

**Public Health Experts
Warn of a Twindemic
This Winter**

Live Well, Work Well

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In the News

Catch up on the latest developments of the biggest health care news that happened in the past three months.



FDA Urges Consumers to Check That Their Hand Sanitizer Is Safe Before Use

Hand hygiene is an important response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends washing hands with soap and water. If those aren't available, using a hand sanitizer can help you avoid getting sick and spreading germs.

However, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is warning consumers that some hand sanitizers are dangerous to use. The FDA's first warning was issued in June 2020 after the agency discovered nine brands of hand sanitizer that contained methanol, or wood alcohol, which is a substance that can be toxic when ingested or absorbed through the skin. Since this first discovery, the agency launched an investigation into the safety of hand sanitizers.

This investigation revealed serious safety concerns with various hand sanitizers on the market, leading to some being recalled and the FDA warning consumers to refrain from using more than 150 sanitizers.

What does this mean for me?

Consumers should read the labels of hand sanitizer they're considering buying or already own to make sure they're safe for use. Specifically, the FDA directs consumers to check the label to see if a sanitizer:

- Was tested by the FDA
- Has been found to contain methanol or 1-propanol, which are toxic substances
- Contains methanol
- Has been tested for and confirmed to have microbial contamination
- Is being actively recalled by the manufacturer or distributor
- Contains less than the required amount of ethyl or isopropyl alcohol, or benzalkonium chloride to be considered effective
- Is made at the same facility as products that have been tested and deemed unsafe by the FDA



The FDA has compiled an interactive [do-not-use-list](#) that consumers can use to quickly identify whether their hand sanitizer is safe for use. The agency has also released [instructions](#) for using the tool.

If your hand sanitizer is on the do-not-use-list, stop using it immediately and dispose of it in a hazardous waste container. Do not pour the sanitizer down the drain.

For more information on the FDA's warning, click [here](#).



Public Health Experts Warn of a Twindemic This Winter

The coronavirus isn't the only public health concern as we approach the winter months. Colder temperatures drive people indoors, which health experts warn leads to cases of influenza spreading more easily than during warmer summer months. This combination has public health experts fearing a potential "twindemic" in surges of COVID-19 cases and another deadly flu season.

With both COVID-19 and the flu in the fall, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Director Robert Redfield stated that either one of those by themselves could stress certain hospital systems. According to Redfield, "By getting that flu vaccine, you may be able to then negate the necessity to have to take up a hospital bed."

CDC Urges Public to Get Flu Shot

According to the CDC, [flu season begins](#) in October and peaks between December and February, typically leading to 140,000 to 180,000 [hospitalizations per year](#). The past few flu seasons have led to historic hospitalizations and death rates, and last year's flu season involved two different strains of influenza spreading throughout the country.

Redfield stated that public adaption of flu shots may help ease the impact of a surge of cases in the fall. The CDC typically purchases doses of the flu shot for uninsured adults, and typically orders around 500,000. According to Redfield, the CDC has ordered an extra 10 million doses this year. Though less than 50% of Americans got a flu shot last year, Redfield is hoping for 65% to comply this flu season. The CDC normally recommends 60% to 70% of the public get a flu shot.

Redfield noted that, if there is one thing we all can do to prepare for the fall—besides wearing a mask, social distancing, hand-washing and being smart about gatherings—it would be to get the flu vaccine.





Don't Fall for This COVID-19 Scam

Federal agencies and state officials are warning the public of a new phone scam that's increasing in popularity. Unfortunately, scammers are taking advantage of the legitimate method of contact tracing and preying on people's fears over the COVID-19 pandemic to catch them off guard.

The Scam

This new scam involves callers who pose as contact tracers from local and state health departments. In many cases, the caller will tell victims that they're calling from the health department to notify the individual that they have been in contact with someone who has COVID-19. At this point, this may seem like a legitimate call that people may get or may have gotten from the health department during the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, the scammer will then ask for payment or banking information before they can continue. Public and federal officials say that this will never be something that a legitimate contact tracer would do. Again, a legitimate contact tracer may call you to notify you that you may have been in contact with someone who has COVID-19, but they will never ask you to provide financial or credit card information.

