

HEALTH

SOUTHWEST UTAH PUBLIC HEALTH FOUNDATION | FALL 2025

LOCAL ADVENTURES
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ROAD RULES
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LIFE AND BREATH
PG. 28



Welcome to the **Fall** 2025 ISSUE OF HEALTH MAGAZINE.

Welcome to our Fall 2025 issue of Health Magazine. We are grateful to those that have provided feedback and support for our efforts to produce this magazine. While we've started publishing one issue a year that focuses on a specific public health topic (like sleep or emergency preparedness), this issue follows our standard practice of offering a variety of articles, tied together with the theme of healthy living in the West.

We want to encourage you to get out and enjoy the area we live in and improve your health in the process. One area to pay attention to is how active living and aging well can make a big difference in your life. I'll be continuing my task of addressing specific causes of death in our community and how we can decrease our risk. You'll also find interesting stories of the history of infectious diseases and the impact they have on us today.

We hope that you will enjoy the artwork, themes, and practical approach that our team has worked hard to bring to you.
Here's to your good health!

We want to encourage you to get out and enjoy the area we live in and improve your health in the process.



Sincerely,

David W. Blodgett, MD, MPH
Southwest Utah Public Health
Department (SWUPHD)
Director & Health Officer

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HEALTH MAGAZINE

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Read all issues of
HEALTH MAGAZINE



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ON THE COVER HEALTH MAGAZINE

*This issue's cover is inspired by the 1969 American Western, **Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid**, which was filmed in Southwest Utah locations including Zion National Park, Snow Canyon State Park, St. George, and the ghost town of Grafton. The film starred Paul Newman, Robert Redford, and Katherine Ross.*

Butch Cassidy, whose real name was Robert Leroy Parker, was born in Beaver in 1866.

Cassidy Trail (located in Red Canyon, east of Panguitch), was named after him and is part of the "Outlaw Trail" traveled by Cassidy, Sundance, and the rest of the "Wild Bunch". See page 14 for more information if you'd like to explore the Cassidy Trail in person!

Then & Now

HISTORY OF PUBLIC HEALTH



By: Nathan Cleverly
SWUPED Emergency Preparedness Planner

Public health can be defined as what we do collectively to improve our health. This idea emphasizes the communal nature of the field - unlike clinical medicine, which focuses on individual treatment. By preventing disease and reducing its spread, public health saves lives quietly, often without acknowledgement or recognition. When public health succeeds, nothing happens — no outbreak, no hospitalizations.

The Invisible Shield, a PBS documentary series released in 2024, walks viewers

through the history, foundations, and impact of public health.

Early Lessons in Collective Action

The Invisible Shield traces the origins of public health back several centuries, highlighting significant turning points. In the 1300s, a wealthy Croatian merchant city, Dubrovnik, employed basic disease control methods during plague outbreaks, including quarantining ships before allowing them into the city to trade. These early interventions demonstrated an evolving awareness that disease

spread could be mitigated by collective action.

In the 1660s, John Graunt began compiling mortality data in London, tracking deaths by disease, age, and season. This laid the groundwork for the field of epidemiology, which has become one of public health's most important tools for disease tracking.

How Data and Observation Have Saved Lives

The series also spotlights Ignaz Semmelweis, a Hungarian physician who used observational data to uncover the link between doctors performing autopsies and then delivering babies without handwashing, a practice that caused deadly childbirth infections. His work showed how simple hygiene practices could drastically reduce mortality.

In London in the mid-1800s, there were major outbreaks of cholera. At that time disease was believed to spread through the air, but physician John Snow hypothesized that cholera was waterborne. After a particularly bad outbreak, he interviewed households and mapped cholera cases, eventually tracing the outbreak to a single contaminated water pump on Broad Street. He petitioned the local health board to remove the pump handle, helping to bring an end to the outbreak.

The Power of Prevention

John Snow's work was a breakthrough that marked a shift in public health thinking, leading to broader acceptance of sanitation infrastructure like sewer systems and clean water supplies. The impact was enormous. In the 1880s, life expectancy was below 40 years. Today it has increased to almost 80

years, thanks largely to public health measures like handwashing, vaccines, sanitation, food safety, and clean water.

We ignore prioritizing public health at our risk, *The Invisible Shield* argues. When funding, attention, or trust is withdrawn, the consequences can be swift and devastating. This makes public health not only a scientific and societal necessity, but a moral obligation.

The Invisible Shield is more than a documentary; it's a call to appreciate and invest in the systems that have quietly kept us safe for generations. Through compelling storytelling and historical insight, it challenges viewers to look beyond the hospital walls and recognize the invisible forces that have extended life expectancy, reduced suffering, and made modern society possible. In a world still grappling with global pandemics and rising health disparities, its message is both timely and essential. ↩

Public health is not only a scientific and societal necessity, but a moral obligation.

Watch The Invisible Shield

pbs.org/show/the-invisible-shield
or scan this QR code with your phone



CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE.

Then & Now

...CONTINUED

Many diseases that were feared in the past are still around today. However, thanks to public health discoveries and interventions, they have become less common in many areas of the world.

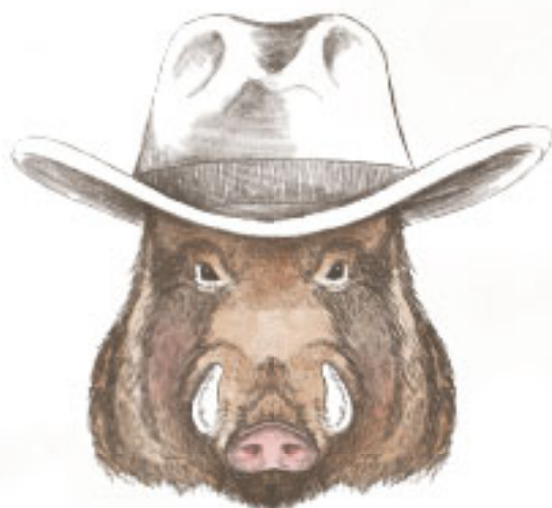
Historical Name	Modern Name	What is it?	Background
Consumption, White Plague	Tuberculosis (TB)	Long-term lung infection caused by a bacteria, can be active or inactive (latent)	Has also been called "the king's evil" and "robber of youth", the microorganism causing TB was discovered in 1882
Grippe	Influenza (Flu)	Viral respiratory infection, recurs in seasonal epidemics	Common cause of pandemics in history; 1918: killed 40 million+ globally. 2009: most recent flu pandemic
Ague	Malaria	Intervals of fevers, sweating, caused by a mosquito-borne parasite	Has plagued human settlements throughout time, was the reason The CDC was founded in 1946
Infantile Paralysis	Poliomyelitis (Polio)	Viral infection that can cause paralysis, especially in children	Has existed for millennia, first clinically described in 1789 (England) and formally recognized in 1840 (Germany)
Yellow Jack	Yellow Fever	Acute virus causing fever and yellowing of the skin/eyes (jaundice)	Entered the Americas through the slave trade in 1600s, was the first human disease found to be linked to a virus (in 1901)
Lockjaw	Tetanus	Serious bacterial infection causing muscle spasms and stiffness	Described throughout history; clinically defined in 1880s

