

# WELLNESS WATCH

Across the Lifespan, Across Indiana



JULY

## July Spotlight - Food Choices and Your Health

[Cord Blood Awareness Month](#)

[International Group B Strep Awareness Month](#)

[Juvenile Arthritis Awareness Month](#)

[National Cleft & Craniofacial Awareness & Prevention Month](#)

[World Hepatitis Day](#)  
- 7/28

Whether women like it or not, food choices of every kind surround us. There are sugary treats and vegetables, proteins and fruits and more kinds of potato chips than one can imagine. It can be very hard to know what we should be eating, where to get it and how to prepare it. But, one thing is for sure: every woman needs to consider carefully her food and nutrition choices each day, because the consequences of poor nutrition can impact your health, appearance and lifestyle no matter how old or young you are.

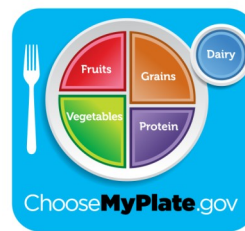
Women are more likely than men to experience nutritional deficiencies. Health effects of dietary deficiencies can include cardiovascular disease, stroke, impaired cognitive function, cancer, eye disease, poor bone health and many other conditions.<sup>1</sup> In order to reduce the risk of these adverse effects of poor diet, women need to have a variety of foods each day. The U.S. Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Agriculture have developed Dietary Guidelines for Americans age two and older that are designed to help maintain a healthy weight, promote health and prevent disease.<sup>2</sup>

The five primary food groups include fruits, vegetables, grains, protein-rich foods and calcium-rich foods or drinks. Many women find it challenging to consume something from all of the food groups each day. Thankfully, there are many great tips and resources to help you improve your diet, and reduce the risk of disease.

- Half of your plate should be fruits and vegetables. If you are eating out or getting fast food, imagine what your food would look like on a dinner plate. Does it measure up? Can you add an apple, banana or some broccoli to equal half?
- Consider cooking your meals. Most women are very busy and have long days, so cooking is not always on the agenda. Healthy eating is much easier when you control the ingredients, however. Make your food for the week on a Saturday morning and freeze it. Or, set up “cooking

stations” so that your kids or family members can help with chopping, washing, stirring or plating on busy evenings.

- Keep a bowl of fruit on the table, counter or refrigerator for easy access.
- Add fruits to your favorite cereals or desserts.
- Be sneaky! If you have picky eaters in your midst (including you) blend vegetables, legumes and other healthy additions such as ground flax seed or nutritional yeast into pasta sauces or soups.
- Rethink calcium and protein. There are many ways to incorporate calcium into your diet, including soy, rice or almond milk, calcium-fortified breads and juices, tofu, some legumes and even leafy greens like kale, collard or turnip greens. Protein sources can include nuts and seeds like almonds or sunflower seeds, as well as foods such as beans, lentils, chickpeas and hummus.
- Have a recipe swap with your friends or co-workers to keep meals interesting. Pick a new vegetable, fruit or protein for each swap and have everyone bring in their favorite recipe, the healthiest recipe or even the recipe with the fewest ingredients.



For more tips on the five food groups, eating and cooking on a budget, sample menus and grocery shopping guides, visit [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov).

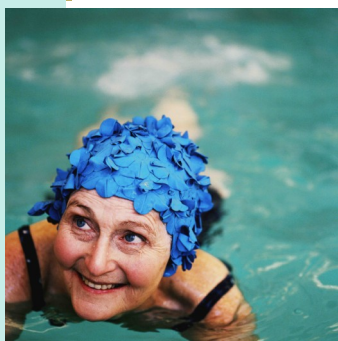
Additional resources:

- [Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics](#): Includes recipes, tips for weight loss, workout ideas and Watch and Learn cooking videos.
- [United States Department of Agriculture \(USDA\) SuperTracker](#): Look up nutrition information for thousands of foods, track your food and physical activity, set goals and build and save your favorite recipes.
- [USDA Interactive Playground](#): Many resources are available here to get your children or grandchildren on the right path to health, including games, eating calculators and fun quizzes.

*Special thanks to Mackenzie Miller, Intern ISDH OPA, for contributing to this article.*

## Arthritis: Myths, Facts and Getting Answers

While many Hoosier women have heard of arthritis, and may even be afflicted with the condition, there are still many misconceptions about the disease. Arthritis is an overarching term that refers to joint pain or disease, and there have been more than 100 types of arthritis and related conditions identified. These can range from osteoarthritis to fibromyalgia and from lupus and to Lyme disease. Each of these conditions, and many more that fall under the umbrella of arthritis, causes joint pain, swelling and loss of movement. It is the nation's number one cause of disability. Below are some myths and facts about arthritis as well as some important resources to help you identify your symptoms and find appropriate help to preserve your joints.



