

The Health Connection NEWSLETTER



It's Flu Season!

By: Krista Alexander RN, BSN

Influenza (flu) remains a major recurring health threat in the United States, leading to millions of illnesses, hundreds of thousands of hospitalizations, and thousands of deaths every year. Despite having vaccines, flu continues to strain the

healthcare system—especially during severe seasons when hospitalization rates spike and vulnerable populations are hit hardest. From 2023 to 2025, flu surveillance data has shown dramatic seasonal variations, with the recent 2024–2025 season having set new records for hospitalizations and pediatric deaths. These patterns reflect the unpredictable and highly dynamic nature of flu transmission and disease burden.

The best flu prevention is getting vaccinated. The Greenup County Health Department has a full selection of vaccine and is ready to make appointments. In addition, we have a new Immunization building that provides quick drive-through experience.

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Greenup County Health Department
Public Health = Public Wealth

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It is a time to honor the lives of babies gone too soon, support grieving families, and raise awareness about prevention and safe sleep practices.

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Breast Cancer- A Survivor's Story

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It's Flu Season! continued...

Each fall, the Health Department schedules off-site vaccination clinics. Below is our current list:

Off-Site Flu and Covid Vaccine Schedule

- October 16- Monster Bash at Greenup County Health Department, Greenup, KY. 5PM-7PM
- October 18- Harvest Festival at Flatwoods City Park, Flatwoods, Kentucky. 1PM-5PM. 50 Free Flu shots will be available (First come, first served).
- October 22- Flatwoods Senior Center in Flatwoods, Kentucky. 10AM-12PM.
- October 23- Spirit Night at Greenup County High School, Greenup, Kentucky. 5PM-7PM.

In addition, if someone cannot leave their home, the Health Department will schedule a home visit and provide vaccination within the home. This is a good option for those who have mobility difficulties.



FESTIVAL
1-5 P.M.
October 18, 2025

FLATWOODS
HARVEST FESTIVAL

AT THE PARK
AFTER DARK
5-9 P.M.

& AT THE PARK AFTER DARK

The poster is a vibrant illustration for the Flatwoods Harvest Festival. It features a central jack-o'-lantern with a carved face, surrounded by various autumn-themed items like pumpkins, gourds, and ears of wheat. The background is a mix of orange and black, with a green border at the bottom. Text is placed in white and yellow on the orange background and in white on the black background.

Come Join Us!!

Lots of Fun!!



Treats

Wear Your Costumes

MONSTER BASH

2025



Where—Greenup County Health Department

Date-Thursday October 16

Time- 5pm to 7pm

Games

Prizes



October is Infant Loss and SUID Awareness Month



By: Cassie Mace, RN

Every October, communities across the nation pause to recognize Infant Loss and Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID) Awareness Month. It is a time to honor the lives of babies gone too soon, support grieving families, and raise awareness about prevention and safe sleep practices.

For many families, the loss of an infant is not just a statistic—it is a deeply personal tragedy. Whether through miscarriage, stillbirth, or infant loss in the first year of life, parents and loved ones carry the memory of their child

forever. This month is about breaking the silence surrounding infant loss and offering compassion, understanding, and community support to those who are grieving.

Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID), which includes Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and accidental sleep-related deaths, is one of the leading causes of death for infants under one year old. While not every tragedy can be prevented, awareness and education about safe sleep practices can save lives.

Recommendations include:

- Always placing babies on their backs to sleep.
- Using a firm, flat sleep surface such as a crib, bassinet, or play yard.
- Keeping soft items, toys, and loose bedding out of the sleep area.
- Room-sharing without bed-sharing during the first year.

This month, let's remember the babies who are no longer with us, stand with families who carry these losses, and spread life-saving information. By honoring the past and educating for the future, we can bring comfort and hope to many.

If you or someone you know has experienced infant loss, you are not alone. Support groups and resources are available to help families through their grief journey. Together, we can bring light, compassion, and awareness during this important month.

October: Healthy Lung Month

By Jamee Helms, LPN

Every breath we take is powered by our lungs, yet many of us don't think about lung health until there's a problem. October is recognized as National Healthy Lung Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness about the importance of protecting and maintaining healthy lungs.