	How it's spread	Threat Status	Prevention
	Prolonged exposure to airborne bacteria inhaled from an infected person	Leading infectious cause of death in the world, rare in the US although there is a large ongoing TB outbreak in Kansas	Screening, proper ventilation, medications and respiratory hygiene if infected
	Respiratory droplets from coughing, sneezing, talking; contaminated surfaces	Affects about 10–20% of Utah's population annually, ranks as 11th most common cause of death (from flu & flu-related pneumonia)	Hygiene (hand washing, covering coughs, staying home when sick), healthy immune system, annual vaccination
	Bites from infected female <i>Anopheles</i> mosquitoes	No longer endemic in US but half the world population still at risk, especially tropical/sub-tropical regions; death toll is 600,000 annually	Mosquito bite prevention and anti-malarial medications when traveling to affected countries
	Fecal-oral or respiratory droplets	Last wild poliovirus case in the US was in 1979; considered eradicated worldwide thanks to vaccine except in Pakistan and Afghanistan	Polio vaccine
	Infected mosquito bites (<i>Aedes aegypti</i>)	Last US outbreak was in 1905, no longer present here, but still a risk in some countries	Mosquito bite prevention and vaccination when visiting countries where yellow fever is found
	Bacterial spores in soil enter the body through open wounds	Caused 1 million deaths annually before vaccine introduced in 1980s, now only about 30 cases in the US annually	Proper wound care and vaccination

Bad Belly Ache

SALMONELLA

NOTORIOUS FOOD POISONER - FIRST DISCOVERED IN HOGS - NOT NAMED AFTER A FISH



By: **David Heaton**

HEALTH Editor

In 1885, a young research assistant named Theobald Smith isolated a new species of bacteria. After two years of investigation, he was sure he had found the cause of hog cholera, a highly contagious disease that was deadly to pigs.

It turns out he was wrong; hog cholera was caused by a virus. The bacteria he discovered was actually a common culprit of gastrointestinal illness in humans. Since Theobald was just an as-

stant at the time, the honor of having this important find named after him went instead to Daniel Salmon, his supervisor at the US Bureau of Animal Industry.

Smith went on to become a highly respected epidemiologist; Salmon developed public health programs dealing with cattle and meat, and Salmonella has continued to afflict millions of people worldwide with nausea, diarrhea, vomiting, and worse.

There are over 2,500 *Salmonella* subtypes, including some that cause the bacterial infection known as salmonellosis. The bacteria lives in human and animal intestines and exist in feces. We get it by swallowing contaminated meat, eggs, milk, water, produce, and other foods, especially if raw, undercooked, or unpasteurized. It also spreads hand-to-mouth after handling animals and pets (which can carry salmonella without being sick), and contact with infected people or surfaces.

It takes anywhere from 6 hours to 6 days to get sick after exposure. The most common symptoms of salmonellosis are watery diarrhea and stomach cramps. Nausea, vomiting, fever, aches, and loss of appetite can also occur.

Most people recover within a week, although they can still shed the bacteria for days afterwards. Some people, especially small children, can remain infectious for weeks or months; that's why it's important to ensure good hygiene habits during and after illness.

Contact a healthcare provider if diarrhea or vomiting lasts more than two days, a fever gets higher than 102°, dehydration occurs, or there is lasting joint pain.

Salmonellosis can be prevented by thorough hand washing, safely preparing and storing food, and being mindful while swimming, traveling, and playing with animals. ↙

INTERESTING FACTS

Recent *Salmonella* outbreaks in the US have been linked to cucumbers, frozen bean sprouts, eggs, cantaloupe, diced onions, tomatoes, peanut butter, flour, backyard chickens, and geckos.

Salmonella infections are more common in summer, due to warm weather and unrefrigerated foods. Promptly refrigerate perishables!

At least 1 out of every 25 packages of chicken at the store is contaminated with *Salmonella*. Keep raw meats separate from other foods and cook to 165°F.

Salmonella can survive freezing temperatures.

It's estimated that there are 30 undiagnosed cases of salmonellosis for every 1 that is confirmed by testing. Most people recover at home with rest and rehydration.

The US has about 1.3 million salmonellosis cases, 26,000 hospitalizations, and 420 deaths annually. It is the 2nd leading cause of food poisoning in the US after norovirus.

Finland, Sweden, & Norway have very low rates of *Salmonella* disease, thanks to exceptional food chain monitoring.

Typhoid fever is caused by certain *Salmonella* subtypes. Most typhoid cases in the US come from travelers returning from South Asia.

An estimated 100,000 cases of salmonellosis were prevented annually in the US after a 1975 ban on the sale of turtles with shells under 4 inches in diameter. Smaller turtles were too easy for children to put in their mouths.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control (CDC), National Institutes of Health (NIH), US Food & Drug Administration (FDA), Harvard Medical School

Smile!

ORAL HEALTH BASICS



By: Mandy Gibbs, RDH, MSDH
Guest Columnist

Hi, my name is Mandy, and I've spent nearly 17 years working in a private dental practice since graduating from Utah Tech University's dental program back in 2008, where I'm also now an instructor. I'd like to take a moment to dive deeper into why oral health matters far beyond just your teeth—it affects your overall well-being and quality of life.

Your smile: a gateway to health.

Our mouths are so much more than a place to chew and speak—they serve as the gateway to your entire body. Think of your mouth as

the front door to your health. When everything inside is well cared for, it helps protect what's beyond. However, when oral health is neglected, that door can swing wide open to serious problems.

Bacteria naturally live in our mouths, and most of the time they coexist peacefully. However, when plaque builds up from poor brushing or frequent snacking on sugary foods, these bacteria can multiply and cause infections in your gums and teeth. If left untreated, these infections don't just stay local—they can enter your bloodstream

through tiny blood vessels in your gums and quietly travel to other parts of your body.

Research has shown strong connections between gum disease and serious health conditions. For example, bacteria from your mouth can contribute to heart disease by causing inflammation or even infections in your arteries. It's also linked to kidney problems and can increase risks in people with prosthetic joints, where infection could threaten the joint's stability.

So, when you're brushing and flossing, you're not just protecting your teeth from cavities or keeping your smile bright—you're defending your whole body. Maintaining good oral hygiene is a key part of overall health. Taking care of your mouth can reduce the risk of heart attacks, strokes, diabetes complications, and more.

What goes in...

Going back to the basics of dental health, I've noticed how many people still overlook the impact of what they eat and drink. It's not just candy that harms your teeth; acidic drinks like soda (even diet soda), coffee, and energy drinks bathe your teeth in acid, which erodes the protective enamel. Snacks like crackers might seem harmless, but they break down into sticky, cavity-causing sugars.

Do you love soda?

What matters is not how much you consume, but how often you drink it. Sipping acidic drinks over several hours exposes your teeth to acid much longer, causing more damage than drinking the same amount quickly. Try to drink your soda in one sitting and follow it with a glass of water to rinse away the acid. This simple habit can help protect your teeth from long-term damage.

Beyond diet, smoking and vaping make oral health even more complicated. They dry out your mouth and reduce blood flow, weakening your immune system's ability to fight gum disease. If early gum disease is already present, smoking accelerates the

damage, leading to faster bone loss and infection. I always tell my patients: every cigarette costs you more than money—it's like handing over your teeth.

