

*February 2025*



## Quabbin Health District Public Health Nurse Newsletter

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*Serving the towns of  
Belchertown, Pelham, and Ware*

126 Main Street Suite D, Ware,  
MA 01082



### **Upcoming Events and happenings in and around the Quabbin Health District!**

**In honor of Blood Donor Month (January) the Quabbin Health District is hosting blood drives in two locations in the district! Donating locally helps keep blood resources in your community! Eligible donors will receive a \$10 gift card!**

1. Belchertown Town Hall, 2 Jabish Street, Belchertown, MA 01007. February 24, 2025, from 9:00 am to 1:30 pm. See attached flyer for more details.
2. Ware Senior Center, 1 Robbins Road, Ware, MA 01082. February 26, 2025, from 9:00 am to 1:30 pm. See attached flyer for more details.

Contact Kirsten Krieger RN, BSN, Public Health Nurse for Quabbin Health District with any questions or concerns and to sign up for the blood drive! No one will be turned away if they aren't able to sign up head of time.

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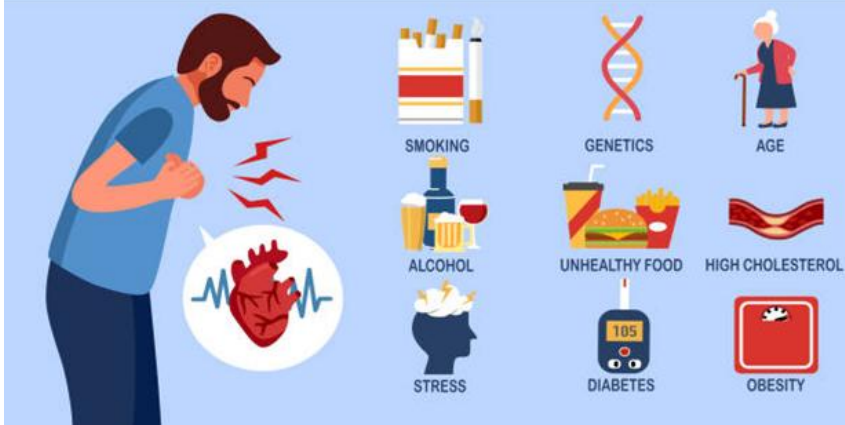
**Ready to Quit Smoking or Vaping? Quitting smoking or vaping now can significantly improve your heart and respiratory health, mental health, and quality of life!**

1-800-Quit-Now can offer FREE trained quit coaches online or by phone. For more information and to learn how to enroll, please visit: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/about-1-800-quit-now> or call 1-800-Quit Now.

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**Naloxone training:** Join us at the Pelham Public Library on February 18, 2025, for a FREE educational training about opioids and using naloxone during an overdose – attendees will receive a FREE kit including naloxone! The library is located at 2 S Valley Road, Pelham, MA 01002.

# HEART DISEASE RISK FACTORS



F E B R U A R Y

## Did You Know?

**Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the US!** In 2022, 1 in every 5 US deaths was caused by heart disease.

**High blood pressure is a leading cause of heart disease!** Nearly half of US adults have high blood pressure, increasing the risk of heart disease and strokes.

# Blood Pressure Categories



BLOOD PRESSURE CATEGORY	SYSTOLIC mm Hg (upper number)		DIASTOLIC mm Hg (lower number)
NORMAL	LESS THAN 120	and	LESS THAN 80
ELEVATED	120 – 129	and	LESS THAN 80
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 1	130 – 139	or	80 – 89
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 2	140 OR HIGHER	or	90 OR HIGHER
HYPERTENSIVE CRISIS (consult your doctor immediately)	HIGHER THAN 180	and/or	HIGHER THAN 120

**How can I get started on taking heart-healthy actions to help prevent or reduce my risk for heart disease?**

Check out the heart health information sheet in this newsletter – [Take Action For Your Heart: Get Started!](#)

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Dating violence is more common than you may think, especially among teens and young adults: 1 in 3 U.S. teens will experience physical, sexual, or emotional abuse from someone they're in a relationship with before becoming adults. And nearly half (43%) of U.S. college women report experiencing violent or abusive dating behaviors.

