

SW REGION COMMUNITY HEALTH CORNER

A Monthly Newsletter by K-State Research and Extension,
the Immunize Kansas Coalition and local partners supporting
women's wellness



Healthy Heart, Healthy Family!

Though the United States designates February as Heart Health month, awareness and action for a healthier heart are needed all year long!

Heart disease is a leading cause of death in women. The percentage of young women (ages 25-34) in Kansas who have CVD (cardiovascular disease) is 2.3% compared to 1.8% in the nation. CVD risk goes up with age among all women no matter their race or ethnicity. Every 100 seconds, a woman in the U.S. suffers a **heart attack**. Having CVD can also increase the risk of having a **stroke** which can be a blocked artery or a leaking, bursting blood vessel in the brain. However, most people can reduce their risk of CVD, heart attack, and stroke with a healthy lifestyle.

A healthy lifestyle includes healthy eating, moving the body more, and coping with stress. Setting achievable goals for yourself, like walking more, filling half your plate with green and leafy veggies, and taking deep, slow breaths throughout the day, can lead to better heart health. Making healthy choices can cut your risk of heart disease in half. It's never too early or too late to start working towards heart health, so include your family in physical activity, stress management, and healthy food on family plates!

Another important step to a healthy heart is knowing your **risk factors**. For women, heart disease, CVD risk factors include smoking, diabetes, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, or a history of these while pregnant. Taking actions to reduce these risks and making choices to stay healthy is important for you, your family, and your community.

HEART ATTACK



Chest pain
and/or
shortness of
breath



Stomach pain,
nausea, and/or
vomiting



Anxiety and/or
sleep problems



Feeling dizzy,
lightheaded,
and/or extremely
tired



Pain in arms,
neck, back, or
jaw



Sweating a lot
or cold sweats

If you have any of these symptoms, don't wait, **CALL 911**

Vaccination.

How Vaccines Reach You.

Vaccines have been around for a long time. The first vaccine was developed in 1798 to fight smallpox, and since that time, vaccines have become a trusted way to fight and prevent disease. Today, vaccines help reduce illnesses like the flu, HIV, COVID-19, chickenpox, and shingles across all people.

Vaccines are an essential step towards staying healthy, but few know how vaccines get to you and your family. The process starts with laboratories worldwide tracking viruses, bacteria, and antibodies and using other information to develop safe and effective vaccines.

So, how does the vaccine get from the lab to you? After many tests by experts, the vaccine gets produced in large amounts, packaged, and shipped to access points so it can be distributed for use.

Access points like hospitals, health departments, pharmacies, doctor's offices, and FQHCs (Federally Qualified Health Centers) place vaccine orders to national agencies like the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**, or state agencies. In Kansas, the **Department of Health and Environment (KDHE)**, manages much of the vaccines for access points. The amount of vaccine each access point receives depends on how many people live in the area, their ages, health conditions, and other factors. When vaccines arrive in communities, they are tested to ensure they remained effective and safe during their journey to you.

Find a vaccine near you:

Search vaccines.gov

Text your ZIP code at **438829**

Call **1-800-232-0233**



Where Does Health Come From?

Healthy Affordable Food.

Many Kansans are not sure if they will have enough food to feed their family each day. Many also wish they had better food options to pick from that are healthy and appropriate for their cultural and traditional ways of cooking. These are examples of **food insecurity**, which impacts over 350,000 people in Kansas each year.

Food insecurity has been magnified by the COVID-19 pandemic and high unemployment rates in recent years. Many people lack the foods important to their families. Every culture is unique and celebrates their traditions and history through food preparation, seasonings, and special foods at special events. Many Hispanic and Latino cultures have a rich history of fresh, plant-based meals that are good for health and cultural connections in communities. For some, maca powder, chia seeds, spirulina, and cacao are considered "superfoods" that can lead to whole-body health and increase comfort and appreciation among cultures.

Many who lack food can benefit from community resources like **food pantries**, community gardens, blessing boxes, farmers' markets, and programs that support getting food.

You can become an advocate for accessible and appropriate food by helping to grow client-choice food pantries in your community. In a traditional food pantry, clients are offered a bag or box of preselected items with limited opportunity to pick items for their culture and cooking styles. Client-choice models allow families to choose their own items. Find out more about client-choice food pantries and how you can take action to increase access to food with the help of the Kansas Healthy Food Initiative at: <https://kansashealthyfood.org>.

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