SCOTT COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT VOLUME 17, ISSUE 9 SEPTEMBER 2025

PUBLIC HEALTH CONNECTION

Healthy Aging Month

Worldwide, 55 million people are living with Alzheimer's Disease and other dementias. Dementia is an overall term for a particular group of symptoms. Dementia symptoms include trouble with memory, language, problem solving, difficulty concentrating, and struggling to understand and express thoughts. Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of dementia, accounting for approximately 60-80% of cases.

There are three risk factors for dementia: age, genes, and family history. Thankfully, there are many risk factors that people can alter to improve overall health of the brain and body.

Tips for Healthy Living for Your Brain and Body:

1. Challenge your mind - Put your brain to work and do something that is new or hard for you.
2. Keep learning - Education reduces your risk of cogitative decline and dementia. Continue your education by taking classes at a library, college, or online.
3. Protect your head - Wear a helmet when riding a bike or playing sports, wear a seatbelt, and improve your balance to prevent falls.
4. Control your blood pressure - Healthy habits and medications can help lower high blood pressure.
5. Eat healthy - Eat more vegetables and leaner meats/proteins, along with foods that are less processed and lower in fat.
6. Be smoke-free - Quitting smoking can lower the risk of cognitive decline back to levels similar to those who never smoked.
7. Manage diabetes - Type 2 diabetes can be prevented or controlled by healthy eating, physical activity, and medication.
8. Maintain a healthy weight - Talk to your doctor about the weight that is healthy for you.
9. Get moving - Engage in regular exercise that increase your heart rate and blood flow to the brain and body.
10. Sleep well - Good quality sleep is important for brain health.

Learn more at alz.org/healthyhabits.

OUR MISSION:

The Scott County Health Department promotes, protects, and preserves health through leadership, services, education, and partnerships.

OUR VISION:

Scott County — A safe and healthy community.

SPECIAL EVENTS

- ***SCHD will be closed Monday, September 1, 2025 in observation of Labor Day.***
- ***Scott County Board of Health Meeting, Scott County Administrative Center, 1st Floor Boardroom, 12:00 PM, Thursday, September 18, 2025.***

Links

- **Alzheimer's Association:** alz.org/help-support/brain_health/10-healthy-habits-for-your-brain
- **HealthyJoCo:** healthyjoco.crediblemind.com/
- **CDC—Rabies Information:** www.cdc.gov/rabies/about/index.html
- **IOWA Health and Human Services—Rabies information:** hhs.iowa.gov/center-acute-disease-epidemiology/rabies-information-public-providers-and-veterinarians

Rabies

Rabies is a deadly virus that is found in the saliva of infected mammals. Only mammals can get rabies, including humans. Bats, skunks, raccoons, and foxes, are common carriers of rabies. Bats account for 7 out of 10 rabies deaths in the United States. Bats can transmit rabies without a bite.

Once the rabies virus enters the body, it travels to the brain and causes severe brain disease and death. The onset of symptoms can be similar to the flu, which can include, headache, weakness, or fever. Some Rabies is a progressive and fatal illness that can be prevented.

If you have had an exposure, immediately wash the wound thoroughly with soap and water, then talk with a medical provider about the type of animal that you were exposed to. If you wake up to a bat in your bedroom, have small children that were in the same room as a bat, or think you may have been exposed, talk with a medical provider right away. They will assess whether you need Rabies Post Exposure Prophylaxis and a tetanus shot. They may also give you an antibiotic to prevent infection from bacteria found in animals' mouths. Rabies is 100% fatal, but one 100% preventable if Rabies Post Exposure Prophylaxis is started before symptoms begin.

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