Allegany COUNTY New York

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Wellness Without Walls

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BY THE NUMBERS

Animal Bites: According to ACDOH data for **Allegany County** there were 176 wild animal exposures in 2026, January through August:

- **Raccoon: 2.8%**
- **Bat: 23.7%**
- **Fox: 1.7%**
- **Dog: 44.6%**
- **Cat 23.2%**
- **Other: 4.0%**

20 of these exposures resulted in someone needing rabies treatment. Be sure to **avoid touching wild animals** that are in your yard or that you come across on trails, by the road or elsewhere!

How to Stay Fit Over the Autumn Months

Drew Ward, PHE, Allegany County DOH

Apple cider, pumpkin pie, oh my!

With the leaves changing, the air getting crispier, and the flannels in full swing, it can be incredibly tempting to cozy on up and bask in the sweet treats of what is, unarguably, the best of the four seasons.

Far too often, people end up pursuing extremes when it comes to making lifestyle choices. For example, one person may say, "Eh it's autumn, time to put on the weight and stop working as hard seeing as how it's almost hibernation time". While another may have the mentality that is more akin to "locking in" as hard as possible and dialing in all of their food consumption, never allowing a slice of pie to even so much as touch their lips, and forgetting all of the magic that comes with a beautiful autumn in western New York.

The truth is that for most people, an in-between approach will be more effective and easiest to adhere to. So, how does one attain a proper balance between enjoying the seasonal offerings of fall and the requirements for the body to feel healthy and functional?

1. Don't completely restrict yourself from the simple pleasures of the autumn season

Practically, what does this look like? It may look like having a small slice of sweet potato pie with your family if you are all having a gathering. It may look like taking your significant other or friend out to a pumpkin patch, or apple orchard, and selecting some choice fruits that you could make a homemade pie with, where you have more control over the composition of the dessert.

2. There are plenty of good ways/options to stay fit, even when the days begin to get shorter.

I know, I know, it's a modern-day caricature, but you could sign up for that local turkey trot! Many gym-goers view the autumn & winter months as a great opportunity to undergo a "bulk" (eating in a mild calorie surplus to put on weight and get stronger). Raking the leaves will be conducive towards a good workout depending upon the size of your yard. Walks will allow you to get some of that crisp air in your lungs while taking in the sights of autumn. Local hiking spots (such as Letchworth State Park) will look near their peak in the fall months, as they become speckled with all hues of orange, yellow, red, and brown.

With whatever form of exercise or leisure you decide, make sure too that it is one that brings you some level of joy. Maybe it's the nerves beforehand that remind you that you love it, or the feeling you get in the middle of a hard set at the gym, or the look of your lawn when the leaves are no longer scattered all over. Find a part of your why and chase that!

3. Cozy on up and get those eight hours of sleep a night!

Even while writing this, I admit that I do not get eight hours of sleep every night. The evening simply seems to get busier than I had intended… got to pack lunch for tomorrow, lay out what I'll wear for work, polish off some dishes, etc. Time gets away and all of a sudden, it's 11pm and you've got to be up in 7 hours for work.

Having good sleep hygiene isn't something that is exclusive to the autumn months. Rather, it should be a focus of ours year-round. But how can we ensure that we receive these crucial hours of rest and recovery?

First, it helps to understand the concept of circadian rhythm. Essentially, our bodies all possess biological or internal clocks. If our clock is tuned correctly to go to bed at the same time every night and to wake up at the same time every morning, then both things will be easier to do (the falling and rising).

Additionally, it's important to "prime your sleep", as it were, by adequately winding down. This could look like opening a book and reading for 15 minutes prior to going to bed, or listening to soothing music, or taking a nice hot shower. Whatever activity helps you to calm down… do just that!

Lastly, we want to take into consideration our intake. And no, I'm not just talking about food. Limiting screen time an hour before you go to bed will help you sleep. Never use your phone in your bed, because this is one of the worst things you could do to your sleep quality. We want the bed to be associated with a good night's rest, not an activity which leads to disturbances. On the topic of food, it is important to consume your final large meal approximately 2-3 hours prior to going to bed. This allows for adequate time to digest the food, which will limit any discomfort you may feel from digesting. Reducing your fluid intake is also a good idea so that you're not waking up throughout the night to use the restroom.

Lay out those flannel sheets and comforter and let the sleeping do the hard work for you!

Fall is the Start of Respiratory Illness Season:

Schedule your flu shot and encourage family members to do the same.

As temperatures drop and people spend more time indoors, respiratory illnesses such as the flu, RSV, and the common cold become more common. Fortunately, there are several simple steps everyone can take to protect themselves, their families, and their coworkers.

One of the most effective ways to prevent respiratory illness is to stay up to date on recommended vaccinations. An annual flu vaccine can reduce the risk of illness, hospitalization, and missed work. Talk with your healthcare provider about which vaccines are recommended for you and your family.

