



## News You Can Use

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2024 has come to an end, but some exciting projects are just beginning. We are delighted to bring you the latest edition of our quarterly newsletter, your trusted source for public health updates, news, and resources. Our mission is to promote the health, safety, and well-being of all people in Jefferson County.

To subscribe to our newsletter, click [here](#) to complete a Google Form with your agency and contact information.

# Communicable Disease Control

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## **Pertussis:**

Across the state we continue to see cases of pertussis, and Jefferson County is no different. 71 counties out of the 72 in Wisconsin have had at least one case since the beginning of 2024. The total case count in Wisconsin as of 12/28/2024 is **2,419 cases**.

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## **Enterics:**

We are officially in norovirus season, which is generally from December to March. So far, we have seen a greater than usual number of norovirus cases. Norovirus is the number one cause of vomiting and diarrhea. Because this virus does not have a stable coating called a capsid, it makes it one of the hardest viruses to kill. Therefore, a quick dose of hand sanitizer doesn't work. This stresses the importance of very thorough handwashing. Be sure to scrub your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds!

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## **Mycoplasma Pneumoniae:**

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services issued a health alert on 10/18/24 due to the high rates of mycoplasma pneumoniae, also known as “walking pneumonia”. Rates are **10x higher** this year than they were last year. Typically, we see this large increase in cases every 3-7 years indicating this season may be a “surge” year. Symptoms include fever, slowly worsening cough, sore throat, headache, and fatigue.

## Avian Influenza Update:

Highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) continues to spread throughout the United States. However, at this time there remains no known human-to-human spread.

During this 2024 outbreak, there have been 66 confirmed human cases. The breakdown of exposures are:

- 40 cattle
- 23 poultry
- 1 “other” animal
- 2 unknown exposure

Ten states currently have confirmed human cases, with California having over half of those cases at 36 total cases. Barron County, WI recently had one reported case in which an individual became infected after exposure to an infected poultry flock.

## Respiratory Season:

COVID-19: COVID-19 activity has been variable throughout the course of the last couple of months. Rates were high in both October and into November, and have slowly progressed to a much lower level. However, over the last two weeks, as we move further into respiratory season, these rates are now beginning to increase again along with respiratory illnesses.

Influenza and RSV: Statewide, the number of confirmed cases of Influenza and RSV, as well as the number of Influenza and RSV associated hospitalizations, have begun to greatly increase over the course of the past several weeks. Lab testing in Jefferson County is portraying this trend as well. When compared to respiratory illness data from previous years, the current rates remain low. Continue to utilize mitigation and preventive measures to stay healthy!

# Maternal, Child and Family Health

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We continue to work towards understanding social connectedness and its impact on members in our community. On October 25th, JCHD partnered with the Greater Watertown Community Health Foundation to host a focus group for new and expecting parents. It allowed them an opportunity to interact and share their thoughts, ideas, and experiences on how families can feel more connected in our community.

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## Community Education:

On November 27th, JCHD partnered with the Watertown Regional Hospital to hold a Labor and Delivery/Breastfeeding Education class in Spanish to expectant families.



## Parenting Play Group:

On, November 12th, JCHD hosted the last Parenting Play Group with the Fort Atkinson Dwight Public Library. Excitingly, JCHD has initiated a new program called Play & Connect Hour, allowing children and caregivers to engage in social connectedness. This program will be held in the TalkReadPlay space at the Health Department. More information on Play & Connect Hour can be found here:

**ENGLISH & SPANISH**





Every other year the State WIC program visits the local WIC agencies to complete a management evaluation, ensuring that the policies and procedures for the WIC program are being followed. Our Jefferson County WIC program had their management evaluation in October. Our agency had many commendations and no findings for corrective actions. One of the highlighted commendations was the fantastic job we are doing with breastfeeding support for our families.



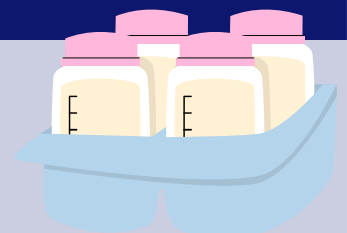
Our Breastfeeding Coordinator, has really embraced her role over the last year, the breastfeeding rates look great and have climbed in recent years. The State WIC program also commented on the wonderful improvements to Breastfeeding Peer services, including achieving a high rate of contacts and evidence of peers establishing good rapport with moms. Our WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselors provide breastfeeding education and support for pregnant and breastfeeding WIC moms. They averaged over 120 contacts per month this past quarter. Our WIC moms greatly appreciate this support during their breastfeeding journey.



serving an average of

**120**

breastfeeding moms each month from  
October - December



Our WIC Dietetic Technician coordinated wellness activities for our department staff. Activities included the Great Apple Crunch and a “Walktober” calendar during the month of October to keep our staff moving.