Tips for parents

Teaching good habits early is essential. Since kids usually lack the dexterity to brush or floss effectively until about age 5 or 6, they need your guidance and support. Set the tone by brushing and flossing together. Kids learn by watching — when they see you caring for your teeth, they'll want to join in. Try using an electric toothbrush with a timer to help them brush for the full two minutes. Most kids need guidance until they're at least 6 or 7, when they can brush well on their own. Stick with it — you're laying the foundation for a lifetime of good habits.

One great way to encourage consistent brushing is to use a treasure box reward system. Here's how you can create one at home:

- Choose small rewards your child will enjoy (stickers, small toys, extra storytime, etc.)
- Use coins, tokens, or points on a chart to track brushing success
- Decide how many coins or points your child needs to earn a reward
- Be consistent with praising and rewarding your child when they brush properly

What works for your family may look a little different, and that's okay. When I was a child, my mom had her system: if we forgot to brush, we had to pay a small fine, and that money went toward our dental care. Later, with my kids, the treasure box idea I shared above worked great for us. It made brushing fun and gave them something to look forward to — and eventually, brushing became part of their everyday routine. The most important thing is to choose a strategy that fits your family's rhythms and keeps your kids engaged.

And remember, oral health isn't just about a pretty smile—it's about keeping your entire body healthy and strong. 🦷

LOW-COST DENTAL CARE THAT'S CLOSE TO HOME

Utah Tech's dental clinic in St. George provides low-cost cleanings and treatments by supervised hygiene students. Near the hospital with evening hours, it's easy to access. Call (435) 879-4900 to join the patient list and be notified of openings. Patients from across Southwest Utah return regularly, and discounted fillings and extractions are available through a partnership with the University of Utah's dental team. Scan for more information:



Local Adventure



PARKS, TRAILS, & GOLF ST. GEORGE, WASHINGTON COUNTY

St. George City now has over 70 miles of trails, visited by one million people over the course of last year. The Black Hill Trail now connects to the popular “Dragon’s Tail” staircase at Tech Ridge, which boasts 333 steps to test your endurance.

We all know how warm summers can get here. Besides our city pool, we have fun water features in four different locations. Town Square has a splash pad, lazy river, and waterfall to play in, and there are splash pads at Hidden Valley, The Fields at Little Valley, and Thunder Junction All Abilities Park.

In total, St. George has 29 parks with a variety of features to get you outside and active: trail access, lawns, playgrounds, and sports courts and fields.

The city runs four municipal golf courses, including Dixie Red Hills, which is our first course, built back in 1965 and features amazing red rock views. That’s back when we were a small, sleepy town of 6,000 residents where people just stopped to get gas between California, Las Vegas, and the Wasatch Front. But it sparked our ability to grow and now it’s considered one of the best nine-hole courses in the state.

There’s also Sunbrook (our signature golf course with 27 holes), Southgate, and St. George Golf Club, all available for residents and visitors alike.

Every spring we open registration for our Junior Association of Golfers (JAG) summer program for kids aged 6-17. This gets kids out in the fresh air having a lot of fun as they’re introduced to the game of golf as opposed to being inside on their phones and video games. They get a killer deal on discounted green fees, range balls, and tournament access.

If disc golf is your thing, then check out Mathis Park, which is a nine-hole course, or 18-hole Beaverwood at St. James Park.

To find out more about recreation in St. George, along with trail maps, park details, and reservation links for tee times and JAG, visit sgcityutah.gov/parksandrec.

-David Cordero, Communications & Marketing Director, City of St. George

PARKS, TRAILS, & GOLF CEDAR CITY, IRON COUNTY

Summertime in Cedar City is filled with festivals, events, and beautiful weather! From families with young children to retirees, there is something for everyone to encourage movement and take advantage of the outdoors. With many new improvements and additions over the last few months, Cedar City offers a variety of opportunities to get moving, stay cool, and reduce stress through recreation.

Take a drive to West Canyon Park, located at 133 S. 400 E., which has been recently overhauled through generous donations provided by the Cedar City Rotary Club. An active irrigation stream system runs through the park and has been redesigned for safer play, including a shallow sand beach area. A new playground has been added - with more to come. The stream also runs through the shady green trees to keep summer days cool.



ed - along with a bridge over Coal Creek trail system park, offering plenty of you cool on those hot

Stop by Cedar Ridge Golf Course and utilize the new tee time reservation system to save time for playing golf! In 2020, and many golfers from Vegas utilize the Cedar Ridge Golf Course to escape the heat. Not to mention the incredible red mountain views as you get your hole-in-one!

Course and utilize the new to reduce your wait and The sport of golf boomed from St. George and Las

With 13.5 miles of stunning trail systems, a Half Marathon, multiple 5K races, a year-round Aquatic Center, newly renovated parks, and premier playgrounds, you can explore Cedar City and all there is to do in Iron County to stay active! Visit www.cedarcityut.gov to learn more.

-Gabbie Costello, Cedar City Community Relations & Public Information Officer

TILTED MESA MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAIL SYSTEM, KANE COUNTY



Tilted Mesa is a 13 mile trail system that is gaining popularity within the mountain biking community, attracting riders from northern Utah and neighboring states. It was developed just two years ago as a collaborative effort between the BLM, Kane County, and the Kanab Biking Club. It can be found about 10 miles east of Kanab, off Highway 89.

Tilted Mesa features several loops, with about six or seven distinct trails that interconnect, offering a variety of longer and shorter options. A map is posted at the trailhead kiosk, and a flyer can be found at many local businesses that includes a map and information on what to bring, what to prepare for, and what to avoid.

The trails are rated for difficulty, with options for all skill levels and technical sections for experienced riders who can navigate challenging terrain. While primarily designed for mountain biking, some segments also accommodate foot traffic and equestrians. Further information can be obtained at the BLM visitor center in Kanab at 669 S. Hwy 89A.

-Whit Bunting, Field Manager, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Kanab Office



DELANO PEAK TUSHAR MOUNTAINS, BEAVER COUNTY

The iconic summit hike in the Tushar Mountains is the Delano Peak Trail, which climbs 1,700 feet in 1.5 miles to the 12,169-foot rooftop of the range. The trail, beginning near Big John Flat, is surprisingly easy with gentle grades up Delano's wide West Ridge as it ascends through tundra meadows studded with tiny alpine flowers that normally grow in northern Alaska. Bring binoculars to spot Utah's largest herd of mountain goats lying on snowbanks or frolicking among boulders.

After catching your breath on the rounded summit, sign into the mailbox register and enjoy the views from Capitol Reef to the east to hazy Nevada ranges on the western horizon. Return to the trailhead on FR #123 or head south along the range crest for 1.5 miles to 11,985-foot Mount Holly. Descend its west slope to the Skyline Trail and walk northwest back to Big John Flat and its superb campsites.