Good hand hygiene is another important defense. Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after coughing, sneezing, or being in public places. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

Respiratory illnesses often spread through droplets released when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks. Help prevent the spread of germs by covering your coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your elbow rather than your hands. Dispose of used tissues promptly and wash your hands afterward.

If you are feeling sick, stay home whenever possible. While it can be tempting to push through symptoms, staying home helps prevent illness from spreading to coworkers and others in the community. If you have a fever, return to work only after it has resolved and you are feeling better.

Maintaining healthy habits can also strengthen your immune system. Aim for regular physical activity, eat a balanced diet rich in fruits and vegetables, stay hydrated, manage stress, and get seven to nine hours of sleep each night. These habits support overall health and may help your body fight infections more effectively.

Improving indoor air quality can also help reduce the spread of respiratory illnesses. Opening windows when weather permits, ensuring ventilation systems are working properly, and spending time outdoors when possible, can help improve airflow and reduce the concentration of germs indoors.

Finally, be considerate of others. If you have mild respiratory symptoms but must be around other people, consider maintaining physical distance when possible, practicing good hygiene, and following workplace health recommendations.

By taking these simple preventive measures, each of us can help reduce the spread of respiratory illness and contribute to a healthier workplace and community throughout the fall and winter months. And finally, schedule a flu shot at one of our clinics, your local pharmacy or with your healthcare provider. Visit the Allegany County Department of Health registration page here for more information on our flu vaccine clinics for 2026:

https://www.alleganyco.gov/departments/health/flu-vaccine/ ← Register Here

Know Your Numbers: Preventive Screening Matters

Many serious health conditions develop quietly, without noticeable symptoms. That's why preventive screenings are so important. Knowing key health numbers such as your blood pressure, cholesterol, blood glucose, and body mass index (BMI) cab help identify potential health concerns early, when they are often easier to manage or treat.

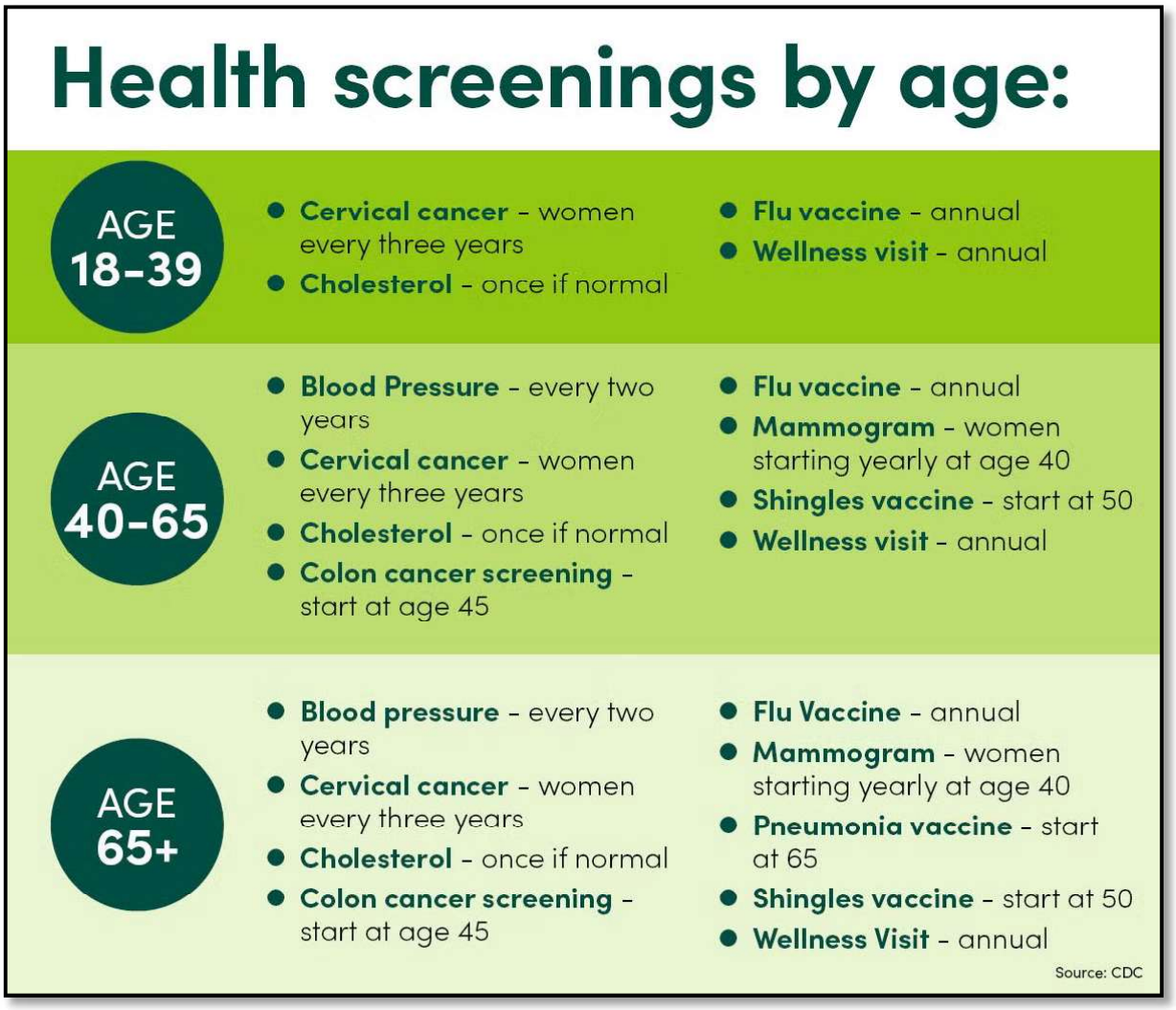
Chronic diseases remain one of the biggest health challenges in the Inited States. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 6 in 10 U.S. adults have at least one chronic disease, and 4 in 10 have two or more. Conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, and certain cancers are major causes of illness, disability, and healthcare costs. Routine screenings help detect risk factors before they become serious health problems.