**JCHD 2024**

WIC continues to network with other community partners and provide outreach for potential eligible participants. These past few months included attending the Watertown Community Resource Fair and the Early Childhood Education Conference. WIC also met with Lactation staff at both Fort Memorial Hospital and Watertown Regional Medical Center to coordinate breastfeeding care. Our WIC team is always striving to serve as many eligible pregnant women, infants, and children under age five that we can. We are currently averaging a caseload of 1,160 participants per month.

serving an average of

**1,160**

WIC participants per month



# Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention

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October was National Domestic Violence Awareness month. On October 17, JCHD participated in National Wear Purple Day by wearing purple to raise awareness about domestic violence and show support to survivors.

## Outreach Events:

- Sexual Health Palooza at UW-Whitewater's Ambrose Health Clinic:
  - One of our Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE) provided education to students about what a SANE exam entails. Of those in attendance, close to **75%** were unaware of this service.
- Interpersonal Violence Prevention Education Resources Connection Event:
  - Partnering with UW-Whitewater's Interpersonal Violence (IPV) Coordinator, JCHD's SANE nurse educated approximately **30** students on SANE exams.
- UW-Whitewater - Dating Violence, Bystander, & Consent Event:
  - **Over 100** students attended the event and were educated on SANE services and available resources.



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In November, a press release was issued by Jefferson County's Office of Administration, addressing the need for exploring more support for sexual assault victims within Jefferson County. Jefferson County's Interim County Executive, Michael Luckey, wrote "For part of National Forensic Nursing Week November 4-10, Jefferson County recognizes the essential work of forensic nurses and the impact they have on public health and safety, and, in particular, Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANEs), who play a vital role in assisting survivors of sexual assault." Two of JCHD's nurses have been SANE trained and have been working hard to connect with stakeholders, advocate centers, & the community.



## Car Seats:

On November 22nd, JCHD held a Child Car Seat Safety Event. Our certified Passenger Seat Technicians provided seat checks and education to families in attendance ensuring their little bundles of joy were safe for the winter roads.



## Head Start:

Throughout the month of October, our public health nurses completed health screenings at eight Head Start centers throughout Jefferson County. These screenings consist of collecting a child's weight, height, and blood pressure. Approximately **110** children were screened.



## Up and Coming in 2025:

- Bimonthly meeting dates - 2/14 ; 4/11 ; 6/13 ; 8/8 ; 10/10 ; 12/12
  - meetings are from 10:00am - 11:30am & are held in a hybrid format, if you're interested in attending please email: [jeffcodfc@jeffersoncountywi.gov](mailto:jeffcodfc@jeffersoncountywi.gov)
- Retail Alcohol Data (RAD) Collaborative - JCDFC is partnering with Walworth Co. to collect local data in early 2025 on the availability, pricing, & marketing of alcoholic beverages that are dangerous and/or appeal to young people.
- Vive18 - The coalition is partnering with local school districts to implement and/or assist with being proactive regarding substance misuse in youth by developing a culture that cultivates peer-to-peer mentorship.



A DOCUMENTARY FILM TO SPREAD HOPE AND FIGHT SUICIDE:



MY ASCENSION FILM SCREENING

Wednesday, October 30, 2024

Doors will open at 6:30 p.m., film will begin at 7:00 p.m.  
Jefferson High School Auditorium  
700 W. Milwaukee Street, Jefferson

OPEN TO ALL JEFFERSON COUNTY MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL FAMILIES and COMMUNITY MEMBERS





## Overdose Fatality Review (OFR) :

The Jefferson County Health Department was awarded grant funding for 2025 to help expand the OFR scope of work. This includes focusing on improving the team's recommendation process to help move ideas into action. Our OFR Team completed four overdose cases in 2024. We are anticipating to complete 6-8 case reviews throughout 2025 during our quarterly meetings.

### 2024 Totals:

distributed

# 872

boxes of Narcan



distributed

# 800

Fentanyl Test Strips



## Public Health Vending Machine

We've updated the items available in our vending machine to include hand warmers, sanitary pads, adult gloves, kids gloves, toddler mittens, toothbrush & toothpaste, Narcan, and fentanyl test strips. As the seasons change, we will continue to stock our machine with different supplies. All these items are **FREE** to our community members. If you have ideas on items you would like to see in our machine, please contact us!