What should I do if I receive a call?

Because contact tracing is part of a federal, state and local response to minimizing the spread of COVID-19, you may receive a phone call from your state or local health department. It's important to your health that you don't avoid these calls out of fear of falling for a scam, but rather be cautious when answering the phone.

You may be asked to confirm your name, but be wary of providing any other confidential information, including your Social Security number. If the caller asks for any financial or credit card information, hang up the phone. This is a scam phone call.

If you're suspicious about the call, ask for the caller's name and number to call them back at a later time. Legitimate contact tracers will provide this information, which will also allow you to double-check the legitimacy of the call with your local or state health department.

For more information about this new scam, click [here](#).



NHO

Learn more about national health observances (NHOs) from the past three months in this section.

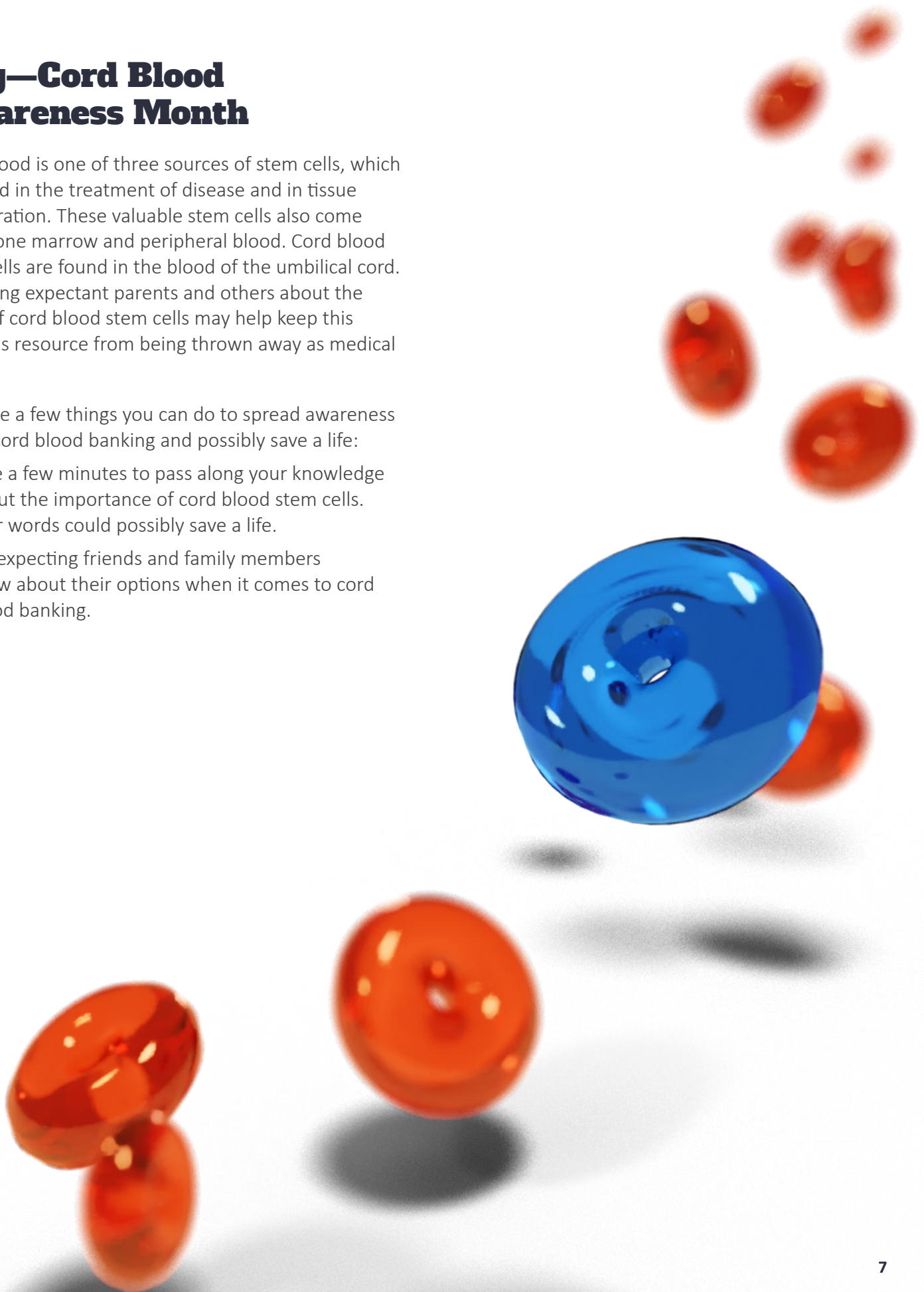


July—Cord Blood Awareness Month

Cord blood is one of three sources of stem cells, which are used in the treatment of disease and in tissue regeneration. These valuable stem cells also come from bone marrow and peripheral blood. Cord blood stem cells are found in the blood of the umbilical cord. Educating expectant parents and others about the value of cord blood stem cells may help keep this precious resource from being thrown away as medical waste.

Here are a few things you can do to spread awareness about cord blood banking and possibly save a life:

- Take a few minutes to pass along your knowledge about the importance of cord blood stem cells. Your words could possibly save a life.
- Let expecting friends and family members know about their options when it comes to cord blood banking.





August—Psoriasis Awareness Month

Psoriasis is an autoimmune disease that causes raised, red, scaly patches to appear on the skin. Psoriatic arthritis is an inflammatory type of arthritis that eventually occurs in 10% to 20% of people with psoriasis.

Psoriasis is a chronic and unpredictable condition, but it is not contagious. Symptoms can come on suddenly and disappear just as quickly. There are five common types of psoriasis, each with its own characteristic skin lesion. There is no known cure for psoriasis, but there are certain things that individuals with psoriasis can do to control their symptoms, which include the following:

