



# Licking County Wellness Coalition Newsletter

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## Next Wellness Coalition Meeting:

February 2, 2011  
 2:30pm  
 Licking County Health Department  
 Unity Board Room

## Welcome!

I hope you were able to have a healthy and happy holiday season! Now that the holidays are finally over, you can focus on your health. With all the choices for a New Year's Resolution why not choose one that betters your health? Remember, if you have anything you would like to share with our subscribers, please send it to [wellness@lickingcohealth.org](mailto:wellness@lickingcohealth.org)

Sincerely,  
*Kate*  
 Kate White  
 Licking County Wellness Coalition Chair



## Upcoming Events

- January 1– New Year's Day
- January 1– Running in the New Year 5 Miler (Granville)
- January 1– First on the First 5k Run/Walk (Westerville)
- January 1– Columbus Outdoor Pursuits– Annual New Year's Hike (Hocking Hills)
- January 4– Granville Recreation District Advisory Committee Meeting (Granville)
- January 15– Columbus Running Company's Fantastic Frigid 5K (Dublin)
- January 20– 6th Street Community Gardens Members Meeting (Newark)
- January 20– School Health Index Workshop (Columbus)
- January 21-23– Columbus Outdoor Pursuits Annual Winter Getaway (Pennsylvania)
- January 23– Columbus Outdoor Pursuits– Hike Infirmiry Mound Park (Granville)
- January 29– See Your Breath 10K (Granville)
- January 29– Columbus Running Company's Fantastic Frigid 5K (Dublin)



## Surgeon General: Any Exposure to Tobacco Smoke Can Damage DNA Immediately and Lead to Illness

Tobacco smoke causes immediate damage at the lowest levels of use and cigarettes are designed to be addictive, according to the 30th tobacco-related report of the U.S. Surgeon General, the *Washington Post* reported on December 9.

The 704-page report is the first on tobacco from current Surgeon General, Vice Admiral Regina M. Benjamin, M.D. It stated that hundreds of the more than 7,000 compounds in tobacco smoke are toxic, at least 70 of the compounds cause cancer, and no level of exposure to tobacco smoke is safe.

The lining of the lungs becomes inflamed upon first exposure to cigarette smoke, and the smoke can cause diseases such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Heart disease is another common effect of cigarette smoke, including exposure to secondhand smoke. Diabetics who smoke may also have more difficulty in controlling blood sugar.

"The chemicals in tobacco smoke reach your lungs quickly every time you inhale, causing damage immediately," said Benjamin. "Inhaling even the smallest amount of tobacco smoke can also damage your DNA, which can lead to cancer."

Furthermore, cigarettes are designed to be addictive. Today, more than ever, according to the report, cigarettes deliver nicotine to the user more quickly and effectively than was the case years ago.

Matthew L. Myers, President of the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, said in a statement that the report "sends an unmistakable message to elected officials at all levels that reducing smoking is one of the most effective actions we can take to improve the nation's health and prevent some of the most deadly and costly diseases in our society."

"This report makes it clear -- quitting at any time gives your body a chance to heal the damage caused by smoking," the Surgeon General said. "It's never too late to quit, but the sooner you do it, the better."

The full report, *How Tobacco Smoke Causes Disease: The Biology and Behavioral Basis for Smoking-Attributable Disease*, is available on the [Office of the Surgeon General website](#).



## Nearly 80% of New Year's Resolutions are broken by Valentine's Day.

Try one of these tips to help insure you achieve your resolutions this year:

1. Include smaller (progress) goals to mark achievement enroute to your ultimate goal.  
(e.g. ultimate goal: eat fruit everyday; progress goal: eat fruit 4 times a week)
2. Involve a buddy. Having a partner increases accountability and provides support.
3. Be realistic. Setting unrealistic goals increases the risk of coming up short.

## Fight Those Winter Blues

If you live in colder climates, you might be experiencing the winter blues. As the days get shorter, it is easy to experience some sadness as moments in the sun get fewer. The sun helps us produce vitamin D, essential for health and well-being. Many get stuck in a rut in the wintertime with less outdoor stimulation. Here are some helpful hints on ways you can beat those winter blues.

Paint your walls. Bright colors are sure to bring happy thoughts to mind and light colors reflect the sunlight.

Get moving. Exercise is essential year-round, but it is especially important in the wintertime because it releases serotonin in the brain. This release will give you that extra kick to beat those seasonal blues. Also, try to spend some time outside each day. Even if it is cloudy, the light will help.



Eat the right foods. You might feel the need for sugary treats and drinks in the wintertime to boost your mood, but this is a short-term solution to a long-term problem. It might give you a temporary high, but the low will be really low. Make healthy food choices that will help your body create serotonin, such as nuts, beans, lots of veggies and whole grains.



Get out of the house. It is easy to hibernate during the winter months, but it is important to get out. You could also try picking up a hobby such as knitting or crossword puzzles to keep your mind focused.

Get a massage. Getting a massage is not only a sure way to relax those tired muscles, but also calm the mind, remove toxins and release serotonin in the brain.

Use herbs to boost your mood. Herbs have a long history of helping the mind, body and spirit naturally. Here are some that combat the winter blahs and stress, which deplete our bodies from the resources it needs to stay happy and healthy. (Consult your doctor first.)

- **St. John's wort** is a great natural mood enhancer. This herb has been used for years to fight off depression, help with sleep, and reduce stress. It can have side effects, but is typically safe.
- Milk thistle helps remove toxins from the liver and also helps fight off depression.
- Rose is a great aphrodisiac and can give a nice energy surge throughout the day.
- Lavender helps calm the mind and reduce stress.
- Chamomile is great to drink before bed to help get a restful night's sleep. It also helps calm the mind and reduce anxiety and tension.

Remember to smile, breathe deeply, and spend time with friends and family. Happy winter! This article is brought to you by *Discovery Health*.

## Save-the-Dates for the First Annual Tri-Healthlon

The Licking County Health Department invites everyone to participate in the First Annual Tri-Healthlon. While not exactly a triathlon, there will be the opportunity to swim, bike and run - just not on the same day. The tri-healthlon addresses three of the leading health concerns for Licking County residents: obesity, tobacco use and breast cancer. The three events offer the community opportunities to be active in a variety of ways, learn how to improve their health and have some fun.

Saturday, June 4: Change Gears: Ride a Bike (physical activity and nutrition); T.J. Evans trail between Newark and Johnstown

Saturday, July 9: Kickin' Ash Splash Pool Party (tobacco use and healthy lifestyles); Heath City Water Park

Saturday, October 15: Pink Strides 5k Trail Run and Wellness Walk (breast cancer); Infirmary Mound Park (tentative)

As you hang your 2011 calendar, be sure to add these events. Additional details will be posted at [www.lickingcohealth.org](http://www.lickingcohealth.org) and in future issues of the Wellness Coalition Newsletter.

## About the Licking County Wellness Coalition

The Licking County Wellness Coalition was founded in September 2006 and was formed as a result of the Community Blueprint. The Licking County Wellness Coalition works to create a healthier Licking County by increasing health and wellness of the county residents through encouragement and promotion of physical activity and healthy lifestyles. The Coalition is made up of a variety of representatives from local and state organizations with a vested interest in reducing and eliminating health disparities. In April 2008, the Licking County Tobacco-Free coalition joined the Licking County Wellness Coalition.

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