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## Teen Dating Violence



## Awareness Month

**“Respect That,”** is a powerful concept that can transform relationships. Respecting someone isn’t just a vague idea; it’s action and a mindset. The theme “Respect That” highlights the importance of treating partners with dignity, listening to their viewpoints, respecting their boundaries, and valuing their autonomy by focusing on “respect.”

### You are not alone - help is available!

- Call (866) 331-9474
- Text Loveisrespect to 22522
- Chat Live at Loveisrespect.org
- Center for Women and Community
  - Amherst: 888-337-0800

For HIV Services Near You:

<https://locator.hiv.gov/>

## Healthy

A healthy relationship means both you and your partner are:

- Communicating
- Respectful
- Trusting
- Honest
- Equal
- Enjoying personal time away from each other
- Making mutual choices
- Economic/financial partners

## Unhealthy

You may be in an unhealthy relationship if your partner is:

- Not communicating
- Disrespectful
- Not trusting
- Dishonest
- Trying to take control
- Only spending time together
- Pressured into activities
- Unequal economically

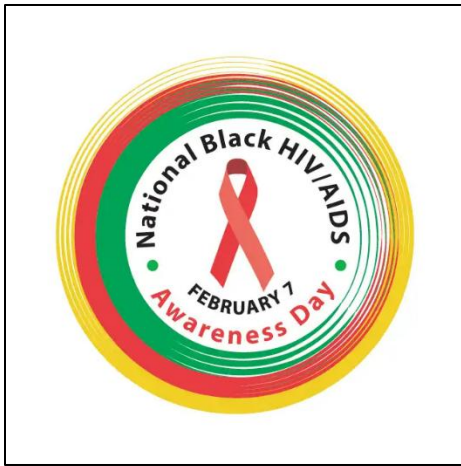
## Abusive

Abuse is occurring in a relationship when one partner is:

- Communicating in a hurtful or threatening way
- Mistreating
- Accusing the other of cheating when it's untrue
- Denying their actions are abusive
- Controlling
- Isolating their partner from others

## Myths vs. Facts: Teen Dating Violence

<b>Myth</b>	<b>Versus</b>	<b>Fact</b>
<b><i>It can't happen to me.</i></b>		<b>More than 1 in 10 young adults experience physical violence in their dating relationships.</b>
<i>Teen dating violence isn't really that serious</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 in 5 teen girls and 1 in 7 teen boys report abuse by their intimate partner between ages 11 and 17</li> <li>• 60% of rapes reported to rape crisis centers are committed by acquaintances, with most victims aged 16-24</li> </ul>
<i>Men cannot be a victim of dating violence</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2021, about 1 in 14 male high school students report experiencing physical dating violence in the last year (CDC, 2023)</li> <li>• In 2021, about 1 in 26 male high school students report having experienced sexual dating violence in the last year. (CDC, 2023)</li> </ul>
<i>Dating violence only occurs in heterosexual relationships</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• According to the CDC (2023), in 2021 nearly 1 in 4 LGBTQ+ students experienced sexual violence.</li> <li>• According to the 2015 Transgender Survey, 54% of transgender and nonbinary people experience intimate partner violence in their lifetimes.</li> </ul>
<i>If a person stays in an abusive relationship, it must not really be that bad</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People stay for several reasons – fear, confusion, loss of self-confidence, not recognizing abusive behavior, belief that the abuser needs their help or will change, shame, and others.</li> </ul>
<i>Jealousy and possessiveness are a sign of true love</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jealousy and possessiveness are a sign that the person sees you as a possession. It is the most common early warning sign of abuse.</li> </ul>



**Resources for everyone:**

To find HIV services near you, please visit:

<https://locator.hiv.gov/>

For a free HIV self-test delivered discreetly to your home address, please visit:

<https://takemehome.org/>

For sexual and reproductive health services locally, please visit:

