

NAUGATUCK VALLEY HEALTH DISTRICT

January 2025



Happy New Year!



NVHD Staff Celebrate The Holidays

On Friday, December 13th in recognition of another great year of staff service and teamwork, NVHD staff celebrated the holidays at Brookside Inn, in Oxford.

Pictured below are:

(back row), Sanitarian John Mucha, Overdose Prevention Coordinator Tracy Tenesca, Public Health Nurse Kristie D'Averso, Health Educator Lisa Trupp, Assistant Director of Environmental Health, Melanie Dokla, CAP Coordinator Vanessa Lopez, Overdose Prevention Coordinator Austin Telford, Admin Judi Waleski, Sanitarian Glenda Buenaventura; (front row) Admin Rose Carey, Betty King (retired), SORT Coordinator Beatriz Allen, Assistant Director of Community Health Carissa Caserta, Chief Sanitarian Laurel Shaw, and Santarian's Amanada Rushin and Amy Durand.



Salem Elementary School Winter Wonderland Fair

This past month, Beatriz Allen, Program Specialist, and Vanessa Lopez, Immunization Program Specialist (pictured below), attended the Salem Elementary School Winter Wonderland Fair. Families were provided with information about how to stay safe this winter season (and beyond) and given fun giveaways. Each vendor was asked to come up with a riddle to engage families, NVHD's learning opportunity was for families to "Learn how to be healthy and safe."

As Certified Community Health Workers, Vanessa and Beatriz always look for ways to spend time with the community. They are both committed to connecting people with services they might need. A special thank you to the PTO at Salem for setting up such a wonderful event.



IDEA of the Month

NVHD is sharing one term or concept from its newly created Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Antiracism (IDEA) Glossary each month.

This month's term is:

**Structural
Racism**

The normalization of an array of dynamics—historical, cultural, institutional, and interpersonal—that routinely advantage Whites while producing cumulative and chronic adverse outcomes for people of color. Structural racism is the most profound and pervasive form of racism—all other forms of racism emerge from structural racism. It involves the reinforcing effects of multiple institutions and cultural norms, past and present, continually reproducing old and producing new forms of racism.

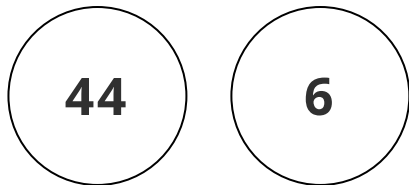


JANUARY HEALTHY VALLEY SPOTLIGHT

COVID CORNER

* NVHD monitors the number of people in the Valley who test positive for COVID-19 each month; please note that the numbers here reflect a combination of home tests and lab results reported to us by test sites.

DECEMBER*



REPORT POSITIVE TEST RESULTS HERE!



PREVENT THE SPREAD OF RESPIRATORY VIRUSES!



Stay up-to-date with immunizations

Wash your hands

Cover your mouth & nose when you cough & sneeze

Wear a mask if people around you are ill

SUSPECT OR KNOW YOU HAVE A RESPIRATORY VIRUS?

Stay home and away from others until both are true for 24 hours:

- Your symptoms are getting better overall
 - You have not had a fever without the aid of fever-reducing medication
- Then take added precautions for the next 5 days, such as wearing a mask, testing yourself, & practicing social distancing

UPCOMING NVHD EVENTS: JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2025

Mental Health First Aid Programs

NVHD will be offering two mental health support programs in January and February:

On January 16th NVHD will offer a virtual one-hour QPR Suicide Prevention Program. QPR is an evidence based, nationally recognized suicide prevention program, designed to provide lay people with the tools to recognize the signs of suicidal ideation, and provide a bridge to help.

On February 22nd, NVHD will offer an in-person, six-hour Mental Health First Aid training. Like QPR, MHFA is a nationally recognized mental health program for lay people to provide assistance to those struggling with a mental health crisis. Please see attached flyers for full details and to register.

Health Observances in January

National Radon Action Month

National Blood Donor Month

Cervical Cancer Awareness Month

Substance Use Disorder Treatment Month

National Birth Defects Prevention Month

Mental Wellness Month

National Glaucoma Awareness Month

January 20th: Martin Luther King Day

January 26th: World Leprosy Day

January 27th: International Holocaust Remembrance Day

January is National Radon Action Month

PROTECT YOUR HOME AND FAMILY.



WHERE DOES RADON COME FROM?

Radon is the by-product of uranium, a naturally occurring radioactive element, breaking down in the soil. Radon can enter a home through groundwater or well water. It can also come up through the bedrock and the soil. This means you can be exposed to radon via air and/or water.



