

# HealthcareConnections

JANUARY 2018

## Healthcare News

January is

NATIONAL  
**RADON  
ACTION**  
MONTH

RADON: TEST,  
FIX, SAVE A LIFE.

### Make a change that could save your life

The start of the New Year means setting resolutions for 2018. Exercising, reading more, and spending time with family may be on your list of goals—but is protecting your home against radon on that list?

#### What is radon?

Radon is an odorless, colorless, and tasteless radioactive gas. It's naturally occurring and can accumulate to dangerous amounts in closed spaces. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Surgeon General's Office estimate that as many as 20,000 lung cancer deaths are caused by radon each year. It's the leading cause of lung cancer for nonsmokers and costs the U.S. an estimated \$2 billion a year in health costs.<sup>1</sup>

This carcinogen can be found in homes, schools, and even groundwater. Spending time in buildings with elevated radon levels can greatly increase your risk of its harmful effects. By inhaling the tiny radioactive particles, they can damage your lung cells and cause cancer to develop.<sup>2</sup>

#### Keep yourself safe

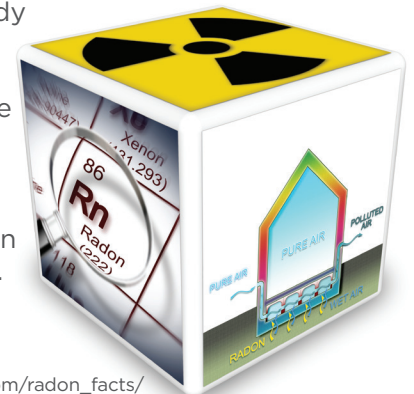
To protect yourself and your family, the first step you can take is to test your home. Radon test kits are sometimes available for free at local health departments and through state programs. They can also be purchased online or in home-improvement stores.

It's likely that radon will be present. It's a naturally occurring gas that can be found almost everywhere. While there is no "safe" level of radon to have in your home, you should be looking to see if your radon exposure is at or below the acceptable level. Remember, the lower the amount of radon, the lower your risk of lung cancer.

#### What to do if you're at risk

If you discover your residence is one of the potentially 8 million homes with elevated radon levels, don't panic. Conduct a follow-up test, as radon levels can fluctuate. If the level is still above the acceptable amount, you should start taking the necessary steps to protect yourself. Fortunately, resources are available for handy do-it-yourselfers, and there are trained professionals who can help. Some states require radon mitigation contractors to have a state license, so contact your state radon office for a list of options.

Make your goal for 2018 to keep you and your family safe. Find out your home's radon levels and check this resolution off your list.



1. Air Check, Inc. (2017). Radon Fact Sheet [http://www.radon.com/radon\\_facts/](http://www.radon.com/radon_facts/)

2. National Cancer Institute. (2011, December 6). Radon and Cancer. <https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/causes-prevention/risk/substances/radon/radon-fact-sheet>

## Keep your New Year's resolution

Living a healthy lifestyle is a New Year's resolution we've all made at one time or another. Motivation to make the change starts strong. We buy a gym membership, stock the fridge with fruits and veggies, and may even say no to that last slice of tasty pizza. But over time, the commitment fades. If that sounds familiar, here are four simple steps to make your healthy resolution a reality.

- 1. Start small.** The truth is that healthy habits are hard to form. Trying to give up smoking cold turkey or making a home-cooked meal every day can be easy to give up on as soon as the first roadblock pops up. You're not a light switch. Big lifestyle changes can't just be flipped on. Instead, commit to small changes and work your way up to your goal.
- 2. Look for healthier alternatives.** Spending too much time watching television, playing video games, and snacking are all habits that are hard to break. They are relaxing, especially when you're stressed. When you decide to start living healthier, look for other options that can replace your current habits. Choose to go for a half-hour walk over spending half an hour on TV or gaming. Have a handful of almonds over a handful of chips. This is a great way to curve cravings and make the necessary steps to healthier living.
- 3. Make health part of your daily routine.** If you are having a hard time following through on your resolution, make it the rule rather than the exception. By fitting your resolution into your schedule, it'll start to feel natural. Begin by deciding to eat an apple every day at lunch—or commit to going to the gym right after work. The goal isn't to work out for an hour or burn a thousand calories; it's to get used to going.
- 4. Remember what motivates you.** When the drive to get healthy begins to fade, remember why you decided to do it in the first place. Do you have a health issue that a lifestyle change will help? Was it for your family? Are you trying to set a positive example? Keep these thoughts in mind every time you feel like skipping your resolution, and it'll be easier to stay on track.

*Stick with these tips, and, by this time next year, **you'll be seeing a healthier you.***



## Healthy Weight Week

Healthy Weight Week isn't about fad diets or quick ways to shed pounds. January 18th through the 24th is about making the lifestyle changes to become a healthier you—and maintain it. If you're looking to get to a better weight, here are some great ways to get started.

**Eat before grocery shopping.** Walking into the supermarket with an empty stomach makes it easy to be distracted by all the delicious junk food sitting on the shelves. By shopping after meals or eating a light snack before you head out, you'll find yourself less drawn to fatty foods and be able to keep them out of your house.

**Keep healthy snacks nearby.** If you're prone to afternoon belly growls, keep nutritious foods nearby. Having fruit, yogurt, and vitamin-rich shakes around you will give you something to snack on when you start getting hungry. Eating healthy food throughout the day will do more than settle your stomach; it'll help keep you from choosing unhealthy options—like fast food—or overeating at dinner.