**Myth:** Arthritis only occurs in adults over the age of 65.

**Fact:** Of the 53 million adults over the age of 18 that are diagnosed with arthritis in the United States, 65% are under the age of 65. And, nearly 300,000 children also have arthritis.

**Myth:** I will know that I have arthritis because my fingers and hands will hurt.

**Fact:** It is true that some individuals who have arthritis will have joint pain in their hands or fingers. However, because there are so many different types of arthritis, it can be very challenging to diagnose. Often, symptoms depend on the type of arthritis an individual has. Signs and symptoms can come and go over time or can cause health problems that might seem unrelated, such as a rash or tiredness. Sufferers often mistake the symptoms for injury or “pushing it” too hard with exercise or daily activity. Be-

cause of the challenges of the condition, one-third of sufferers have work limitations, and those working-age individuals are less likely to be employed than those without arthritis. Nearly \$156 billion annually is lost in wages and medical expenses due to complications from arthritis.

**Myth:** Arthritis only happens to people who are athletes or who have had injuries to joints.

**Fact:** Arthritis has many different causes and risk factors. Degenerative arthritis, such as osteoarthritis, can be impacted by being overweight, age or a previous injury. Inflammatory arthritis, however, occurs when the immune system begins attacking the joints and causing inflammation. This is called an autoimmune reaction. Infectious arthritis can be caused by bacteria, a virus or a fungus, such as salmonella, hepatitis C or Chlamydia. And, metabolic arthritis is caused by a build-up of uric acid in the body. Some types of arthritis have risk factors that are both genetic and environmental, and it is important to see a physician as soon as possible to determine a diagnosis to ensure that you are taking all the necessary steps to prevent joint damage.<sup>3</sup>



Do you think that you have arthritis? Utilize the resources below to help you learn more about the conditions associated with arthritis, resources to help support you, and guidance and information to help guide you through your very important conversations with medical providers.

- Arthritis Foundation [Better Living Toolkit](#) – A free, customizable toolkit to help guide you through your arthritis journey. It includes brochures on your specific arthritis condition, an Arthritis Today magazine, an Arthritis Answers brochure, a resource guide and a jar opener.
- [Arthritis resources](#): Resources including an online symptom tracker, drug guide, an online support community, weather and arthritis index, brochures/DVD's and information about multiple Arthritis Foundation programs in your area.
- Arthritis Foundation [Walk with Ease](#) program: A program designed to help you reduce arthritis pain and improve your health.
- Arthritis Foundation [Put Pain in Its Place](#) program: A program designed to help you manage Osteoarthritis symptoms and improve your quality of life.
- Arthritis Today e-newsletter sign-up: <http://at.arthritistoday.org/0313newsletter/landing.cfm>.

# Spotlight on Women's Health: The Protective Impact of Breastfeeding



By now, most individuals know the powerful health benefits that breastfeeding has for an infant. He/she receives

immune benefits, comprehensive and unmatched nutrition, physical closeness and touch with his/her mother and improved long-term health outcomes in many areas across the lifespan. But, did you know that breastfeeding has a strong protective impact on mothers as well?

more quickly from childbirth, have reduced rates of breast and ovarian cancer and may even be at lower risk of developing type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and rheumatoid arthritis.<sup>4,5</sup> Due to the release of specific hormones during nursing, mothers often experience a sense of calmness and relaxation that can reduce stress levels. Some evidence even indicates that breastfeeding mothers may have a less intense response to the stress hormone adrenaline.<sup>3</sup>

choosing to breastfeed their infants, much work still needs to be done to ensure that all mothers and babies have the opportunity to meet their breastfeeding goals, regardless of the mother's age, race, ethnicity, income or education.

To get support and education, learn how you can help support mothers in your own community or to connect with professionals in your area, visit the [Indiana Breastfeeding Coalition](#), the [Indiana Perinatal Network](#) and the [La Leche League of Indiana](#).

Women who breastfeed typically recover

While most Hoosier mothers are now

## Straight Talk: Addressing Urinary Incontinence

It is a problem that millions of women of all ages experience, but that most do not want to talk about. Urinary incontinence (UI) means that urine leaks before you get to the bathroom. This might happen when you laugh or sneeze, or it could occur because of issues with constipation, certain medications, caffeine and alcohol, infection, nerve damage or being overweight. Whatever the reason, know that this is a common problem and there are solutions.

UI happens in both men and women, but the most common reasons it occurs more frequently in women is because of changes to the body during pregnancy, childbirth and menopause. UI is typically

caused by problems with muscles and nerves that help women pass urine. There are six types of incontinence:

- **Stress:** This is when certain movements put pressure on the bladder;
- **Urge:** Sometimes called “overactive bladder,” this is when incontinence occurs suddenly and without warning;
- **Functional:** This is when a person has a medical condition that limits their ability to make it to the bathroom;
- **Overflow:** This is when the bladder does not empty completely;
- **Mixed:** This is when more than one type of incontinence occur together;

- **Transient:** This is temporary, and occurs because of an illness or medical condition.