RADON IS NOTHING TO IGNORE

Radon is invisible, odorless and tasteless. It can only be detected by testing your home and has been linked to over 20,000 lung cancer-related deaths each year.



RADON

WHAT THE NUMBERS MEAN

Radon is measured in picocuries per liter (pCi/L). But what does that mean for your health?

2 

CHEST X-RAYS



... is the equivalent radiation exposure of 4.0 pCi/L. Hospitals try to limit patients to less than 4 x-rays per year.

2.5

CIGARETTES EACH DAY



... is the equivalent of having a radon measurement of 1.0 pCi/L in your home.

ONE

HOME IN FIFTEEN



... is estimated to have radon levels at or above the EPA Action Level of 4.9 pCi/L.

To request a free radon test kit, contact NVHD Health Educator Lisa Trupp, 203-881-3255, ext 108 or email ltrupp@nvhd.org



For more information about radon, click the link below or access via QR Code

[Click Here](#)



Radon Publications

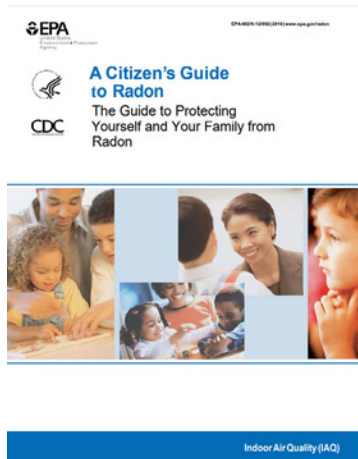
Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that can enter homes from the ground and build up to dangerous levels. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has several publications – including guides for consumers, home buyers and sellers – to help people better understand radon and its health risks.

Scan the QR Codes below to access the publications, or scan the code to the right to explore EPA’s radon website.

Scan here to visit
epa.gov/radon

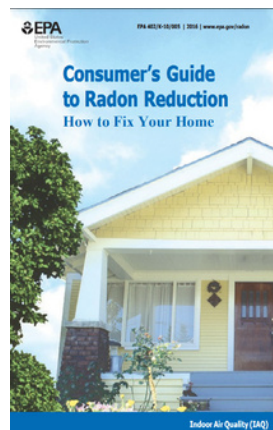
A Citizen’s Guide to Radon: The Guide to Protecting Yourself and Your Family from Radon

This guidance offers strategies for testing your home for radon, discussions of what steps to take after you have tested, discussions of the risk of radon and radon myths.



Consumer’s Guide to Radon Reduction: How to Fix Your Home

This guidance is designed for people who have tested their home and confirmed that they have elevated radon levels — 4 picocuries per liter (pCi/L) or higher. Know what to look for when selecting a qualified contractor to reduce the radon levels in your home, determine an appropriate radon reduction method and maintain your radon reduction system.



Home Buyer’s and Seller’s Guide to Radon

This booklet is intended for anyone who is buying or selling a home, real estate and relocation professionals, home inspectors and others.



State and Tribal Indoor Radon Grants (SIRG)

This factsheet provides information to ensure that all eligible parties, including tribes, have the information they need to apply for SIRG funding.



“Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health is the most shocking and the most inhuman because it often results in physical death.”

-Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



On January 20th, we celebrate Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

A fundamental facet of Dr. King’s legacy is his understanding that the roots of health inequity lie in racism, poverty, education, and housing—what we recognize today as **social determinants of health**. Decades later, communities across the the state of Connecticut and here in the Naugatuck Valley continue to face significant health disparities.

According to DataHaven’s “Health Equity in Connecticut 2023” report,

- **Fetal mortality** is more than twice as high—and **infant mortality** three times as high—for **Black babies** than **white babies** in Connecticut.
- More than 40 percent of **low-income adults**, as well as adults living in **Waterbury**, said they had **not seen a dentist** in a year or more.
- About **one in five low-income** and **Latino** adults reported that they **didn’t get the medical care** they needed at some point in the past year.
- Statewide, 73 percent of adults **feel there is good availability of affordable, high-quality produce** in their area, but this share ranges from 90 percent in many wealthy suburbs to **less than 50 percent in urban cities**.
- Statewide, **low-income adults** report feeling **chronically depressed** at five times the rate of high-income adults; **Black** and **Latino** adults report chronic depressive symptoms at **more than 1.3 times the rate of white adults**.

Read DataHaven’s full 2023 report [here](#). You can also learn more about the equity profiles of [Ansonia](#), [Beacon Falls](#), [Derby](#), [Naugatuck](#), [Seymour](#), and [Shelton](#) for 2023, courtesy of DataHaven.

Naugatuck Valley Health District is committed to recognizing the causes of health inequity and advancing initiatives to combat health disparities in our communities.