-*VisitUtah.com (The drive to Delano Peak trailhead from Beaver starts on SR 153 for 16 miles and follows about 30 miles of dirt roads)*

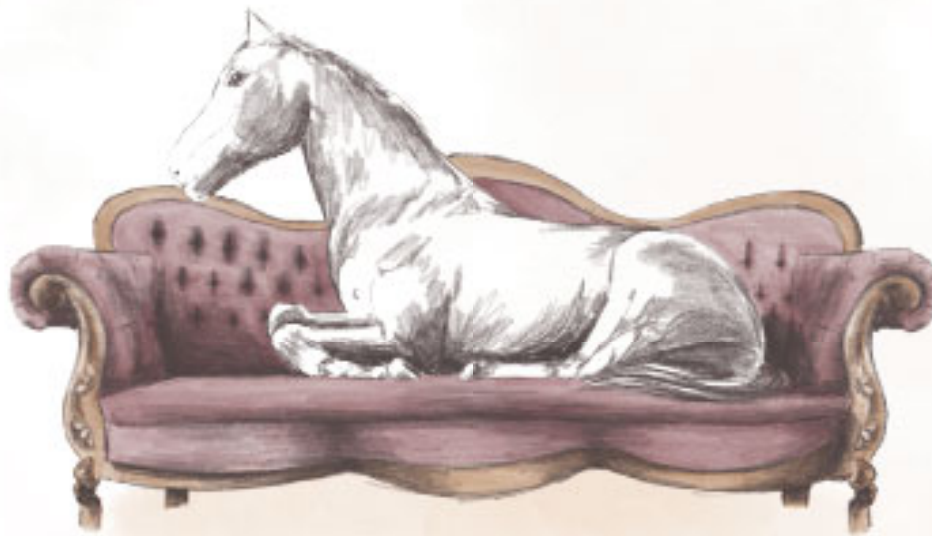


Cassidy Trail RED CANYON, GARFIELD COUNTY

Enjoy Bryce Canyon scenery without the crowds. From Panguitch, head south on Highway 89, then turn east onto Highway 12. Go approximately 4.5 miles, pass the Red Canyon Visitor Center, and park at the Red Canyon Trailhead on your left. Watch closely or you may miss it. The trail is accessible to hikers, bikers, and horses. It is believed to have been used by the famous outlaw Butch Cassidy in his escapes from lawmen. You will pass red hoodoos and large, old ponderosa pines as you wind through the bottom of the wash and eventually climb to scenic vistas that culminate at Brayton Point. This trail is part of a larger, well-marked trail system where you can go as little as 4 miles round trip to a 16 mile round trip. The trail is rated as moderate, mostly open to the sun with pockets of shade. Take plenty of water. 🐾

-*SWUPHD*

Ask Your Doc IF GETTING OFF THE COUCH IS RIGHT FOR YOU



Introducing a most wondrous remedy!!

No longer must you languish in a state of slothful repose, beset by the creeping malaise of idleness.
Permit us to present the miracle tonic of our age: **Getting Off the Couch!**

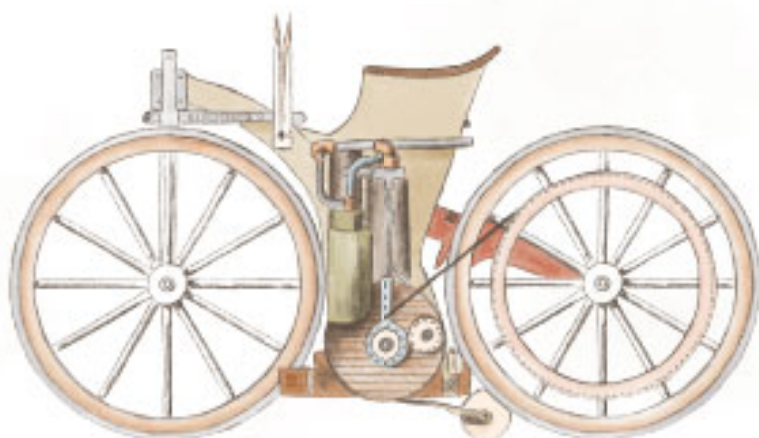
With a simple daily application, one may restore vigor to the limbs, clarity to the mind, and a spring to the step. Reports from satisfied patrons describe sensations most extraordinary—such as blood circulating, lungs inflating, and spirits elevating! Side effects may include a rosy countenance, trousers fitting most agreeably, and neighbors remarking, “Why, you look positively hale and spry!”

Delay not, dear reader—for in every household where couches abound, there too is the timely opportunity for **Getting Off the Couch!**

1871

I Survived

...A MOTORCYCLE CRASH



By: Roland Byrd
Guest Columnist

The minivan cut across my lane, hit my bike like Thor's hammer, and punched me into the air. I was airborne, flying over the freeway at nearly 55 miles per hour. My motorcycle flipped and tumbled away from me, spitting chunks of tarmac and dirt as it spun off the pavement. The road rushed to meet me. I couldn't fly forever, and there was no safe landing. Interstate 15 loomed, an executioner, ready to pound nails into my coffin.

Years of martial arts training took over. I tucked my chin to my chest,

extended my right arm, and prepared to roll through the impact. It's called the "tuck and roll". When performed correctly, it redistributes the force of your fall, allowing you to roll back to your feet. You hardly feel it. But I was going to feel this...

My forearm hit, and I started my tuck. WHAM! My chin was pulled tight to my chest, but my head still slammed into the asphalt. I rolled through and felt every bit of my body pound the roadway.

Too fast...

I was rolling too fast!

I bounced off the ground, entered another tuck. WHAM! Wrist, shoulder, head, slamming into the tarmac as I rolled through. Four times I tucked and rolled, head striking the asphalt each time. I covered over two hundred feet of freeway before slamming into a road marker, taking the impact with the middle of my lower back.

Stunned, I lay there. Wrist broken, shoulder injured, the rest of my body felt like someone had just played chopsticks on it with a sledgehammer.

The paramedics and emergency room doctors were amazed that I survived and walked away mostly intact. They rarely see that. Far too many motorcycle accident victims end up in an intensive care unit, or worse, the morgue.

How did I survive? I was wearing full riding gear, plain and simple. That includes an armored motorcycle jacket, carbon fiber reinforced gloves, motorcycle boots, jeans (armored pants would have been better), and most importantly: a helmet.

Make no mistake, without my helmet, I would have either died or been left with severe brain damage. The g-forces were too great to keep my head from hitting the asphalt. Despite knowing how to fall, the first impact would have knocked me out or killed me. Then my body would have rag-dolled down the freeway. My kids would have lost their father, my wife her husband, my parents their child, and my youngest son would never have been born. And for what, to feel the wind in my hair?

Helmets are cheap insurance. The NHTSA (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration) found that riding without a helmet increases the risk of death in a motorcycle crash by nearly 40%. The helmet I was

wearing cost just over \$100. It saved my life. How much is your life worth? The truth is, no amount of protective gear can guarantee you'll emerge unscathed from an accident. But wearing full gear, including a helmet, definitely improves your odds. Why not stack the odds in your favor?

Think of it this way: asphalt is hard. Asphalt is also like coarse sandpaper against your skin. Chip-sealed roads are even worse - they're a motorcyclist's bane. It doesn't matter if you're only going 10 mph; you're going to get road rash. I hit the road at 55 mph and only had two small patches of road rash. One on my wrist and one on my lower leg, where the fabric ripped away. If I'd only been wearing my helmet, most of my body would have been shredded.