**Pack your meals.** Meal preparation is a great idea many people use to stick to their healthy lifestyles. Knowing you have food waiting in your fridge when you get home can help you avoid eating out. And taking prepped meals to work means you have food ready to eat when you're hungry. Prepping also helps you know what and how much you're eating for easy calorie counting each day.

**Find ways to stay active.** When most people think of exercise, they think of running on a treadmill or lifting weights. While that's great, it can be hard for some to do. Staying active every day can be something simple. Taking a walk around the office, playing with your kids, and even dancing while cleaning are all ways you can become more active in your life without losing any time in your day.

**Accept that it's a process.** It's easy to become discouraged if you don't see immediate results. Reaching a healthy weight takes time. For many, getting to their weight goals can take months or even years. But you won't reach your goals unless you start. If you make the effort and stick to it, you'll remember 2018 Healthy Weight Week as the time you took your first steps to a healthier life.

If you have any questions about health and wellness, a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist is available on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Albia Hy-Vee. Taylor Grgurich, RDN, LD, is also able to help employers implement employee fitness and nutrition programs, as well as seminars on healthy living.

Call 641-932-7131 or email [tgrgurich@hy-vee.com](mailto:tgrgurich@hy-vee.com) for more information.



## Healthy Recipe

Looking for a healthy way to start the morning? Warm up a cold winter day with a nutritious bowl of Overnight Oats!

### Overnight Oats

4 1/2 cups of water

1 cup of steel-cut oats

1/2 cup of your favorite dried fruit

1/4 teaspoon of salt

2 tablespoons of butter

1. Pour the water into a slow cooker. Then, add the oats and your choice of dried fruit. Raisins, cranberries, prunes, and blueberries make excellent choices.
2. Turn the heat on low and stir briefly. Cover your slow cooker with a lid. If a crust starts to form around the edges, stir lightly.
3. Let the oats cook for 7-8 hours or until they are tender and creamy. Perfect to let sit overnight.
4. When you wake up the next morning, pour and enjoy!

**Tips for the chef:** Depending on your taste, you can add a number of ingredients for a little extra flavor. Sugar, cinnamon, and maple syrup are all tasty options!

Do you have a recipe you'd like to share? Send us your healthy snack or meal at [jwitt@mchalia.com](mailto:jwitt@mchalia.com).

## Choose to help save a life during Blood Donor Month



**DONATE  
BLOOD**



Giving blood is, and will always be, an important way to help those in need. But as winter sets in, blood donations drop. Blood drives may be cancelled due to poor weather, and volunteering slows down during the flu season. These reasons and more are why January is Blood Donor Month—to raise awareness for the need of blood donations during this sluggish season.

According to the American Red Cross, about 44,000 donations are required each day to keep up with demand across the country, regardless of the time of year. Patients with blood disorders, cancer, and serious trauma still need your help. So, when you choose to give blood during this time of the year, your donation is even more critical.

When you donate, you're doing more than earning a cookie or glass of orange juice—you're giving people hope. It's one of the most precious things you can give to another person. There is no substitute for blood, and when you donate, you're helping to save the lives of people in your community and beyond.

After a holiday season of bringing joy to one another, carry the spirit on into January by giving blood. To schedule an appointment, call the Blood Center at 800-452-1097 or visit [bloodcenterimpact.org](http://bloodcenterimpact.org).

**We're hosting blood drives throughout the month! Donate at MCHC and help give others a chance of life.**

January 12th  
8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.  
Conference Rooms 1 & 2

January 15th  
2:30-6:30 p.m.  
Conference Rooms 1 & 2

## January 2018

### Susan Allison Outpatient Clinic

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 <b>Happy New Year!</b>	2 Sokol	3 Sanders Curtis Narayan	4 Sokol Coleman	5 Marcus Onsrud	6
7	8 Homedan Freeman	9 Sokol	10 Sanders	11 Sokol Agarwal/ Moratz	12 Marcus Moratz	13
14	15 Homedan	16 Sokol	17 Sanders Curtis Moore	18 Sokol Coleman	19 Marcus Onsrud	20
21	22 Homedan Freeman	23 Sokol	24 Sanders	25 Sokol	26 Marcus Moratz	27
28	29 Homedan	30 Sokol	31 Dawley Dickins			

### Outpatient Clinic Specialists

Ravinder Agarwal, M.D. - *Allergy & Immunology*  
 Greg Moore, AUD - *Audiology*  
 Richard Marcus, M.D. - *Cardiology*  
 Rachel Onsrud, ARNP - *Cardiology*  
 Heidi Curtis, ARNP - *Dermatology*  
 Neal Sokol, D.O. - *General Surgery*  
 Kelley Dawley, ARNP - *Neurology*

Q. Stokes Dickins, M.D. - *Neurology*  
 Joseph Coleman, M.D. - *OB/GYN*  
 Brian Freeman, M.D. - *Oncology/Hematology*  
 Shehada Homedan, M.D. - *Orthopedic Surgeon*  
 Robert Moratz, DPM - *Podiatry*  
 Tamarisa Narayan, M.D. - *Pulmonology*  
 Shayla Sanders, ARNP - *Rheumatology*

For additional information or to schedule an appointment, please call 641-932-1678.