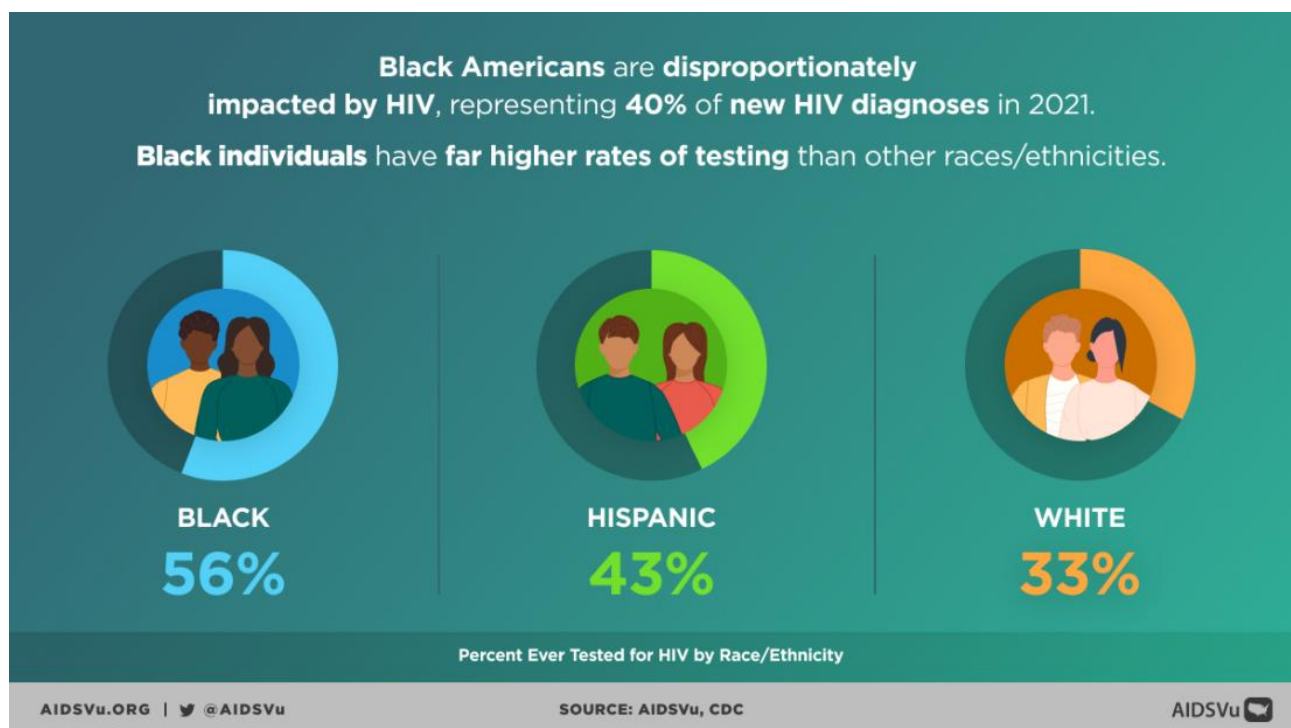
<https://www.tapestryhealth.org/sexual-reproductive-health/>

The Black community in the United States faces unique structural and societal **barriers** to accessing HIV prevention services. As a result, HIV has a disproportionate impact on the Black population. In 2022, **Black people represented 38% of new HIV diagnoses, despite making up only 14% of the U.S. population.** The disparity is clear in HIV prevalence as well—in 2022, 39% of all people living with HIV in the U.S. were Black.

These challenges can also hinder access to HIV testing and necessary treatment. In 2022, **a smaller percentage of Black Americans diagnosed with HIV were virally suppressed than either Hispanic/Latinx or white Americans** living with diagnosed HIV.

Progress has been made, however, especially in testing. In 2022, **Black people had the highest percentage of people that have ever tested for HIV (56%) of any group.** In comparison, the national average was just 35%.

