

November 2025 - Empowering Health. Elevating Communities

In our community, we're still losing too many people to diseases we can often prevent, catch early, or slow down if we have access, support, and education. This month we're focusing on diabetes, lung cancer, and Alzheimer's.

National Diabetes Awareness Month

What it is?

Diabetes affects how your body turns food into energy. When blood sugar stays too high, it can damage the heart, eyes, nerves, and kidneys over time. Black, Hispanic/Latino, and Native American adults are diagnosed at higher rates than white adults because of barriers to healthy food, safe places to exercise, affordable medication, and consistent care. These are system issues, not "you didn't try hard enough."

Warning signs to take seriously:

- Always thirsty/always hungry
- Peeing a lot, especially at night
- Blurry vision
- Numbness or tingling in hands/feet.
- Cuts that heal slow

Why our community is hit harder:

- Cost of insulin and supplies can make people "stretch" meds or skip doses, which is dangerous.
- Grocery stores don't show up in every neighborhood, but fast food does. That's not an accident, that's policy.
- Stress. Constant stress raises blood sugar. Chronic stress is higher in communities facing racism, housing insecurity, and violence.

What you can do this month:

- Get your A1C checked (that's a 3-month average of your blood sugar).
- Ask your provider: "What's my number and what does it mean?"
- Move your body 20 minutes a day. Walking counts. Chair workouts count. Dancing in the kitchen counts.
- If you're already diagnosed: check your feet daily. If you see redness, swelling, or sores, get it looked at, Do Not Wait!

Community message: Diabetes is not just "Grandma's problem." We're seeing people in their 30s and 40s.

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Lung Cancer Awareness Month

The truth:

Lung cancer is the #1 cancer killer. You do not have to be a smoker to get it, secondhand smoke, air pollution, and workplace exposure (factories, construction, chemicals) all play a role.

“Black men have the highest lung cancer death rate in America. We have to say that out loud.”

Who should ask about a lung scan:

- Adults - 50 and older
- Long-term smokers or people who used to smoke heavily
- People who lived/worked around heavy smoke, chemicals, or diesel

Where the disparity shows up:

- Black communities are less likely to be offered early screening, even when the risk the same.
- By the time cancer is found, its often advanced. That means less treatment options and lower survival.

Take this question to your doctor or clinic:

“I want to know if I qualify for a low dose CT scan lung cancer screening.”

If they brush you off, ask again. Bring somebody with you. Advocate for yourself because you are worth that scan.

Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month

What it is:

Alzheimer's is a brain disease that slowly affects memory, mood, judgment, and independence. It is not a normal part of aging.

“We are losing our elders too soon, and sometimes we call it just getting old when it's actually dementia.”

Early signs:

- Asking the same question over and over.
- Getting lost in familiar places.
- Personality changes (suddenly angry, paranoid, withdrawn).
- Trouble with bills, appointments, or medications.

Why this hits communities of color so hard:

- Black and Hispanic/Latino adults are more likely to develop Alzheimer's compared to white adults, but less like to get diagnosed early.
- A lot of families handle it “in the house,” so caregivers (usually daughters, granddaughters, nieces) are doing 24/7 care with no pay, break, and no mental health support.
- Missed diagnosis = missed treatments, missed planning, and missed benefits.

Caregiver reminder:

You cannot pour from an empty cup. If you are caring for someone with memory loss, you deserve breaks, sleep, air, and support. Please hear me: asking for help is not “giving up on them.”



Health Department Divisions Spotlight



Green Youngstown (Litter & Recycling)

Youngstown Leaf Collection 2025

Leaf Bag Curbside Distribution:

- Started October 1st **while supplies last**
- 25 Bags per household
- Bags picked up at our office between 8 am and 3:30 pm
- 9 W. Front Street, Youngstown, OH
- Bring your old tires and help keep our neighborhoods safe and clean.

Leaf Bag Curbside Collection:

- Leaf collection starts on October 27th through December 6th
- Call ahead before putting bags out, 330-744-7526

Nursing Division (Fall Flu & COVID Clinics)

- Tuesday, November 4th & Wednesday November 5th @ YMHA (downtown)
- Saturday, November 8, 2025 - 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM
- Saturday, November 22, 2025 - 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM
- Eugenia Atkinson Recreation Center, 903 Otis St., Youngstown, OH
- Contact: Theresa Sanchez - 330-742-8265.

Lead Testing

- Wednesday, November 12, 2025 @ Happy Campers Daycare
- Thursday, November 13, 2025 @ Laugh and Learn Academy