If you are experiencing urinary incontinence, do not be embarrassed or shy. This condition is common and most doctors have treated many patients like you. There are many treatments available to help you, including behavioral treatments, medications, devices, nerve stimulation, biofeedback and even surgical options.<sup>6</sup>

To learn more about tools, resources, questions to ask your provider and ways to connect, visit the [National Association for Continence](#) or the [Urology Care Foundation](#).

## Are you at Risk? Preventing Falls to Prevent Injury

Each year, over two million older adults are treated in the emergency department for fall injuries. In Indiana in 2013, there were 37,000 fall-related emergency department visits among older adults, 69% of which were women, and 350 deaths from fall-related injuries. Despite what many people think, falls are not an inevitable part of aging. In fact, there are many steps that you and your doctor can take together to reduce your risk of falling.

Your risk of falling depends on multiple factors that include your own body and

medical conditions, as well as environmental causes. Some risk factors include:

- Older age;
- Previous falls;
- Muscle weakness;
- Balance and walking problems;
- Poor vision;
- Chronic conditions (i.e. arthritis, diabetes, stroke, Parkinson's, incontinence, dementia);
- Fear of falling;
- Dim lighting;
- Lack of stair handrails;

- Tripping hazards;
- Slipping or uneven surfaces; and
- Psychoactive medications.<sup>7</sup>

If you have any of these risk factors, talk to your doctor about your concerns and level of risk to ensure that you can avoid falling as much as possible. Other steps you can take are to exercise to improve strength, review your medications for risk, have your vision checked and take care to make your home safer. For more information about falls, safety and how to talk to your doctor, visit the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC).





# Indiana State Department of Health

Indiana State Department of Health  
Office of Women's Health  
2 N. Meridian St., 3M  
Indianapolis, IN 46204  
  
Phone: 317-233-9156  
Fax: 317-233-8199  
E-mail: [lchavez@isdh.in.gov](mailto:lchavez@isdh.in.gov)

Thank you for subscribing to the Office of Women's Health (OWH) Wellness Watch Newsletter. The Office of Women's Health wants to ensure that each woman in Indiana is aware of her own health status, risks and goals, and can achieve optimal health through access, education and advocacy.

- For more information about OWH's programs and initiatives, please visit: <http://www.in.gov/isdh/18061.htm>.
- Follow OWH on Twitter at [@inwomenshealth](https://twitter.com/inwomenshealth).
- Follow this link to manage your subscription or to subscribe to the **OWH Wellness Watch Newsletter**.

## Upcoming Events

Covering Kids & Families of Indiana  
[Mobile Enrollment Event](#) – Goshen, IN  
7/10

ISDH Division of Trauma and Injury Prevention  
[Trauma Tour](#)  
Terre Haute, IN – 7/14  
Muncie, IN – 7/16  
Ft. Wayne, IN – 7/21  
Scottsburg, IN – 7/28  
Lafayette, IN – 7/30

ISDH Office of Minority Health  
[INShape Indiana Black and Minority Health Fair](#)  
7/16 – 7/19

Make a Wish Foundation  
[10<sup>th</sup> Annual Indianapolis Walk for Wishes](#)  
7/18

Indiana Perinatal Network  
[A Team Approach to Tongue and Lip Ties in the Breastfeeding Dyad](#)  
7/24

## References

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- <sup>2</sup>Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. (2015). *Dietary guidelines for Americans, 2015*. Retrieved from <http://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015.asp>.
- <sup>3</sup>Arthritis Foundation. (2015). *Understanding arthritis*. Retrieved from <http://www.arthritis.org/about-arthritis/understanding-arthritis/what-is-arthritis.php>.
- <sup>4</sup>American Academy of Pediatrics. (2015). *Benefits of breastfeeding for mom*. Retrieved from <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/baby/breastfeeding/Pages/Benefits-of-Breastfeeding-for-Mom.aspx>
- <sup>5</sup>La Leche League International. (2001). *A well-kept secret: Breastfeeding's benefits to mothers*. Retrieved from <http://www.llli.org/nb/nbjulaug01p124.html>.
- <sup>6</sup>Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health. (2012). *Urinary incontinence fact sheet*. Retrieved from <http://www.womenshealth.gov/publications/our-publications/fact-sheet/urinary-incontinence.html?from=AtoZ>.
- <sup>7</sup>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2015). *Steady Toolkit*. Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/homeandrecreationalsafety/Falls/steady/index.html>.