Source: <https://aidsvu.org/resources/deeper-look-hiv-in-black-communities/>





# Blood Donor Program

BaystateHealth.org/BloodDonor  
413-794-4600

 Baystate  
Health

ADVANCING CARE.  
ENHANCING LIVES.

**GIVE BLOOD, SAVE A LIFE**  
BLOOD DRIVE HOSTED BY  
**Quabbin Health District**

**February 24, 2025**

**9:00AM – 1:30PM**

**LOCATION: Belchertown Town Hall Auditorium**

**SIGN-UPS: Kirsten Krieger RN**

**(413) 967-9648 ext 112**

Eligible Donors will also receive a \$10.00 gift card from the below locations.



Baystate Medical Center

Daly Building, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor | 759 Chestnut Street | Springfield, MA 01199 | 413-794-4600



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**GIVE BLOOD, SAVE A LIFE**

**BLOOD DRIVE HOSTED BY**

**Quabbin Health District**

**FEBRUARY 26<sup>TH</sup>**

**9:00AM – 1:30PM**

**LOCATION: WARE SENIOR CENTER**

**1 ROBBINS RD**

**SIGN-UPS: Kirsten Krieger RN**

**(413) 967-9648 ext 112**

Eligible Donors will also receive a \$10.00 gift card from the below locations.



Baystate Medical Center

Daly Building, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor | 759 Chestnut Street | Springfield, MA 01199 | 413-794-4600

# Opioids and Opioid Rescue Training



## Join us for this training at:

Pelham Public Library

2 S Valley Road

Pelham, MA 01002

On: February 18, 2025 At: 5:30 pm

*Presented By:*

Kirsten L. Krieger RN, BSN

Public Health Nurse

(413) 967-9615

Email: [kkrieger@townofware.com](mailto:kkrieger@townofware.com)

Website: [www.quabbinhealthdistrict.com](http://www.quabbinhealthdistrict.com)

- Understand what opioids are and why people become addicted.
- Address the stigma of addiction.
- How to recognize and respond to an overdose
- How to use Narcan (naloxone) safely and effectively
- Resources for help available.
- Narcan kit (free!)

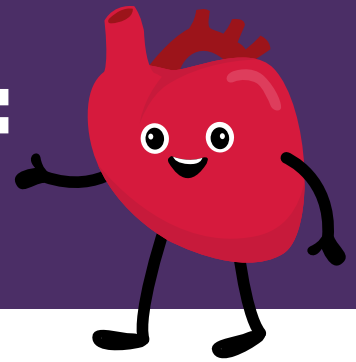


If you are not comfortable attending a large group training, please contact Kirsten, the public health nurse, for a small group or one-on-one training at (413) 967-9648 ext. 112 or [kkrieger@townofware.com](mailto:kkrieger@townofware.com)





# Take Action for Your Heart: Get Started!



**Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States, but it can often be prevented. Adopting a heart-healthy lifestyle can help you reduce the risk of heart disease and its risk factors. Take action to protect your heart by following these tips.**

## **Get Enough Quality Sleep**

**Lack of sleep or getting poor-quality sleep increases the risk of having high blood pressure, heart disease, and other medical conditions.**

- Try to aim for 7-9 hours of sleep a night.
- Go to bed and wake up at the same time each day.
- Exercise regularly, but not within 2-3 hours before bedtime.
- Avoid caffeine and nicotine.



## **Eat Better**

**A flexible and balanced eating plan can help lower your high blood pressure and improve your cholesterol.**

- Follow the [Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension \(DASH\) eating plan](#), which can help you create a heart-healthy eating style for life.
- Read nutrition labels to pick the food lowest in saturated fat, sodium, and added sugars.
- Try a mix of lean cuts of meat, eat fish once or twice a week, and eat two or more meatless meals each week.
- Consider whole fruits, dried fruits, unsalted rice cakes, fat-free and low-fat yogurt, or raw vegetables as a snack.

