

HEALTHtoday

A publication of the Albany County Department of Health

**GET THE
LEAD OUT!**

Important information about
drinking water and lead



Lead Testing: Know Your Water!

Lead is a naturally occurring metal widely used over the years in gasoline, house paint, and plumbing fixtures. Children six years old and under are most at risk of being affected by lead exposure as it can harm a child's growth, behavior, and ability to learn. The primary source of lead for most children is peeling and chipping lead-based paint but lead in drinking water can add to that exposure.

How does lead get into the water we drink?

Lead is rarely found in public water supplies or private well water but can enter tap water from the corrosion of older fixtures, pipes or from the solder that connects pipes. Homes built before 1986 are more likely to have lead fixtures, pipes and solder. When water sits in leaded pipes for several hours, lead can leach into your home's water.

What can I do to reduce or eliminate lead in my tap water?

1. If you have lead pipes or lead solder in your pipes and if water has been sitting in them for several hours or more, run water for several minutes to flush out lead.
2. Use only cold tap water for cooking, drinking or making baby formula.
3. Boiling water does not remove lead.
4. Replace your plumbing fixtures if they are found to contain lead.

How can I test water for lead?

Certified commercial laboratories can test for lead in drinking water.

For a limited time, the New York State Free Lead Testing Pilot Program (FLTPP) is offering **FREE** lead water testing. To participate, fill out the short form available at Free Lead Testing Pilot Program at www.health.ny.gov and e-mail it to the Bureau of Water Supply Protection (BWSP).

SUMMER 2017

Inside This Issue

Lead Testing: Know Your Water!

Page 1

Find out more about the dangers of lead and how to test water at home for free.

May is Asthma Awareness Month

Page 2

Learn the common signs of this disease that affects over 24 million people in the U.S.

Screening Saves Lives

Page 3

Learn how to prevent colon cancer with one screening per year.

A Statewide Emergency Preparedness Exercise

Page 4

Registered. Ready.
Prepared.



Daniel P. McCoy, Albany County Executive
Elizabeth F. Whalen, MD, MPH, Commissioner of Health

ALBANY COUNTY
Cares about our community

May is Asthma Awareness Month

Do you have:

- Shortness of breath?
- Coughing?
- Wheezing?
- Chest tightness?

These are the common signs of asthma, an illness where the airways become inflamed and the movement of air in the lungs is blocked. Asthma can interfere with everyday life, leading to time off from school and work, poor sleep, and reduced physical activity.

Treatment can help keep asthma under control. What you can do to manage asthma:

- Visit a doctor regularly and tell them about your symptoms. Ask about your treatment options.
- Identify and avoid common asthma triggers including tobacco smoke, dust, changes in weather, illness and stress.
- Have an asthma action plan in place.
- Know when to call for help.

Data shows that children living in some Albany County neighborhoods have higher rates of emergency department visits than others living outside those areas. Reducing uncontrolled asthma (with particular attention to communities with high rates of asthma in the City of Albany) is identified in the [2016 Community Health Needs Assessment for Albany County](#) and a priority area for the Albany County [2016-2018 Community Health Improvement Plan](#):

http://www.albanycounty.com/Libraries/Department_of_Health/2016_HCDI_CHNA_6_15_16_All.sflb.ashx

http://www.albanycounty.com/Libraries/Department_of_Health/Albany_County_CHIP_123020162_o.sflb.ashx

Albany County Department of Health currently has an Asthma Nurse Educator available through our Healthy Neighborhoods Program who provides in-home visits to individuals diagnosed with asthma. The nurse assesses homes for asthma triggers and educates on ways to reduce such triggers. In addition, the nurse provides education on asthma symptoms, proper use of medications and medical devices, and assists in the development of an asthma action plan. Please call the phone number below to learn more about this service.

The good news is that people with asthma can be symptom-free if they receive the right kind of medical care, use medicine as directed and change their environments to limit exposure to triggers.

For more information about asthma, contact the Albany County Department of Health at **(518) 447-4615**.



Screening Saves Lives

Fact #1

Colon cancer is the second leading cause of death from cancer.

Fact #2

Colon cancer can be prevented or found early with regular screenings.

Fact #3

Screening is affordable and you have options, including take-home stool tests.

Colon cancer, also called colorectal cancer, is a disease where cells grow out of control in the rectum and is most often found in people ages 50 and older. Even though it can be prevented or found early, it is still the second leading cause of death from cancer in the U.S.

