill most microorganisms or parasites that may be present, but will not remove chemical pollutants sometimes found in snow.

## Shoveling Snow after a Winter Storm

Shoveling snow is extremely hard work that places great physical demands on the body. You should only shovel snow if you are in good physical health. It is important to know your limits when shoveling snow. If you experience chest discomfort or arm pain or numbness, stop immediately and go indoors.

When shoveling snow, follow these tips:

- Use a proper shovel and lift with your leg muscles
- Do not smoke while you are working, Smoking constricts the blood vessels.
- Do not drink alcohol while you work.
- If you use a snow blower, be sure to have a firm footing before you start it. Remove obstacles from your path and aim the snow carefully.

Source: *Illinois Department of Public Health*



When a disaster occurs in Logan County, we will need **your** help. The Logan County Medical Reserve Corps is committed to helping the community before, during, and after a disaster. The Logan County MRC is made up of medical and nonmedical volunteers who have completed specialized training to help Logan County during emergency situations.

Whether you are a healthcare professional or a skilled clerk, you can contribute to the Logan County MRC and make a difference. Volunteers benefit from a minimal time commitment, hands-on drills, professional CEUs, and networking. It is time to do your part for your community— join the Logan County Medical Reserve Corps!

# Radon

## The Silent Killer—Get The Facts

You can't see, smell or taste it but it may be lurking. It may be in your home and it is estimated 21,000 people die from it each year. What is this danger? The answer is radon gas.

Radon is a carcinogen and is the leading cause of lung cancer among non-smokers in the United States. Radon is a radioactive gas that comes from the breakdown of uranium in the soil and rock. It can enter your home through cracks in the foundation, floors, walls, construction joints, around service pipes or suspended floors and cavities within walls. If you rely on a well for your water supply and your home has tested positive for radon, your water may even contain levels of radon.

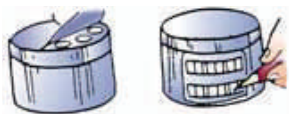


Radon is an inhalation hazard and becomes a danger when radon gas in the home decays into radioactive particles. Once these particles are inhaled and trapped in the lungs, they give off energy that can cause tissue damage which may lead to lung cancer. Radon in water can be a hazard through inhalation of water droplets during activities such as showering.

Not everyone exposed to elevated levels of radon will develop cancer and the onset of exposure and the occurrence of the disease may be many years. A home with a high level of radon does however pose a greater health risk for developing lung cancer and people who smoke and live in a home with elevated levels of radon are even at greater risk. Overall, the chance of developing lung cancer depends upon the level of radon in your home, the amount of time you spend in your home, and whether you smoke or have ever smoked.

Logan County in addition to much of Illinois is rated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as zone 1 meaning Logan County is in a zone of highest potential for radon to be found at unsafe levels. Regardless of which zone a home is located, any home has the potential to contain unsafe levels of radon. Just because your neighbor's home tested safe for radon doesn't mean your home will be safe. The only way to determine if your home is safe is to have it tested.

Radon in the air is measured at "picocuries per liter of air" or "pCi/L". Although any level of radon is not considered safe, levels of 4pCi/L or greater meet the EPA level to take action. There are several courses of action you can take to remove radon and one way is to have a home mitigation system to the outside. Such radon mitigation systems must be installed by a state licenses mitigation contractor.



Radon testing is simple, inexpensive, and can be done with a home test kit. These kits can usually be purchased at department, home improvement, or hardware stores. The Logan County Department of Public Health, through a grant from the Illinois Emergency Management Agency, has kits available at a reduced cost of \$5.00.

You can stop in Monday-Friday from 7:30am-4:30pm to purchase yours.

If you haven't tested your home yet, this is a good time to purchase your test kit. If you have questions or would like more information, you can contact the Logan County Department of Public Health at (217) 735-2317.

Sources: IEMA ([www.state.il.us/iema/radon/availpub.asp](http://www.state.il.us/iema/radon/availpub.asp)) and the US EPA ([www.epa.gov/radon/pubs](http://www.epa.gov/radon/pubs))