The following routine screenings can help identify diseases early.

- **Blood Pressure:** High blood pressure is a major risk factor for heart disease and stroke.
- **Cholesterol:** Elevated cholesterol can contribute to plaque buildup in arteries, increaseing the risk of heart attack and stroke.
- **Blood Glucose:** Screening can identify prediabetes or diabetes early, allowing lifestyle changes and treatment to prevent complications.

- **BMI and Weight:** Monitoring weight can help assess risks related to heart disease, diabetes, and other chronic conditions.

Early identification of disease can help ensure treatment is most effective. Regular preventive care visits give healthcare providers an opportunity to monitor your health, recommend screenings, and discuss any ways to reduce health risks.



Despite the benefits, many people delay routine checkups. CDC data show that about 76% of U.S. adults had a routine checkup within the past year, leaving many others who may be missing opportunities for early detection and prevention. Remember to use your annual cancer screening time to visit your healthcare provider.

Taking charge of your health starts with knowing your numbers. Whether through your healthcare provider or an employee wellness screening event, a few minutes of screening today could help prevent serious health issues tomorrow.

Wellness Tip: Keep a record of your health numbers each year. Tracking changes in blood pressure, cholesterol, blood glucose, and weight over time can help you and your healthcare provider make informed decisions about your health.

Wellness Myths and Facts

Myth #1: "I don't need a flu shot if I'm healthy."

Fact: Even healthy individuals can get the flu and spread it to others. Flu vaccination helps reduce the risk of illness, missed work, hospitalization, and complications, while also helping protect vulnerable family members and coworkers.

Myth #2: "It's too cold outside to exercise."

Fact: Physical activity can continue year-round. Walking, hiking, biking, and other outdoor activities can be enjoyed safely during cooler weather with appropriate clothing. Regular exercise can boost mood, support immune health, and help manage stress during the fall and winter months.

Myth #3: "Gaining weight during the holidays is unavoidable."

Fact: While seasonal gatherings often involve extra treats and larger meals, small healthy choices can make a big difference. Staying active, practicing portion control, drinking water, and maintaining regular eating habits can help you enjoy holiday festivities without significant weight gain.

Wellness Tip: Focus on progress, not perfection. Small consistent healthy habits throughout the fall season often lead to better long-term results than drastic changes.

Things to Do in Allegany County this Fall:

- **Sept. 25-27th:** Civil War Reenactment, Angelica NY
- **Sept. 26th:** Wellsville Brew Fest, Wellsville NY
- **Sept. 26th:** Belfast Fire Demolition Derby, Belfast NY
- **October 3rd: United for Hope Allegany Walk – Suicide Prevention**, Wellsville NY
- **Oct. 3rd:** Lisa's Tractor Show, Angelica NY
- **Oct. 10th:** Pumpkin Hunt/Haunted Ride, Andover NY
- **Oct. 16-18th:** Allegany Artisans Studio Tour Weekend
- **Oct. 17th:** Paint For a Cure, Angelica NY
- **Oct. 17th:** Swain Beer Fest, Swain NY
- **Oct. 17th:** Fall Foliage Lift Rides, Swain NY
- **Oct. 17th:** Fall Fest, Angelica NY
- **Oct. 18th: 34th Annual Ridgewalk & Run**, Wellsville NY

Allegany COUNTY New York

Community WELLNESS

UR MEDICINE | JONES MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

KNOW YOUR NUMBERS WELLNESS DAY

Register to save your time by scanning the QR code

https://form.jotform.com/262524904789065

- Blood Pressure
- Blood Sugar
- Consultation
- Education
- Body Composition
- Bone Density

DATE: TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2026

TIME: 9:30 AM – 3:00 PM

VENUE: 2ND FLOOR LEGISLATIVE CHAMBERS
ALLEGANY COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING

FREE FOR EMPLOYEES AND THE PUBLIC !!!

Take Control Of Your Health. Get Checked. Stay Healthy.