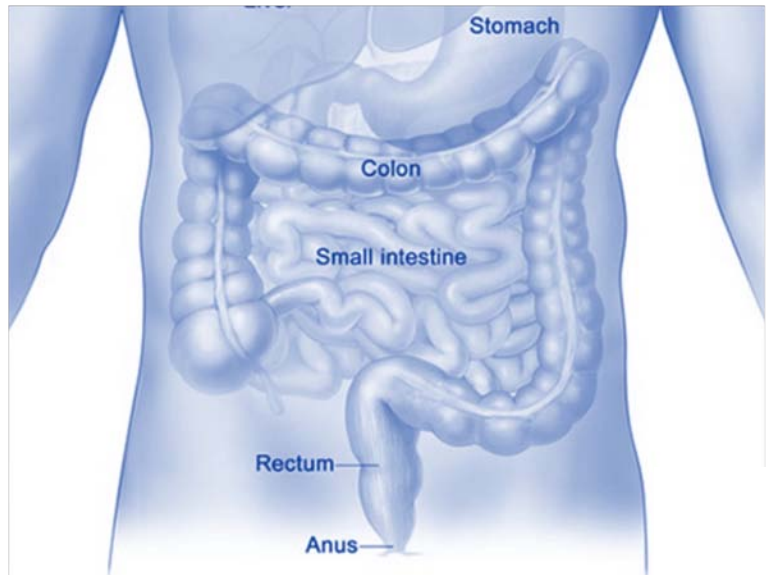
Screening is the most important step in preventing colon cancer because many people do not see or feel any signs when the cancer begins. In Albany County, only 72.8% of adults ages 50 and older received colon cancer screenings in 2014 (New York Department of Health).

Have you heard that colon cancer screenings are unpleasant? There is good news. There are several screening options besides colonoscopies, including simple take-home options! You can talk to a doctor about your options first and then make a decision.



9 OUT OF **10**

CASES OF COLORECTAL CANCER CAN BE TREATED SUCCESSFULLY WHEN FOUND EARLY.



Help prevent colorectal cancer in yourself and others with these three steps:

- 1. Get screened starting at age 50***
- 2. Tell your family members and friends over age 50 to get screened**
- 3. Live a healthy life: eat healthy, be active, and quit smoking**

**Your doctor may suggest colon cancer screenings before age 50 if you have family history of colon cancer.*

Most health insurance plans cover annual screenings at no additional cost to you. New York State offers FREE cancer screenings and services through local Cancer Services Programs to men and women who:

- Live in New York State
- Do not have health insurance
- Have a health plan with high costs that may keep a person from getting screening and/or diagnostic services
- Meet income requirements
- Meet age requirements

For more information on the Cancer Services Program of Albany County, call 518-525-8680.

The Albany County Department of Health encourages all adult residents 50 and older to be screened for colorectal cancer and supports the American Cancer Society's goal to reach an 80% screening rate for adults 50 and older by 2018.

www.health.ny.gov/coloncancer

A Statewide Emergency Preparedness Exercise

Imagine that a new strain of the flu was rapidly spreading around the world. How would potentially life-saving medicines or vaccines be shared with you and your family? How can you, as a community member, help during this kind of emergency?

The answer to these questions can be summed up in three letters: P-O-D. What is a POD? POD stands for point-of-dispensing and it is operated in response to an emergency situation, such as an infectious disease outbreak, to quickly provide medications or vaccines to large amounts of people. During a real disease outbreak, more than one POD may be opened in different locations in order to reach everyone in Albany County.

On March 1, 2017, Albany County Department of Health conducted a drill and practiced opening a POD at Bethlehem Central High School in Delmar. Bethlehem Central High School students and community members acted as pretend patients, while ACDOH staff and Albany County Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) practiced dispensing medication. Everyone worked together to ensure the POD process went well.

Do you have an interest in public health emergency preparedness or want to learn more about volunteering for a POD? Visit www.RegisteredandReady.com or contact the Albany County MRC Coordinator at Maureen.Casale-Reidy@albanycountyny.gov to learn more!

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Upcoming Rabies Clinics

- All dogs, cats, and ferrets must be on leashes or in carriers.
- A record of prior vaccination will be required for a three year immunization-certification.
- If no record is presented, a one year vaccination certification will be issued.
- All clinics are open to any Albany County residents.

Date	Time	Location
Tuesday, June 6	4:00-7:00pm	Bethlehem Town Park Elm Avenue
Saturday, Sept. 9	1:00-4:00pm	Village of Colonie Municipal Garage 2 Thunder Road
Saturday, Nov. 4	1:00-4:00pm	Village of Green Island Public Works Garage Cohoes Avenue

Albany County Department of Health Mission Statement

The Albany County Department of Health strives to protect and promote the health of individuals, families, and communities.

We work with many community partners to offer a variety of programs and services to achieve our mission and accomplish the following: prevent communicable and chronic diseases, injuries, and disabilities; protect against environmental hazards that threaten health and safety; promote the health and wellness of our citizens and our communities; and prepare for and respond to public health emergencies.

Services Available

Clinical Services
Communicable Disease Program
Environmental Health Services
Health Education and Wellness
HIV/AIDS/STD Education
HIV Testing and Counseling
Maternal and Child Health Programs
Public Health Emergency Preparedness Program

Call (518) 447-4580