

Early detection significantly improves female breast cancer survival rates

According to the Delaware Cancer Registry, for the period 2016 to 2020, breast cancer was the most diagnosed cancer and the second leading cause of cancer death (after lung cancer) among women in both Delaware and the United States. For the same period, non-Hispanic Black women (26.8 per 100,000 persons) were more affected by breast cancer mortality compared to non-Hispanic White women (20.3 per 100,000 persons). Also in the period 2016 to 2020, Delaware (20.7 per 100,000 persons) had a higher breast cancer mortality rate compared to the United States (19.6 per 100,000 persons). When caught in the early stages, breast cancer is treatable, and the survivor's longevity is improved.

In 2021, the five-year relative survival rate for female breast cancer in Delaware was 91.2% compared to the United States rate at 91%, according to the [CDC's United States Cancer Statistics: Data Visualizations](#). In Delaware, for 2021, the relative five-year survival rate for women diagnosed with breast cancer at the localized, most treatable stage was 98.9%; those women lived five years or more after their diagnoses. Survival decreases to 85.4% when breast cancer is diagnosed at the regional stage (when the cancer has spread directly beyond the primary site or to regional lymph nodes) and to 32% when it is diagnosed at the distant stage (when the cancer has spread to other organs or remote lymph nodes).



October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The Division of Public Health (DPH) urges women under the age of 40 to perform [monthly breast self-exams](#) and report any changes lasting longer than 90 days to their health care provider. Women aged 40 and older should visit their health care provider to determine if a mammogram is needed. Those without insurance or

whose insurance does not cover routine cancer screenings may qualify for free screenings through DPH's Screening for Life program. Visit https://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dph/dpc/sfl_eligibility.html or call 302-744-1040 to determine eligibility.

Women without a health care provider or who need help finding an imaging facility may visit <https://www.healthylidelaware.org/Individuals/Cancer/Get-Help/Nurse-Navigators> to connect with a nurse navigator. Also visit www.healthylidelaware.org.



CDC adopts vaccine recommendations

The Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) adopted the following recommendations made by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP):

COVID-19

- 2024-2025 COVID-19 vaccines as authorized or approved by the Food & Drug Administration (FDA) in persons 6 months of age or older.

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)

- A single dose of RSV vaccine is advised for adults aged 60 to 74 years and older who are at increased risk of severe RSV disease, and for all adults 75 years and older.
- RSV vaccination is recommended as a single lifetime dose only. Persons who have already received RSV vaccination are NOT recommended to receive another dose.

Influenza ("the flu")

- Routine annual influenza vaccination is recommended for all individuals aged 6 months and older who do not have contraindications.
- High-dose inactivated (HD-IIV3) and adjuvanted inactivated (aIIV3) influenza vaccines are acceptable options for influenza vaccination of solid organ transplant recipients aged 18 through 64 years who are on immunosuppressive medication regimens, without a preference over other age-appropriate IIV3s or RIV3.

Pneumococcal Vaccines

- PCV21 is an option for adults aged 19 years and older who currently have a recommendation to receive a dose of PCV.

To view all ACIP recommendations, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/acip/recommendations.html>.



Be prepared for a radiological event

Nuclear accidents and incidents are rare, but learning how to react during a radiological emergency can reduce risks to health and safety.

[An Emergency Planning Zone \(EPZ\)](#) exists within a 10-mile radius surrounding the PSEG Salem and Hope Creek Nuclear Power Generating stations, all located on Artificial Island in Salem County, New Jersey. Eight Delaware ZIP Codes are in the EPZ: 19701, 19734, 19709, 19977, 19730, 19731, 19706, and 19733.

For individuals who live, work, or support people with access and functional needs within the EPZ, it is important to make radiological preparedness part of customized emergency planning. Smart 911 registration helps emergency responders locate and safely evacuate EPZ residents who would need transportation in the event of an incident at the power plant. Register for Smart 911 here:

<https://dema.delaware.gov/onlineServices/index.shtml>.

To reduce exposure to radiological material resulting from an incident or accident, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend the following general guidelines:

Take Shelter Immediately

- Get inside. A basement is best. Put as much of an interior barrier between you and the outside as possible.
- Stay inside. Close windows, secure doors, and turn off any ventilation systems such as air conditioning. If you are in a car, roll up windows, close air vents, and pull off the road to safety.
- Stay tuned to emergency alerts and instructions.