Key facts

~Cervical cancer is the fourth most common cancer in women globally with around 660,000 new cases and around 350,000 deaths in 2022.

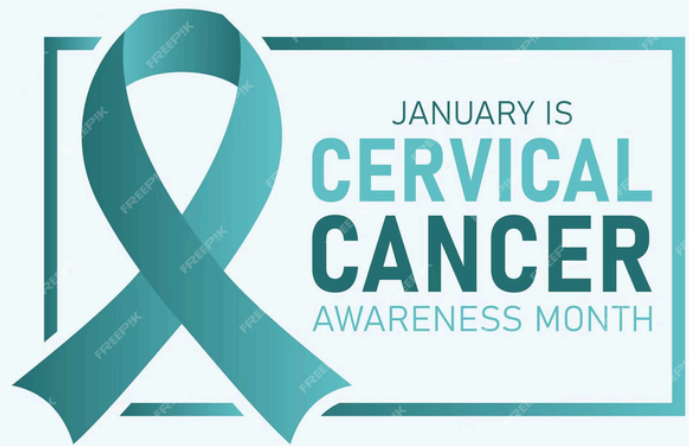
~The highest rates of cervical cancer incidence and mortality are in low- and middle-income countries. This reflects major inequities driven by lack of access to national HPV vaccination, cervical screening and treatment services and social and economic determinants.

~Cervical cancer is caused by persistent infection with the human papillomavirus (HPV).

~Prophylactic vaccination against HPV and screening and treatment of pre-cancer lesions are effective strategies to prevent cervical cancer and are very cost-effective.

HPV VACCINATION AND OTHER PREVENTION STEPS

- There are HPV vaccines available globally.
- All protect against the high-risk HPV types 16 and 18, which cause most cervical cancers and have been shown to be safe and effective in preventing HPV infection and cervical cancer.
- HPV vaccines should be given to all girls aged 9–14 years, before they become sexually active. The vaccine may be given as 1 or 2 doses.
- Some countries have also chosen to vaccinate boys to further reduce the prevalence of HPV in the community and to prevent cancers in men caused by HPV.



EARLY DETECTION, DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT OF CERVICAL CANCER

Cervical cancer can be cured if diagnosed and treated at an early stage of disease.

Recognizing symptoms and seeking medical advice to address any concerns is a critical step. Women should see a healthcare professional if they notice:

- unusual bleeding between periods, after menopause, or after sexual intercourse
- increased or foul-smelling vaginal discharge
- symptoms like persistent pain in the back, legs, or pelvis
- weight loss, fatigue and loss of appetite
- vaginal discomfort
- swelling in the legs.

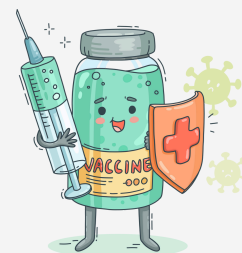


HPV VACCINE EFFECTIVENESS



- The HPV vaccine works extremely well. In the 10 years after the vaccine was recommended in 2006 in the United States, quadrivalent type HPV infections decreased by 86% in female teens aged 14 to 19 years and 71% in women in their early 20s.
- Research has also shown that fewer teens and young adults are getting genital warts and that cervical precancers are decreasing since HPV vaccines have been in use in the United States.
- HPV vaccination prevents new HPV infections but does not treat existing HPV infections or diseases.
- HPV vaccine works best when given before any exposure to HPV. Most sexually active adults have already been exposed to HPV, although not necessarily all of the HPV types targeted by vaccination.
- Cervical cancer screening is recommended for women beginning at age 21 years and continuing through age 65 years. Women who have received the HPV vaccine series should still be screened for cervical cancer beginning at age 21 years, in accordance with current cervical cancer screening guidelines. [CDC-HPV vaccination/effectiveness](#)

INTERESTED IN GETTING
THE HPV VACCINE?
WE HAVE IT!



Call Nurse Kristie
203.881.3255, ext. 107

Substance Use Disorder Treatment Month



January 2025 marks the launch of Substance Use Disorder Treatment Month—a dedicated time to raise awareness, reduce stigma, and promote the importance of treatment for those struggling with substance use.

Why is this important?

Substance use disorder (SUD) affects millions of individuals and families each year, but far too many are reluctant to seek treatment due to fear of judgment and stigma.

The Goal of Treatment Month:

- Ending the negative associations with seeking treatment for substance use disorders, including the use of medications as part of the treatment process.
- Highlight the resilience of those currently on their treatment and recovery journey.
- Help healthcare providers, family members, and friends understand the importance of early screening, intervention, and treatment.

What can you do to support Substance Use Disorder Treatment Month?