It also seems there's a misconception that scooters are safer than motorcycles. While a person on a scooter wearing full motorcycle racing gear might be extreme, surely there must be a balance between full gear and flip-flops, shorts, dresses or skirts, and thin shirts. True, most scooters top out around 40 mph,

but you're going to hit the ground just as hard on a scooter as you would on a full-sized bike at that speed.

Finally, most motorcycle - and scooter - accidents are caused

by other drivers. People should watch for motorcyclists, but most don't. These accidents are usually on city streets during short trips around town. Even at slower speeds, protective gear can do wonders to increase your odds of survival.

If you have gear, great! Wear it. If you don't have any gear, get some and wear it, especially a helmet! Your brain will thank you. 🏍️

Roland is a network engineer, author, fitness enthusiast, husband, and father. The accident described above occurred in May 2012 on the freeway just south of Cedar City, Utah.

In the 33 states without universal helmet laws (including Utah), 54% of motorcyclists killed in 2022 were not wearing helmets, as compared to 11% in the 17 states with universal helmet laws -NHTSA

Road Rules

FOR A SAFE RIDE



By: Kristi Sharp

SWUPHD Health Promotions Program Manager

As someone who works closely with our community safety partners—Zero Fatalities, Safe Routes to School, law enforcement, and local leaders—I see the shared commitment to making our roads safer for everyone. Whether you're driving across town, dropping off kids at school, or commuting to work, how you drive directly affects your life and the lives of your passengers and those you share the road with.

Besides buckling up every time you get behind the wheel, here are a few reminders for driving responsibly:

Focus on driving, not multitasking

Using devices, reaching for things, even intense conversations can cause fatal delays in reaction time. Put the phone down; Utah law prohibits texting, dialing, or browsing on your cell phone. You can talk on your phone, but voice activation and hands-free options are advised. Let passengers handle calls, music, and getting directions.

Stay alert, aware, and patient

Check your mirrors and scan your surroundings frequently. Anticipate

possible hazards (defensive driving) and expect the unexpected, such as distracted walkers, children, and animals.

- Look twice at crosswalks and intersections
- Always yield to pedestrians
- Give cyclists at least 3 feet of space
- Drive slower in neighborhoods and school zones
- Slow down in bad weather or poor visibility
- Let others merge
- Don't tailgate or retaliate
- Stay out of truck blind spots

Don't drive impaired

Besides being distracted, driving while tired is as dangerous as being drunk. The same goes for medications (whether over-the-counter or prescription) that can make you sleepy or unfocused. Get enough sleep before long trips. Avoid driving

late at night or during your normal sleep hours. Switch drivers if you're feeling tired or pull over in a safe place if you feel drowsy.

Put kids first, every time

Children often rely on adults to keep them safe. Make sure all kids in the car are buckled up in appropriate seat belts, car seats, or boosters before the car moves. You can make sure your child car seats are installed correctly by scheduling a free car seat check at swuhealth.gov/carseats.

When you drive with intention, patience, and awareness, you're not just following the rules—you're protecting your loved ones and those around you. You're also setting an example for the next generation of drivers by your attitudes and habits behind the wheel. Help make our roads safer for everyone!

WHERE CAN I RIDE?

When it comes to sharing the road, more people than ever are using alternate modes of travel, including active transportation (human-powered). Here are some of the most common "non-car" examples and where you can ride them. Each of them are considered vehicles when you're on a road (even the horse), so normal traffic rules usually have to be followed. These are **GENERAL GUIDELINES ONLY**; local, state, and federal ordinances may vary, along with age and helmet requirements. Research before you ride! 🐾

	Side-walk	Paved Walking Trail	OHV Trail	City Street	Highway	Peck-hoo Loop (Byrce)
Bicycle	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ ¹	X
E-Bike <small>>750 watts</small>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ ¹	X
E-Scooter <small>(stand-on) 15mph max</small>	✓	✓	Good Luck	✓ ²	X	X
E-Motorcycle <small>>750 watts</small>	X	X	✓	✓ ³	✓ ³	X
Golf Cart	X	X	Good Luck	✓ ²	X	X
OHV <small>(ATV, Quad)</small>	X	X	✓	✓ ³	✓ ¹	X
Motorcycle	X	X	✓	✓	✓	X
Horse	X	X	✓	✓	X	✓ ⁴

¹ Designated highways only, must stay as far right as possible on pavement

² 25 mph max roads only | ³ Only if made street legal | ⁴ Must share trail with bikers

Active Aging

NEVER GIVE UP



By: Debra Zais, ADN, RN
Activities Director at Sun River St George

While aging is inevitable, how we age is becoming more under our control than ever before. The "Golden Years", as they've been called, are no longer viewed as a time to slow down into a sedentary lifestyle. Instead, today's seniors are embracing an active life well into their 70s, 80s, and 90s. Staying healthy and active as we age isn't just about adding years to our lives; it's about adding life to our years!

Whether you are newly retired or well into your senior years, it's never too late to make positive changes. There are practical and achievable ways for older adults to remain physically, mentally, and emotionally healthy as we age.

Regular physical activity has documented benefits for people of all ages, but it's especially crucial for seniors. According to the World Health Or-

ganization, adults aged 65 and older should engage in 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity each week.

Exercise can significantly reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease, including heart attacks and strokes. Often, high blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar levels improve. Staying active increases mobility, balance, and flexibility, which helps prevent falls - the number one injury that causes seniors to end up in the emergency room.

Walking, light strength training, and resistance bands can slow or even reverse bone density loss. In my case, I reversed my osteopenia (an early stage of bone loss) with walking, cardio class, and pickleball!

Physical activity also enhances mental well-being and brain health by reducing stress, anxiety, and depression, while helping memory, attention, and problem-solving. You can even increase your lifespan and lower your risk for dementia.

Of course, good nutrition goes hand-in-hand with staying active. Make sure you're eating a balanced diet with enough protein in your meals to nourish your muscles. And stay hydrated!

As we get older, staying active becomes less about getting in shape and more about maintaining our independence, preventing injuries, reducing the chance of getting a disease, and improving our quality of life.

Living in Southern Utah is like paradise for enjoying outdoor activities like walking, hiking, and biking. Stay social and engage with others by joining an activity-focused club. As the sun sets over the red cliffs and lights up the desert sky, it's clear there's no better place to grow strong, stay active, and enjoy the journey of aging. Embrace a lifestyle that prioritizes movement, mindfulness, and meaning! ✨

Ways to stay active when you're older:

Swimming, water aerobics

Golf (try it without a cart)

Aerobic exercise classes

Bicycle riding (e-bikes count)

Dancing

Yard work (gardening, digging, pushing a law mower)

Tennis, racquetball, pickleball

Vacuuming

Bowling

Walking/jogging (take your dog)

Hiking

Lawn games (horseshoes, cornhole)

Resistance bands

Lifting weights to maintain muscles

Yoga, tai chi

Pilates

Washing windows

Playing with grandchildren

Kayaking

WHAT'S IN YOUR Chuckwagon?

Only one in ten adults meet the recommended intake of fruits and vegetables. Incorporating vegetables as a first course or snack can help manage blood sugar and boost overall health. Start with small steps, like munching on veggie snacks, until you're filling half your plate or bowl with a delicious variety of vegetables at mealtime. ↩



Roasted Vegetables

INGREDIENTS

2 Tbs Olive oil

Choose 3-4 types of veggies (1 cup ea)
*Carrots, Sweet Potato, Brussel Sprouts, Beets,
Onions, Winter Squash,
Red Cabbage, Cauliflower, Broccoli*

Use 2-3 of the following seasonings:

½ tsp salt

1 tsp pepper

1 tsp garlic powder

1 tsp onion powder

1 tsp Italian seasoning

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat Oven 425 degrees F.