- Keep the skin lubricated.
- Use a humidifier in colder, dryer months.
- Do not get too much sun.
- Use mild soaps or soap-free cleansers.
- Eat a nutritionally balanced diet and maintain a healthy weight.
- Do not scratch, rub or pick the lesions.
- Bathe daily to soak off the scales.

September—National Preparedness Month

Since 2004, the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the national Ready Campaign have promoted National Preparedness Month (NPM) every September. NPM encourages Americans to take steps to prepare for all types of emergencies and strives to increase the overall number of people, families and communities that engage in preparedness actions.

Remember, you can't plan when a disaster will occur, but you can plan ahead to be prepared if and when a disaster does strike. This September, take time to learn more about NPM and take the suggested steps to become properly prepared. For more information, please visit the NPM website.



Looking Ahead...

October

Breast Cancer
Awareness Month

November

American
Diabetes Month

December

Safe Toys and
Celebrations Month



Health and Wellness

Remain on top of the latest trends in health and wellness with the three articles in this section.



Using Honey to Alleviate Cold and Flu Symptoms

Physicians from Oxford University's Medical School and Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences recently published a study showing that honey may be a better treatment for coughs and colds than over-the-counter (OTC) medicines.

The Study

The study evaluated whether honey was superior to antibiotics and OTC medications in treating symptoms of upper respiratory tract infections (URTIs), or cold-like illnesses, in children. Researchers found that honey did a better job at easing coughs and improving sleep than common OTC medications. As such, the study suggested that doctors should consider recommending honey for treating URTIs instead of antibiotics.

What does this mean for you?

As cold and flu season is among us, it's important to be prepared and know your options for alleviating symptoms of the common cold. For the common cold, a doctor visit is usually unnecessary. However, if you do visit the doctor and are prescribed a certain treatment, it's important that you follow those instructions. If you do not visit the doctor and are seeking relief from cold symptoms, consider drinking a cup of warm tea with honey.