## **Stop Smoking**

**Any amount of smoking, even light or occasional smoking, damages your heart and blood vessels.**

- Select a quit date and write yourself a contract that outlines your **plan for quitting**.
- Talk with your healthcare provider about programs and products that can help you quit.
- Join a support group. Many hospitals, workplaces, and community groups offer classes to help people quit smoking.
- Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW and visit [smokefree.gov](http://smokefree.gov) to get additional support.

## **Maintain a Healthy Weight**

**Maintaining a healthy weight is important for overall health and can help you prevent and control many diseases and conditions.**

- Choose healthy snacks like fruits, vegetables, yogurt, or nuts, instead of sugary or high-calorie snacks.
- Stay hydrated with water as your primary beverage.
- Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise (such as brisk walking) or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity (like running) exercise per week.
- Consider keeping a log of what you eat throughout the day.

## **Be More Active**

**Getting enough physical activity helps to lower your risk of heart disease and stroke.**

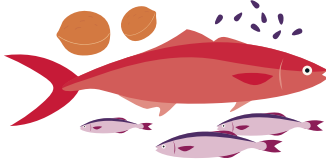
- Adults should spend at least 150 minutes (2 ½ hours) each week doing physical activity.
- Sit less! Take the stairs. Park farther away. March in place or take a walk around the block.
- Try muscle-strengthening activities like lifting weights, working with resistance bands, doing sit-ups and push-ups, or some forms of yoga—whatever works for you.
- If you don't have a lot of time in your day, try being active for 10 minutes at a time. Anything that gets your heart beating faster counts!



## **Control Cholesterol**

**Unhealthy levels of cholesterol can lead to high cholesterol, which increases the risk of developing heart disease.**

- Try the **Therapeutic Lifestyle Changes (TLC) Program** which combines diet, physical activity, and weight management to help lower high blood cholesterol and improve heart health.
- Eat a heart-healthy diet that is low in saturated fats, as these can raise LDL cholesterol levels.
- Limit alcohol consumption. Drinking too much alcohol—more than two drinks a day for men or one drink a day for women—can raise your total cholesterol level.



## **Manage Stress**

**Learning how to manage stress with healthy coping strategies helps improve your emotional and physical health.**

- Use relaxation techniques that combine breathing and focused attention on pleasing thoughts and images to calm the mind and body.
- Consider meditation, as it can help to **lower stress**.
- Take a yoga class to help lower stress and improve mindfulness. It may also offer you a supportive community.

## **Manage Blood Sugar**

**Maintaining stable blood sugar levels is crucial for heart health, especially for people with diabetes or those at risk of developing diabetes.**

- Eat a diet rich in whole foods, including vegetables, fruits, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats.
- Monitor your carbohydrate intake and choose complex carbohydrates, like whole grains and legumes, to help control blood sugar levels.
- Talk to your healthcare provider about how often you should check your blood sugar levels, especially if you have diabetes.

## **Control Blood Pressure**

**Keep your blood pressure in a healthy range and keep track of your numbers. Blood pressure that's consistently higher than 130/80 mm Hg can cause serious health problems.**

- Have your blood pressure checked each time you visit the doctor.
- Use a blood pressure monitor to measure your blood pressure at home and **learn how to measure it correctly**.
- Use a **blood pressure tracker** to keep a record of your numbers each reading.
- If you're pregnant or planning to be, it's especially important to keep your blood pressure in a healthy range.

## **Practice Self-Care & Find Social Support**

**Daily acts of self-care can benefit your heart because self-care is heart care. Studies show that having positive social support, close relationships, and feeling connected to others makes it easier to stick to heart-healthy habits.**

- Try to do at least one positive action for your heart health each day.
- Make the doctor's appointment you've been putting off.
- Ask family and friends to text you reminders or encouragement to help you meet your health goals.
- Join an exercise class or a weight management group to connect with other like-minded people and stay motivated.

For more information about how you can take action to keep your heart healthy, visit [hearttruth.gov](https://www.hearttruth.gov)



**you can.**

**Help us understand  
and help others.**

**Have you responded to or  
witnessed an overdose?**

Let us know,  
anonymously.

**SCAN HERE**



**RedCap.Link/  
overdosereport**