Cut veggies into 1-inch pieces, combine in a large bowl. Pour 2Tbs olive oil (or spray) over veggies. Add spices and flavors. Mix well. Line baking sheet with foil, spread veggies evenly over pan. Do not crowd pan. Bake 20-30 min, turning veggies halfway through baking. Veggies are done when they are tender and slightly browned.

Cowboy Caviar



SALSA INGREDIENTS

- 2 Roma tomatoes, *diced*
- 2 ripe avocados, *diced*
- 1 green bell pepper, *diced*
- $\frac{1}{2}$ red onion, *diced*
- 1 15-oz can black beans, *drain and rinse*
- 1 15-oz can black eyed peas, *drain and rinse*
- 1 15-oz sweet or white corn, *drain and rinse*
- $\frac{1}{4}$ c cilantro, *chopped*

SEASONING*

- $\frac{1}{2}$ lemon, *juiced*
- $\frac{1}{2}$ lime, *juiced*
- 2 Tbs red wine vinegar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup olive oil
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp cumin
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt, *or to taste*
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp pepper, *or to taste*
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp chili powder



INSTRUCTIONS

Dice tomatoes, avocado, bell pepper, and onion. Add remaining ingredients to the bowl and mix gently. For a fresh, quick dressing add lemon juice/salt/pepper to taste.

*Optional: add the seasonings listed above. Allow cowboy caviar to chill in refrigerator for at least 30 minutes before serving for flavors to blend together.

Hit the Hay

WHY SLEEP MATTERS FOR CHILDREN & TEENS



Adequate sleep is essential for everyone, but it's especially important for the healthy development of children and teens. There are some fascinating findings in sleep science that should serve as motivation for parents to prioritize good sleep habits for their kids. Most of these can apply to adults, too!

Their brains love sleep

- Just 15 more minutes of sleep nightly significantly boosts brain health, brain volume, neural connectivity, and cognitive abilities like vocabulary and reading comprehension.
- During sleep, the brain eliminates toxins, which in turn enhances memory, planning abilities, and problem-solving skills.
- Infants who take a nap after a learning activity show better recall ability.

Their mental health depends on it

- Teens who are sleep deprived (less than 6 hours a night, for example) are more likely to experience depression, anxiety, mood swings, impulsiveness, and suicidal behavior.
- Good sleep, however, can relieve depression in teens who are stressed.

Their growing body needs sleep

- That's when your body builds muscle, supports growth hormones, restores energy, and regulates the immune system.
- Sleep deprived teens are more likely to be overweight, diabetic, and sleepy during the day (bad for driving).

How much sleep?

Newborns (0-3 months): Between 14 and 17 hours of sleep. This includes daytime naps, since newborns rarely sleep through the night.

Older infants (4-12 months): Between 12 to 16 hours, including naps.

Toddlers (1-2 years): Between 11 and 14 hours, including naps.

Preschoolers (3-5 years): 10 to 13 hours, including naps.

School-age kids (6-12 years): 9 to 12 hours each night.

Teenagers (13-17 years): 8 to 10 hours nightly.

I'm convinced, so how can I protect their sleep?

- Create calming bedtime routines that start at the same time every night, like baths, reading, quiet time, tuck-ins, and lights out. Keep weekend "late nights" no more than 2 hours later.
- Create a sleep-friendly environment in the bedroom: dark, cool, quiet, and screen-free (no electronics at least an hour before bed).
- Limit caffeine (none in the afternoon or evening), avoid big meals late at night and naps during the day for school aged kids.
- Bright light (including sunlight) first thing in the morning helps keep their internal clocks regulated. Daily physical activity also helps with falling asleep at night.
- Talk to your kids (when they're old enough) about why sleep is so important and how it can help them be healthier and happier. Involve them in planning sleep/waking schedules and trying the sleep-friendly ideas outlined above.
- Be their model and inspiration; they're watching you. Parents who prioritize their own sleep set a great example for their children. Here's the sleep guidelines for adults, by the way: Adults (18-64 years): 7 (minimum) to 9 hours of nightly sleep. Older adults (65 and older): a slight decrease - 7 to 8 hours. ⚡

Good night, sleep tight!

DON'T LOSE YOUR Mind



By: RuthAnne Watt
SWUPED Administrative Liaison

Life, as we know, can get very busy. We seem to feel we are superhuman - that we can do it all, all of the time, and never allow ourselves the breaks we need. That mindset can become overwhelming and end up making us feel like we don't want to do anything because we've burned ourselves out.

You can still be accomplished, but do not give up your peace of mind in the process. When you are giving 120% to everything in your life, eventually something is going to have to give. Hopefully, some of the following tricks will help you when taking on life.

We don't have to be perfect

Perfection is a lie, I'm sorry to say. I had to learn this the hard way. Over the years, there were times when I tried to be infallible; if I could just avoid any mistakes and anticipate the needs or wants of others, then everything would be fine. Wrong! It made me even more stressed out. *Am I going to get fired because of that little mess-up at work?*

Am I going to flunk out of school because I didn't ace that test? Are my friends going to stop wanting to hang out with me because I wasn't able to help that one time? I would get caught in a vicious cycle brought on by trying to be perfect, and I was only hurting myself. Ms. Frizzle (remember The Magic School Bus?) taught, "Take chances, make mistakes, get messy!" Life is messy, and that is "perfectly" okay.

Prioritize

Our to-do lists can seem never-ending. Take a few minutes in the morning or the evening before to determine what absolutely has to be done for that day. Everything else can be placed on the back burner for now. Don't completely forget them, but can they wait a day or two? I use my calendar and lists to help me prioritize the important things while still keeping track of the rest.

Is there anything that can be completely removed from your list? I have taken on tasks in the past that I really didn't need to. I was just in the habit of always saying "yes" because I felt needed, but

when I said “yes” to one thing, I was really saying “no” to something else. If you feel like you don’t have enough time, take an honest look at where your time is being spent. No one can “do it all”.

Listen to your body

We are very good at just pushing through. If I can just get this “one” thing done, then I can relax. How many times have we said that, but never do? If you need a nap, take one (just try to do it before 3 pm, says the Mayo Clinic). Read or do meditation if that’s your thing. Watch a funny movie if you need to laugh, or let yourself have a good cry because you’re feeling overwhelmed. Each of us is different, and our needs vary. What works for one person may not work for their family member, neighbor, or friend. Find out what works for you. Give yourself permission to take that break.

What works for you (or what would you like to try)?

Cleanse from social media

Have you ever been caught in a social media “doom-scroll”? Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and all the other “social” sites can actually pull you further away from society. I tried removing social media accounts from my phone. Wow, has that made a difference! Suddenly, I have more time on my hands. I didn’t realize how much time I was spending scrolling, just to find out I had lost an hour or more. Posts on social media are often optimized productions of people’s vacations, weddings, skills, and successes. It can be stressful to see how great everyone else seems to be doing when you aren’t feeling that great. If completely removing the app is too difficult, try experiencing just one day without social media.

