

Take a Time-Out for Women's Health

National Women's Health Week is a weeklong health observance coordinated by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office on Women's Health. National Women's Health Week empowers women to make their health a top priority. With the theme "It's Your Time," the nationwide initiative encourages women to take simple steps for a longer, healthier, and happier life. During National Women's Health Week, communities, businesses, government, health organizations, and other groups work together to educate women about steps they can take to improve their health and lower their risks of certain disease. Important steps include:



Getting at least 2 hours and 30 minutes of moderate physical activity, 1 hour and 15 minutes of vigorous physical activity, or a combination of both each week

For 2007, 42.4% of women in Indiana reported insufficient moderate or vigorous physical activity as opposed to 36.9% of men.

Fourteen percent of Hoosier women did not participate in any physical activity, compared to 11.4% of men.

Eating a nutritious diet

For 2007, 5.8% of women in Indiana reported eating less than one serving of fruits and vegetables per day.

Thirty-five percent of Hoosier women eat more than one but less than three servings a day.

Avoiding risky behaviors, such as smoking

For 2008, 23.9% of Indiana women were current smokers, compared to a national average of 16.5%.

The rate of Indiana mothers who reported smoking during pregnancy (17%) is considerably higher than the national average (11%), making Indiana one of the highest among states.

It is important to celebrate National Women's Health Week, and to continue this focus throughout the year, to remind women that taking care of themselves is essential to living longer, healthier, and happier lives. Women are often the caregivers for their spouses, children, and parents and forget to focus on their own health. But research shows that when women take care of themselves, the health of their family improves. It is important to educate the women in your life about the steps they can take to improve their health and prevent disease. When women take even the simplest steps towards becoming healthy, the results can be significant and everyone can benefit.

One way that local communities can get involved in National Women's Health Week is to encourage other women to participate in the Woman Challenge, an eight-week physical activity challenge for better health. The Woman Challenge encourages women to get at least 2 hours and 30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity each week, including muscle-strengthening activities on 2 or more days of each week.

Additional Resources

[National Women's Health Week](#)

[Women's Challenge](#)

[Office of Women's Health at the Indiana State Department of Health](#)

[Indiana Tobacco Quitline](#)

To find out what National Women's Health Week activities are planned in your area, you can search the [Events](#) page.

The Office of Women's Health (OWH) at the Indiana State Department of Health is working to help Indiana women achieve optimal health and a high quality of life in every stage of life. OWH applies a gender focus to population-based approaches, including policy and environmental change, to support Indiana women in engaging in healthy behaviors.