Beat the 2020-21 Seasonal Flu

The 2019-20 seasonal flu was another lengthy and severe flu season. Last year's flu activity began to increase in November and remained elevated through March. Seasonal influenza can cause serious complications for people of any age, but children and the elderly are more vulnerable. To help keep your household healthy this flu season, consider the following suggestions:

- Get the flu vaccine. Becoming vaccinated against the flu is the best chance of preventing the illness.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick, and stay away from others when you feel under the weather.

- Wash your hands often using soap and warm water to protect against germs.
- Get plenty of sleep, stay physically active and drink plenty of water to keep your immune system strong.
- Manage your stress and eat a nutritious diet rich in healthy grains, fruits, vegetables and fiber.

Contact your doctor today to learn more about the flu vaccine and how to prevent the flu.





Start Planning Today for a Stress-free Holiday Season

While the holiday season brings joy and togetherness, it can also bring stress for many individuals and families. Top holiday stressors include staying on a budget, managing multiple commitments and finding the perfect gift. Fortunately, by getting organized and planning out what you can ahead of time, you can help reduce your holiday stress. Consider the following tips:

- **Write down any known commitments**—Does your child's school have a holiday concert? Are you planning on hosting a holiday dinner? Making a list of your commitments will help you plan your time and help you avoid double-booking yourself.
- **Create your budget now**—If you're stressed about how your holiday spending will impact you after the holidays are over, you're not alone. Remember, the sentiment of a gift is much more important than the cost. Set a realistic budget and do not go over it.
- **Start shopping early**—Do you already know what you want to get some people on your list? Don't be afraid to shop early. Sometimes, you can get great deals on presents even before the holiday season hits. Moreover, you can avoid the scenario of not being able to get the gift you want because it's sold out.

By keeping these three tips in mind, you'll be well on your way to a stress-free holiday season.



Recipes

Try out these two healthy recipes,
which are from the USDA.



Spaghetti Squash With Tomatoes, Basil and Parmesan

Makes 4 servings

Ingredients

- 1 spaghetti squash (about 1 ½ pounds, halved, seeded)
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 3 Tbsp. Parmesan cheese
- ¼ tsp. dried oregano
- 2 tsp. dried basil (or ½ cup fresh basil, chopped)
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes (thinly sliced)
- Salt and pepper (to taste, optional)

Nutritional information for 1 serving

Calories	77
Total fat	5 g
Saturated fat	1 g
Cholesterol	3 mg
Sodium	67 mg
Total carbohydrate	7 g
Dietary fiber	2 g
Total sugars	3 g
Added sugars included	0 g
Protein	2 g

Directions

1. Place the two squash halves, cut-side down, in a glass baking dish. Add about ¼ cup water and cover with plastic wrap.
2. Microwave on high for 12 minutes or until soft when pressed. Let stand covered for 3 minutes.
3. In a large bowl, whisk oil, basil, oregano and 2 Tbsp. Parmesan cheese together. Stir in tomatoes and season lightly with salt and pepper to taste.
4. Scrape squash out with a fork, and add strands to tomato mixture. Toss until combined.
5. Sprinkle with remaining Parmesan cheese.



Hearty Vegetable Beef Soup

Makes 4 servings

Ingredients

- $\frac{3}{4}$ 14.5-ounce can low-sodium chicken broth
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water
- 2 cups mixed vegetables (frozen)
- 1 14.5-ounce can tomatoes
- 4 ounces beef (cooked, diced)
- 1 tsp. thyme leaves (crushed)
- 1 dash pepper
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. teaspoon salt
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups noodles (narrow-width, uncooked)

Directions

1. Heat broth and water. Add vegetables, meat and seasonings. Bring to boil, reduce heat and boil gently, uncovered, for 15 minutes.
2. Add noodles. Cook until noodles are tender, about 10 minutes.
3. Remove bay leaf before serving.

Nutritional information for 1 serving

Calories	173
Total fat	3 g
Saturated fat	1 g
Cholesterol	28 mg
Sodium	331 mg
Total carbohydrate	25 g
Dietary fiber	6 g
Total sugars	6 g
Added sugars included	0 g
Protein	12 g