Have fun!

Life shouldn’t be about just getting things done. Prioritize time for fun, whatever makes you feel happy and uplifted. When was the last time you called a friend or family member just to chat? Sat down with a jigsaw puzzle? Gone out to enjoy nature? Traveled somewhere new?

We live in a place that has a lot to offer. I recently went hiking at Bryce Canyon. Hiking has never been something on my list, but it turned out to be a great time with fantastic scenery.

What makes you happy and uplifted?

Ask for help

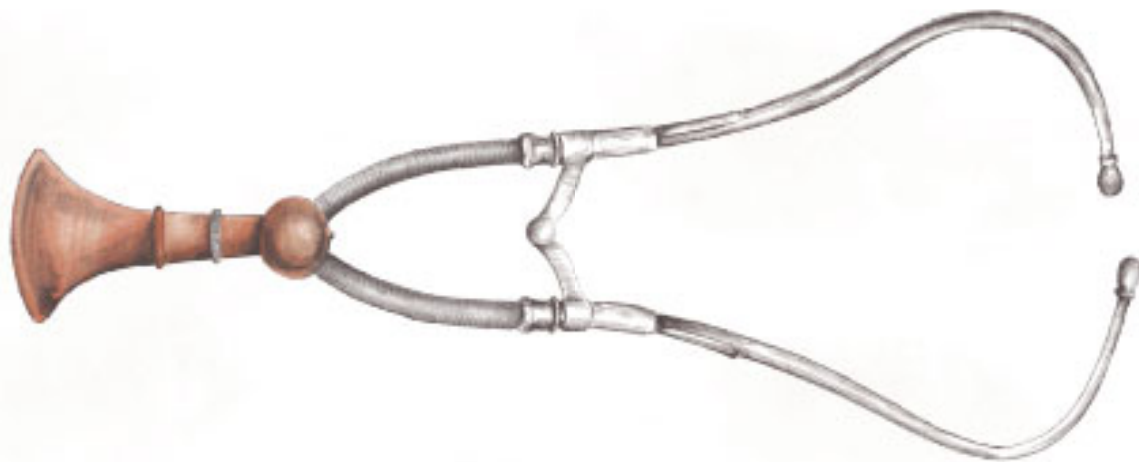
If I ask for help, then people will see me as weak or a failure. This is definitely a big roadblock for a lot of people, and it was hard for me to do. I thought that if I couldn’t figure it out myself, then I was obviously doing something wrong. This was not true. There are some things in life that you need help with, and it is totally okay to ask for it. It can be scary, but no one is going to look down on you. Take the chance and ask.

It’s okay to start over

You don’t know how many times I have had to remind myself of these principles when life gets overwhelming. It’s easy to forget the things that truly make us happy and that help us feel less stressed. So go ahead and start over; try again. It doesn’t matter how many times you need to reset; it’s okay. As my mum tells me, “just breathe”. 🐦

Between Life & Breath

RESPIRATORY VIRUSES IN SOUTHWEST UTAH



By: **David A. Blodgett MD, MPH**
SWUPHD Health Officer & Director

This article continues our focus on the leading causes of death in our area. Paying attention to these reveals much about what each of us can do to lead longer, healthier lives.

I'd like to turn your attention to the role of infectious diseases in the top ten causes of death. In 1900, the average age at death was 47 years old; today it is 78 years. The difference, largely, is due to our increased understanding of how to prevent and treat these illnesses that infect humans.

In 1900, the top three causes of death were infectious diseases—pneumonia and influenza A, tuberculosis, and gastrointestinal infections (the fourth infectious disease on the list,

diphtheria, was the 10th leading cause of death). Improvements in sanitation, public health (vaccination development and delivery), and medical treatments such as antibiotics, led to dramatic declines in deaths. As the impact of these diseases has been reduced or eliminated, mortality rates from other causes, especially chronic diseases like heart disease and cancer, have increased.

New mechanisms, such as noninfectious diseases, diabetes, and suicide are now among the top 10 causes of death. Today, pneumonia and influenza rank number 11th on our list for Southwest Utah and COVID-19 ranks 13th, a dramatic improvement! Today, however, influenza A still kills 20,000-80,000 people per

year, often among the most vulnerable in the population.

These respiratory infections continue to be difficult to eradicate because of several factors:

1. They change very rapidly. Each year the influenza virus changes enough to evade the immune system, creating the potential for disease outbreaks. Most of the time this is due to small changes that allow it to infect many people. Most of them will get sick, with the most vulnerable possibly dying. Sometimes, there is a major shift in the virus, essentially becoming a new infection, which creates the scenario for a pandemic like we saw with H1N1 flu in 2009 and COVID-19 in 2020. Pandemics are, by definition, a widespread occurrence of disease with increased cases, complications, and deaths.
2. They spread very easily. Diseases that spread via droplets like influenza are easily spread from one person to another, and easily spread geographically as well. Cases of the H1N1 influenza spread around the world within weeks after it had been discovered.
3. Many times, they are spread by an infected person before the person even knows that they are sick. This is the case with influenza, COVID, RSV, measles, and many other upper respiratory infections. Many times, efforts to identify and control the spread of a disease are ineffective in an environment where those primarily spreading the disease are not identifiable.
4. Vaccines for these diseases are effective at decreasing the severity of the disease, but often don't prevent all cases of the disease. The one human disease that has been eradicated is smallpox, which killed 1/3 of those that got it. There hasn't been a case since 1977, however, because we came up with a vaccine that gave permanent immunity. We have not discovered such a vaccine for influenza, although promising trials are underway.

It seems clear that we will continue to see influenza, COVID, and dozens of other respiratory

illnesses as part of cold and flu season for the foreseeable future.

Those most at risk of dying from influenza include people who are either over 65 or under 2 years of age, and those with underlying chronic health conditions. The CDC lists over 21 conditions that lead to increased risk of death from influenza, including being pregnant. COVID continues to pose the most risk to the elderly and those with underlying health conditions.

Immunization against pneumonia and influenza - and COVID when appropriate - is the single most effective weapon we have against these leading causes of death. Because the influenza virus changes rapidly, vaccination every year is recommended, while vaccination against pneumonia requires only a one-time shot. COVID vaccination on a yearly basis is recommended for those most at risk from that disease.