Our lungs are vulnerable to a wide range of issues, including asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), infections, and lung cancer. Environmental factors such as air pollution, allergens, and exposure to harmful chemicals can also take a toll. One of the most common and preventable threats to lung health is tobacco use both smoking and exposure to secondhand smoke. Vaping, while often perceived as safer, also carries serious risks to the respiratory system.

Taking steps to protect your lungs can make a lasting difference in your overall health. Here are some ways to support healthy lungs:

- Don't smoke or vape. If you do, seek support to quit your lungs will start to heal almost immediately.
- Avoid secondhand smoke and pollutants. Stay away from areas with heavy smoke, dust, or strong chemicals.



Director Chris Crum & the Mega Lung

- Protect yourself at work and outdoors. Wear masks or protective gear when exposed to dust, fumes, or allergens.
- Stay active. Exercise strengthens your lungs and improves their capacity.
- Keep up with vaccinations. Flu, COVID-19, and pneumonia vaccines help prevent respiratory infections that can damage the lungs.
- Schedule regular checkups. Early detection of lung issues can lead to better outcomes.

This month is a reminder to prioritize your breathing health not just in October, but all year long. Take steps now to protect your lungs, and give yourself the gift of easier, healthier breathing for years to come.

October Employee Anniversaries



Kara McCoy
2 Years



Kristie Swanagan
12 Years

Breastfeeding and Cancer Prevention

By Stephanie Gillum BFPC & Andrea Collins MS, RDN, LD

Did you know that breastfeeding can help keep both moms and babies healthier? Research shows that breastfeeding can lower a mom's risk of breast and ovarian cancer.

How Does it Help Moms?

- When women breastfeed, their bodies go through hormonal changes. This can delay the return of menstrual periods after childbirth.
- This means moms have less lifetime exposure to estrogen, a hormone that can cause breast cancer cells to grow.
- During pregnancy and breastfeeding, the body also sheds breast tissue. This can remove cells that might have been abnormal or even cancerous.
- Breastfeeding also lowers the number of times a woman ovulates. Fewer ovulations mean less exposure to estrogen and abnormal cell growth, which may help prevent ovarian cancer.

How Long Should You Breastfeed?

Experts like the American Institute of Cancer Research and the World Health Organization recommend breastfeeding exclusively (only breast milk) for at least 6 months. After 6 months, other foods can be added, but breast milk should still make up at least half of your baby's nutrition.

What Research Shows:

- For every 12 months a woman breastfeeds (this can be with one child or over several children), her risk of breast cancer goes down by about 4.3%. (Bever, 2025)



Stephanie

Andrea

- An Australian study found that women who breastfed more than 13 months were 63% less likely to develop ovarian cancer than those who breastfed for less than 7 months. (Bever, 2025)
- Women who breastfed multiple children for more than 31 months had up to a 91% lower risk of ovarian cancer compared to women who breastfed less than 10 months. (Bever, 2025)

How Does it Help Babies?

- Breastfed babies are less likely to become obese later in life.
- Breastfeeding strengthens the baby's immune system, helping them fight off sickness.
- Breastfeeding is a powerful choice for both mom and baby's health.

Some Thoughts from Your Breastfeeding Peer Counselor

We often associate the month of October with pink ribbons, strength, and hope. Breast cancer has impacted nearly everyone of us in some way or another. This is why bringing breast cancer awareness to the public is so important! Education is the key to teaching all women, *continued on page 7*

Breastfeeding and Cancer Prevention (continued)

including breastfeeding mothers, how to advocate for themselves.

When I was a new breastfeeding mother, I remember reading about the amazing benefits that breast milk provided. Breastfeeding does much more than lower your risk of asthma, diabetes, and SIDS. The CDC suggests that the longer a woman breastfeeds, the greater the benefit to her long-term health, including a reduction in the risk for breast and ovarian cancer. (CDC, 2025)

During my personal breastfeeding journey, I did notice occasional lumps. Discovering a lump at any stage of life can be cause of concern, especially when you are breastfeeding. Sometimes, a lump can develop as a sign of a clogged milk duct. This can often be remedied by making a small latch adjustment during feeding times or massaging the affected area. I firmly believe that if it is concerning you, then it never hurts to get checked out by your primary care provider or your OBGYN.

How Can We Help You?