Distributed

# 1,263

items from Aug. -  
Dec. 2024

Available

# 24/7

# Access to and Linkage with Clinical Care

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Every Fall the Jefferson County Health Department works alongside local schools in order to host influenza clinics for school aged children. These clinics offer a free, easy and accessible way for families to get their children vaccinated. This year the state also offered an opportunity to provide free Tdap (Tetanus, Diphtheria and Acellular Pertussis) vaccines for age eligible children at these events. A huge thank you to the Jefferson, Lake Mills, and Palmyra Eagle School Districts who helped promote these events and because of that, **58** school aged children were able to receive influenza and/or Tdap vaccines at these clinics.



Through local business requests and home visits, **81** additional influenza vaccines were administered to adults throughout the community.

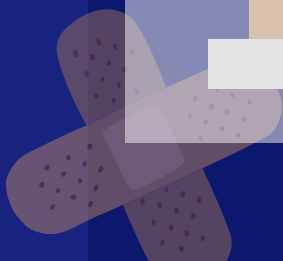


## Clinic Hours

Tuesday's: 8:00am - 4:30pm

Thursday's: 8:00am - 4:30pm

**\*\*Appointments are by appointment only. Please call:  
(920) 674-7275**

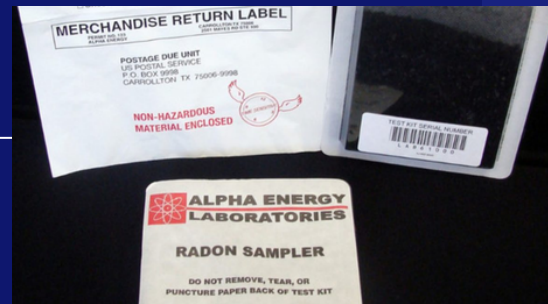


# Environmental Health



## Radon Testing:

With January being National Radon Action Month, what better time to protect your family than by testing your home? Did you know that radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States? This invisible, odorless gas can seep into your home from the ground and build up to dangerous levels without you even knowing. You can pick up a **FREE** radon test kit at the Jefferson County Health Department or the Watertown Department of Public Health.



Our Environmental Health Staff have been busy conducting inspections on a variety of things, in a variety of places. For 2024, they have:

Completed

**320**

Pool inspections

Completed

**204**

Retail Food not Serving Meals

Completed

**60**

Inspections in Schools

Completed

**42**

Beach Water Samples

Completed

**88**

Lodging inspections

Completed

**382**

Retail Food Serving Meals

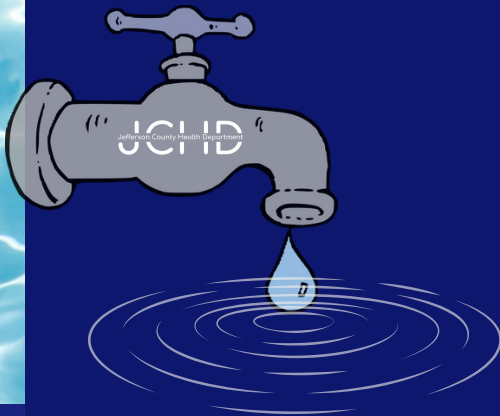
# Support at Your Fingertips: JCHD's Resources for You

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## Nitrate Screening:

Nitrate is one of the most common groundwater contaminants in Wisconsin. Private well users should test for nitrate regularly.

Our staff will be attending the Fort Atkinson Wellness Event to provide Nitrate Screenings. Please collect approximately 16 ounces (about a full water bottle) of well water within 12 hours of the screening. For more information regarding the event, click [here](#).



## Patty's Closet:

Recognizing that at times, everyone benefits from a helping hand, our Department created Patty's Closet, a small donation space dedicated to an employee near and dear to our hearts. This closet will house items donated from the community and will be given back to community members we serve who are experiencing challenges. We are accepting a variety of items. If you are in need of items or interested in donating, please call the Health Department at: (920) 674-7275.

# Notable Health Care Leader

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JCHD is proud to share that our Health Officer and Director has been named as a Notable Health Care Leader! Thank you, Elizabeth, for your drive and dedication in promoting the health, safety, and well-being of our community. JCHD is fortunate to have a notable leader with so much resilience. To read the full article, click [here](#).



*Elizabeth M. McTeary*