We've recently seen a rise in cases of measles, mumps, and pertussis in our area. Outbreaks of vaccine preventable-diseases have been increasing in recent years as we see some parents who are choosing not to vaccinate their children. As the rate of vaccination declines, there are no longer enough

immunized people to stop the spread of the disease in the community if outbreaks occur. There are two reasons to vaccinate: to avoid getting the illness yourself, and to avoid passing the illness on to someone else. That

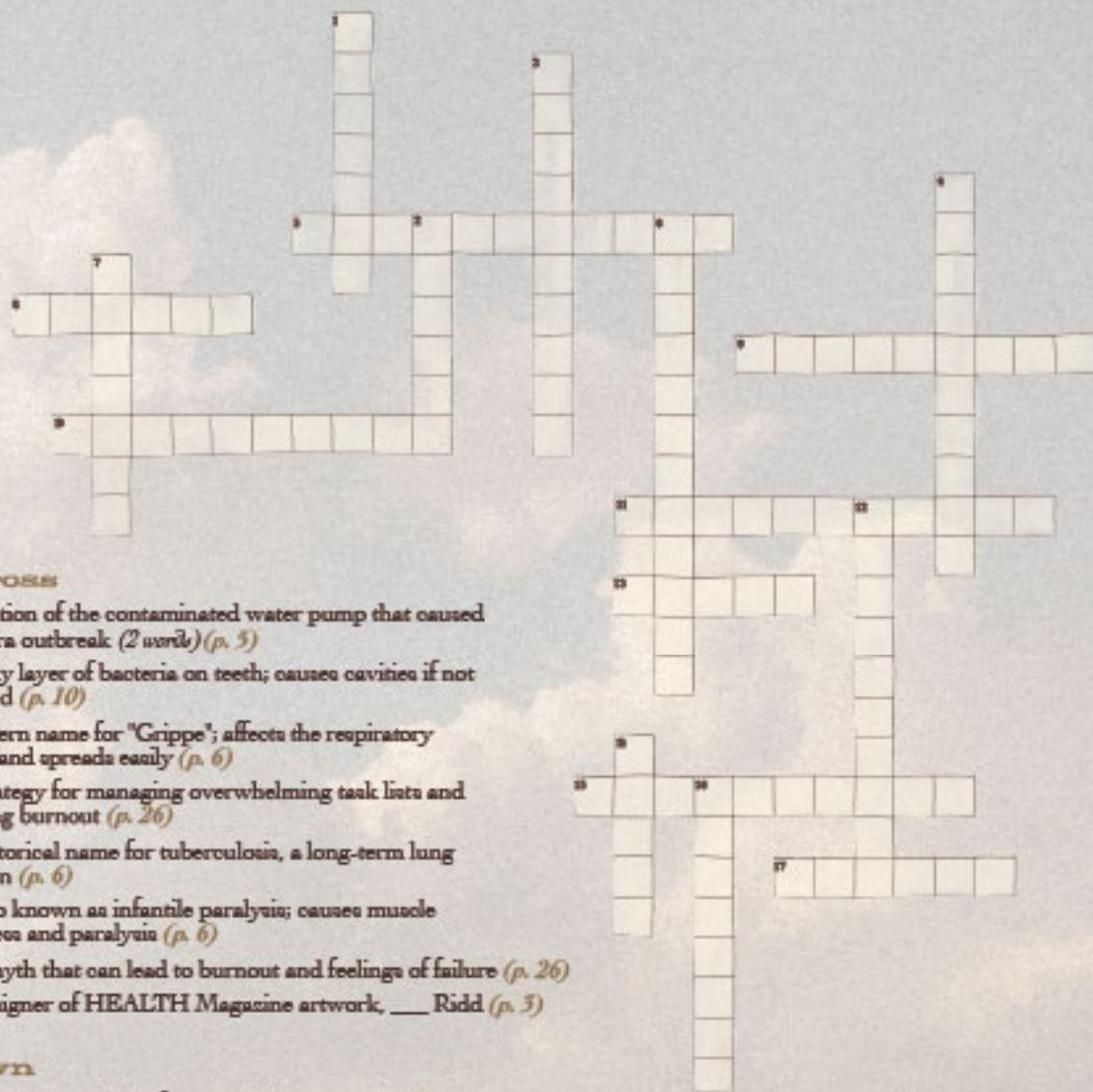
someone could have a limited immune system, like an infant or a person with chronic disease.

Infectious diseases are still present in our world; they still pose a very real risk to those that are infected, especially vulnerable people. The role of a health department is to identify cases of potentially dangerous diseases and try to stop from spreading. Even more important is prevention; that's why we put out messaging about what you can do to help protect yourself. With the influenza season approaching, we're offering vaccine "shootouts" again this fall (see inside back cover). About 35% of the population in our district gets immunized against influenza every year - I hope you will consider becoming one of them. ✍

Immunization against pneumonia & influenza is the single most effective weapon we have against these leading causes of death.

public health

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



Across

6. Location of the contaminated water pump that caused a cholera outbreak (2 words) (p. 5)
8. Sticky layer of bacteria on teeth; causes cavities if not removed (p. 10)
9. Modern name for "Grippe"; affects the respiratory system and spreads easily (p. 6)
10. Strategy for managing overwhelming task lists and reducing burnout (p. 26)
11. Historical name for tuberculosis, a long-term lung infection (p. 6)
13. Also known as infantile paralysis; causes muscle weakness and paralysis (p. 6)
16. A myth that can lead to burnout and feelings of failure (p. 26)
17. Designer of HEALTH Magazine artwork, ___ Ridd (p. 3)

Down

1. What sleep provides for growth hormones (p. 25)
2. To offer guidance to protect passengers and pedestrians. (p. 18)
3. Public health measures supported after John Snow's cholera discovery in London (p. 5)
4. Doctor who linked unwashed hands to fatal childbirth infections (p. 5)
6. This science of tracking diseases in populations began in the 1660s (p. 5)
7. Known as ague, it causes cycles of fever and is spread by mosquitoes (p. 6)
12. Core goal of public health—avoiding disease before it starts (p. 5)
14. Encouragement to start over when life gets too overwhelming (p. 27)
16. Key oral hygiene habit to clean between teeth and prevent gum disease (p. 11)

Use the clues to fill in the words (found in this issue) above. Words can go across or down. Letters are shared when the words intersect.

WANTED

Protect yourself against the **2025-26 Flu Season**
- it's quick and convenient to get your shot at one of our

FLU SHOOTOUTS

ST. GEORGE

Tuesday, September 23, 2025
(8am - High Noon)
Red Cliffs Mall (1770 Red Cliffs Drive)
Drive-Thru

KANAB

Saturday, October 4, 2025
(9am - 1pm)
Kanab Middle School (690 S Cowboy Way)
Walk-In

BRUCE CANYON CITY

Wednesday, September 24, 2025
(1pm - 4pm)
Ruby's Inn (26 S Main St)
Walk-In

BEAVER

Wednesday, October 8, 2025
(High Noon - 4pm)
Beaver EMS Building (1090 N Main St.)
Drive-Thru & Walk-In

CEDAR CITY

Tuesday, September 30, 2025
(2pm - 5pm)
Health Department (260 E DL Sargent Drive)
Drive-Thru

PANGUITCH

Thursday, October 16, 2025
(1pm - 4pm)
Fire Station (40 N 100 E)
Drive Thru & Walk-In

We accept most plans from these insurances (NO CHARGE):

Aetna • CHIP • Cigna • DMBA • Educators Mutual • Healthy Premier • Medicare (Part B) • Molina Marketplace • MotivHealth • PEHP • Select Health • Tall Tree Administrators • United Health • Utah Medicaid

Price without insurance:

\$26 Standard Flu Shot (6 months+) • \$70 High-Dose Flu Shot (65 years+)

To get more information and print out the consent form to save time, visit
swuhealth.gov/flu

Wear a **SHORT-SLEEVED** shirt * Bring your insurance card & photo ID



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connect with us!

**"Every sunrise is a new trail to ride;
make it count"**



FREE prediabetes screening and tests (A1C) coming in November! Scan this code to see if you qualify and reserve your spot.