Breastfeeding is a journey that benefits both you and your baby in many ways, including lowering your risk of breast and ovarian cancer. We know that every mother's experience is unique, and questions or concerns can arise along the way—whether about breastfeeding, your breast health, or noticing changes like lumps. The Greenup County Health Department is here to support you on your journey. Don't hesitate to reach out—we can provide guidance, resources, and the help you need to protect your health and your baby's health. Remember, early awareness and education are key to preventing and detecting breast cancer.

Sources:

Bevens, T. (2025, July 8). Can breastfeeding really lower your breast cancer risk?. MD Anderson Cancer Center.

<https://www.mdanderson.org/cancerwise/can-breastfeeding-really-lower-your-breast-cancer-risk.h00-159778023.html>

CDC. (2025, May 5). Breastfeeding Benefits Both Baby and Mom. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

<https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/features/breastfeeding-benefits.html>





UK King's Daughters is hosting a day of free, healthy family fun with the second Healthy Hoopla event, taking place from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., Saturday, October 11, at Camp Landing, 10699 U.S. Route 60, in Ashland.

The event will feature:

- Free health screenings
- Health education with more than 25 booths, including mental health, heart disease, cancer and more
- Inflatables sponsored by Camp Landing
- Safety City with helicopter, ambulance and other vehicles
- Walkthrough health exhibits the Mega Colon and Mega Lung
- Smoothie bike, a stationary bike with a blender that uses human power to blend ingredients for a healthy smoothie
- Meet and greet UK's Wally Cat
- Walk with a health professional, featuring a variety of medical topics
- Backdrop for family photos
- Free giveaways for the whole family
- Free at-home COVID tests while supplies last
- UK King's Daughters K-9 team volunteers Lakota & Lacy
- "Calm Down Corner" activity with local schools' Family Resource and Youth Services Centers (FRYSC)
- Much more

The City of Ashland's bus system will run free transportation routes every 30 minutes to and from the event.

Sponsors include the City of Ashland, Boyd County Government, Camp Landing Entertainment District, Malibu Jack's, UK King's Daughters, King's Daughters Health Foundation, and UK HealthCare.

Breast Cancer- A Survivor's Story



By: Brenda Barney- Howe
HANDS Home Visitor

At age 55, I felt something unusual when performing my monthly breast self-exam. I went to my doctor and showed them the lump. After some testing, I received a diagnosis that no one wants to hear. I had breast cancer. After treatment, I am happy to say that I am free of cancer.

Breast cancer is the second most common cancer among women in the United States. (Some kinds of skin cancer are the most common.) Breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death among women in the United States. (Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death.) For non-Hispanic Black women and Hispanic women, breast cancer is the leading cause of cancer death. A woman's risk of breast cancer nearly doubles if she has a first-degree relative (for example, their mother, sister, or daughter) who has been diagnosed with breast cancer. Approximately 15% of women who get breast cancer have a family member diagnosed with it.

Most breast cancers share the same imperative: early detection matters. Across all types of breast cancer, the 5-year relative survival rate in the U.S. is 91% once it hits the lymph nodes and 99% if it's still localized. Detecting cancer before it spreads gives more treatment options and a better chance at complete remission.

Many breast cancers are first noticed by women themselves. Research shows women detect about 25% of breast cancer. That said, awareness of one's own body and prompt reporting of changes



is widely encouraged by health organizations and physicians. However, mammography remains one of the most powerful screening tools available.

Breast screening should take place every other year starting at age 40. Younger women should talk with their health care providers about whether early screening or additional imaging would be appropriate.

To everyone reading this, take care of yourself, know your body and what's normal for you. Complete monthly self-exams at all ages. Don't hesitate to tell your physician about changes. Don't skip your mammograms. They are one of the best health detection tools.

If you or someone you know walks this path, do it together. Embrace conversation, honesty and compassion. And finally: cancer may be a part of your story, but it doesn't get to write the whole book.

IN CELEBRATION OF
Breast Cancer
AWARENESS MONTH

**SCHEDULE YOUR
MAMMOGRAM TODAY!**



KDMC MOBILE MAMMOGRAPHY UNIT

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2025
9AM-3PM

GREENUP COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

CALL (606) 408-1111 TO SCHEDULE

Early Detection Saves Lives

Check Out the Latest Food Scores!

Our environmentalists have been hard at work making sure the county is safe. Click to see the scores in Greenup County!

[Click Here](#)