Protect Yourself After Potential Exposure

- Change clothes and shoes. Immediately put exposed clothing in a plastic bag and close tightly.
- Get clean by taking a thorough shower.
- Help others and pets with protective actions.
- Stay tuned to emergency broadcasting for specific instructions.

Detailed emergency information regarding preparedness and response to a radiological event is distributed to residents within the EPZ in the form of a calendar, which is also online at [PrepareDE.org](https://www.preparede.org).



CDC.gov



Hope Creek Nuclear Generating Station #1 in Salem County, New Jersey. Nuclear Regulatory Commission photo.

Potassium iodide distribution and siren tests planned for October

In response to a nuclear emergency, state and local officials will issue an Emergency Alert System (EAS) message on local radio and television stations with instructions on how affected residents should react, directions to evacuation routes and emergency reception centers, and when to take Potassium iodide (KI) tablets, if at all. Taking KI is a protective measure outlined in Delaware's emergency plan.

Twice a year, the Delaware Emergency Management Agency (DEMA) and Delaware Division of Public Health (DPH) distribute free KI tablets to those who live or work within the Emergency Planning Zone (EPZ) surrounding the Salem/Hope Creek Nuclear Generating Stations in New Jersey. The next distribution event is October 24 from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Townsend Fire Company, 107 Main Street, Townsend, Del. 19734.

Individuals allergic to iodine should not take KI. Immediately contact a physician if an allergic reaction occurs. For more information about KI, contact the DPH Office of Radiation Control at 302-744-4546.

Emergency Siren Tests

The next quarterly siren test of the Salem/Hope Creek Nuclear Generating Stations Alert and Notification system is scheduled the morning of October 1, 2024. Delaware State Police, PSEG, and DEMA activate 37 sirens for three to five minutes, followed by EAS messages on radio.

Radiological Drills

DEMA conducts quarterly drills to test response and warning procedures for the Salem/Hope Creek Nuclear Stations. Learn more at [PrepareDE.org](https://www.preparede.org).

Reduce the risk of falling by getting screened and taking a balance class

Governor John Carney and Lieutenant Governor Bethany Hall-Long proclaimed September 23 to 27, 2024 as Falls Prevention Awareness Week.

In Delaware in 2023, there were 3,483 falls among individuals aged 65 and older, and 923 of them resulted in a head injury, according to the Delaware Trauma Registry of the Delaware Trauma System of Care.

To reduce broken bones, head injuries, and disabilities from falls, the [Delaware Coalition for Injury Prevention's Falls Prevention Team](#) asks adults of all ages to get a falls risk assessment, receive regular hearing and vision exams, and review medications with their health care provider and pharmacist.

It is important to engage in consistent physical fitness activities and balance exercises. A Matter of Balance classes are held in communities throughout the state. Call Volunteer Delaware 50+ at 302-515-3020 or visit [Bayhealth.org/Classes](#) to sign up.

ChristianaCare offers the ThinkFirst to Prevent Falls program which addresses home modifications, medications, balance, and healthy eating to prevent falls. ChristianaCare also offers a "Fall Prevention Education for Caregivers" seminar that educates first time and veteran caregivers how to implement falls reduction strategies in their home and community. The seminar shares medications related to falls, community resources, balance programs, and resources from the [National Council on Aging](#) (NCOA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Classes are available in person at no cost; contact injuryprevention@christianacare.org

Free fall risk screening is offered at these events:

- September 24, 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. – Mid-County Senior Center, First Regiment Rd., Sherwood Park II, Wilmington, Del., 19808. Provided by University of Delaware Physical Therapy students and open to the public over the age of 50.
- September 25, 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. – Modern Maturity Center, 1121 Forrest Avenue, Dover, Del. 19904. Provided by Delaware State University (DSU) Nursing and Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT) students. It is open to the public. A bingo game with prizes begins at 12:15 p.m.
- October 3, 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. – Milford Senior Center, 111 Park Avenue, Milford, Del. 19963. Provided by DSU Nursing and Master of Occupational Therapy students. It is open to the public, but they must RSVP to 302-422-3385. A bingo game with prizes begins at 12:30 p.m.

Cancer information available at community events

The Division of Public Health's Cancer Prevention and Control Program will have an information table at these September events:

- "Go Blue" Health Fair at Pedal Away Prostate Cancer, Saturday, September 14, 9:30 a.m. to noon, Eden Hill Medical Center, 200 Banning Street, Dover, Del. 19904.
- Hispanic Heritage Community Health Fair, Saturday, September 21, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Route 9 Library & Innovation Center, 3022 New Castle Avenue, New Castle, Del. 19720.