- If you're seeking help: Reach out for support and explore the treatment options available.
- Healthcare providers: Spread awareness about the available treatments and best practices for addressing substance use disorders.
- Friend or family member: Learn about how you can provide support and care for those in recovery. Your understanding can make a difference.

LEAD FREE CT

EVERY CHILD SAFE FROM LEAD



Harmful lead exposure can happen to any child, but it is 100% preventable.

Connecticut's Department of Public Health is investing in our communities so every child can grow up safe from lead.

What are the risks of lead?

Even a little lead can do a lot of harm, especially in young children.

There is no safe amount of lead exposure. Lead poisoning can be hard to notice at first—getting your child tested is the only way to know for sure. The sooner lead is detected, the sooner you can do something about it and stop it from getting worse.

A lead-free CT will help each child to fulfill their promise.

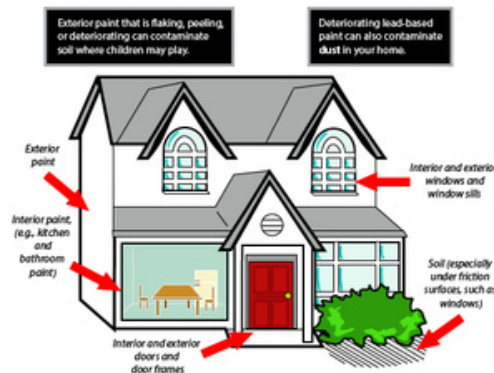
- ✓ Lead can cause behavior problems in children, speech and language delays, poor school performance, and may have long-term health effects, such as headaches, dizziness, decreased motor skills, fatigue and memory loss.
- ✓ Lead poisoning can affect our young children by causing harm to brain development that may follow them through school years and beyond.
- ✓ Children with higher lead levels may have problems with learning and reading, delayed growth, and hearing loss.
- ✓ In Connecticut, Black and LatinX children, and children from neighborhoods with high poverty rates are more commonly impacted by these risks.
- ✓ Children under age 6—especially small children ages 1 to 3— and pregnant persons are most vulnerable to lead exposure.
- ✓ Lead affects almost every organ in a child's body, including the brain, heart, lungs and kidneys.

Many Connecticut homes built before 1978 contain lead, which can be unsafe for children. Right now, Connecticut residents have the opportunity to make these older homes lead-safe, by removing lead paint hazards, for free*. If you own a property where a pregnant person or child under age 6 lives, you may be eligible for free abatement. Abatement is the process of eliminating or removing lead paint hazards.

APPLY NOW AT LEADFREETCT.ORG



Lead-based paint can be found both inside and outside the home. Do you know where to look for lead?





Naugatuck Valley Health District

Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

**Naugatuck Valley
Health District**



Save a Life with... **Question Persuade Refer** *A Suicide Prevention Program*

Become a certified QPR
Gatekeeper

QPR is a nationally recognized, evidence-based suicide prevention program. QPR is like CPR for mental health emergencies, providing hope and assistance until help is available.

Virtual Community Training Session
Thursday, January 16th, 2025, 6:00pm
As a QPR Gatekeeper you will learn to:

- Recognize the warning signs of suicide.
- Know how to offer hope.
- Know how to get help and save a life.

**Those who complete the training will receive a one-year QPR Gatekeeper certification*

Click Here To Register

Or Enter This Link Into Your Browser



<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwuc-uqrpj0pEtyDGghNr41viUC9IAy5Ub9V>

NAUGATUCK VALLEY HEALTH DISTRICT PRESENTS:

Adult Mental Health First Aid Training



Mental Health **FIRST AID**

from NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR MENTAL WELLBEING

In Person Program

Saturday, February 22, 2025: 8:00am to 2:00pm

Naugatuck Valley Health District, 98 Bank St., Seymour, CT

(snow date, March 1st, 2025)

****Lunch Provided****

Join us for a **FREE** Adult Mental Health First Aid training where participants will learn how to respond to a mental health crisis using the **Mental Health First Aid Action Plan (ALGEE)**:

- A**ssess for risk of suicide or harm.
- L**isten nonjudgementally.
- G**ive reassurance and information.
- E**ncourage appropriate professional help.
- E**ncourage self-help and other support strategies.

Participants will be required to complete a **2-hour, self-paced online course** before attending the in-person led session. Participants will receive certification from the National Council for Mental Wellbeing valid for 3 years.

MHFA satisfies CT OEMS Approval #CT-F4-V101 for 8 EMS continuing education hours

[Click Here To Register](#)

or enter this link in your browser

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/JHM9RVL>

Questions?

Lisa Trupp, CCHW

Health Educator
ltrupp@nvhd.org

203-881-3255, ext. 108



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.
Naugatuck Valley
Health District