Public can comment on State Health Assessment and draft regulations

The Division of Public Health (DPH) seeks public comment on the **Delaware State Health Assessment** through September 20, 2024. Access the report on the State Health Improvement Plan website homepage (<https://delawareship.org/>) or in the "SHIP Reports" tab. Send comments to info@delawareship.org.

DPH seeks public comment until October 1, 2024 at 4:30 p.m. on proposed revisions to three regulations in Title 16 of the Delaware Administrative Code:

4106 Practice of Non-Nurse Midwifery Regulation – DPH proposes to repeal the regulation governing the practice of non-nurse midwifery.

4204 Care and Transportation of the Dead Regulation – DPH proposes new sections, updated definitions, new language regarding natural organic reduction, and technical changes.

4306 Stroke System Regulation – The proposed regulation was previously published in the [February 2024 Register of Regulations](#) (27 DE Reg. 567 (02/01/2024) (Proposed)), and was held open for public comment from February 1, 2024 through March 4, 2024. The regulation was substantially revised and is being re-proposed.

Public comment is accepted in written form via email to DHSS_DPH_regulations@delaware.gov, or by U.S. mail to: Vicki Schultes, Hearing Officer, Division of Public Health, 417 Federal Street, Dover, DE 19901. The proposed revisions are available online in the September 1, 2024 [Delaware Register of Regulations](#) or by calling DPH at 302-744-4951.



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Protect children from lead poisoning

Lead poisoning is a medical condition that occurs when people repeatedly inhale, swallow, or touch lead compounds, even in small amounts.

Lead is toxic, especially in children under the age of six and unborn babies, because it damages the brain and nervous system, causing reduced intelligence, learning disabilities, attention deficit disorders, behavioral problems stunted growth, hearing problems, anemia, kidney damage, and stomach pain. High levels can cause mental retardation, coma, and death.

Delaware law requires the universal testing of all children at ages 1 and 2; however, children can be tested at birth through 72 months. All lead testing results up to age 18 years must be reported to the Division of Public Health's (DPH) Lead Poisoning Prevention Program. Proof of a blood lead test must be presented for enrollment into a licensed childcare facility and public kindergarten.

The reference level for blood lead testing set by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is 3.5 micrograms per deciliter (µg/dL). In Fiscal Year 2023, 694 Delaware children ages 0 to 72 months tested at or above that level (5.9% of the total 11,275 blood lead tests reported, according to the DPH report, [Childhood Blood Lead Surveillance in Delaware, 2023](#).

A major source of exposure is deteriorating lead-based paint used inside and outside of homes built before 1978. Other dangers are drinking tap water from plumbing fixtures or pipes containing lead or lead solder; working or playing in lead-contaminated soil; and using imported dishes, cosmetics, and plastic or metal jewelry containing lead.

Learn how to prevent lead poisoning

[National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week](#) (October 20 to 26, 2024) provides opportunities to learn more about this hazard.

Children under the age of 6 and unborn babies are most at risk for lead poisoning, but adults can also be exposed. Adults exposed to lead may suffer high blood pressure, fertility problems, nerve disorders, muscle and joint pain, irritability, and memory or concentration problems.

Protect family members from lead hazards by taking these steps:

- If you live in a home built before 1978, hire a certified inspector or risk assessor to check your home for lead-based paint or lead hazards. If renting, ask your landlord to have your home or apartment tested or give you previous test results. When doing renovation, repair, or painting jobs in a pre-1978 home, hire a lead-safe certified contractor who is trained in lead-safe work practices. Find a certified lead-based paint professional using the Environmental Protection Agency's search tool at <https://cdxapps.epa.gov/ocspp-oppt-lead/firm-location-search>, or call the National Lead Information Center at 1-800-424-LEAD [5323].
- Whether or not you live in a pre-1978 home, regularly clean floors and windowsills with wet or damp sponges or cloths to control dust.
- Wipe and remove shoes before entering the home.
- Wash children's hands often, especially before eating food.
- Do not let small children, especially those who are teething, chew on painted windowsills or eat paint chips.
- Wash toys often.



For more information, visit the Delaware Lead Poisoning Prevention Program at <https://dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/hsp/lead.html>, where its annual surveillance reports are posted.

The program has two fact sheets. One is about [lead poisoning prevention](#) and the other is about [program services](#).