

# **Cancer in Iowa: 99 Counties Project**

## **Resource Guide**

The **Cancer in Iowa: 99 Counties Project** has gathered these resources to help address cancer concerns in our state. This project aims to solve community-specific cancer issues in all 99 counties of Iowa. These resources come from partners across the state who are committed to controlling cancer and reducing its impact in Iowa, including the Iowa Cancer Registry, Iowa Health and Human Services, the Iowa Cancer Consortium, Iowa Cancer Plan, the Iowa Rural Health association, and more.

The Iowa Cancer Registry (ICR), also known as the State Health Registry of Iowa (SHRI), has been serving Iowa since 1973. As part of the National Cancer Institute's SEER Program, ICR tracks cancer rates, survival, and deaths among Iowans. ICR provides important data and resources to support cancer research, public health efforts, and education in Iowa.

Iowa Cancer Registry Website: <https://shri.public-health.uiowa.edu/>

Cancer in Iowa: 99 Counties Project website: <https://shri.public-health.uiowa.edu/cancer-data/cancer-in-iowa-99-counties-project/>

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## Cancer Clusters

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What to do if you suspect a specific cancer cluster in your community?

- If you are concerned about cancer excess in your area,
  - please email us at [ICR-CancerConcerns@uiowa.edu](mailto:ICR-CancerConcerns@uiowa.edu)
- For your request we will ask you about
  - **Area of concern** (neighborhood, census tract, town, county)
  - **Cancer types** that have been diagnosed in the area
  - **Time frame** that this has been going on
  - **Exposure(s) of concern**
- If possible, the Registry will conduct an analysis comparing the expected number of cancers in the area to what has been observed
  - A written report of the results will be sent to you and a meeting to discuss the results will be offered

**Visit the following link for more information about how cancer clusters are investigated** <https://www.cdc.gov/cancer-environment/media/pdfs/Guidelines-for-Examining-Unusual-Patterns-of-Cancer-and-Environmental-Concerns-h.pdf>



## Iowa Cancer Consortium

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The Iowa Cancer Consortium is Iowa's non-profit cancer control coalition, formed in 2001. The organization has approximately 700 members across Iowa from all professional backgrounds and experiences, working together to reduce the burden of cancer.

The Iowa Cancer Consortium provides...

- Connections and partnership
- Latest news and cancer updates via email
- Training and educational opportunities
- Grant opportunities and technical assistance
- Free cancer educational materials for distribution
- Blueprint for cancer control, the Iowa Cancer Plan
- Virtual workgroup meeting

### Virtual Workgroups include

- Cancer Screening & Early Detection
- Health Equity
- HPV (w/ Iowa Immunizes coalition)
- Policy
- Radon
- Research & Clinical Trials
- Rural Cancer
- Quality of Life
- Cancer & the Environment Task Force

Sign-up for our newsletter: [www.canceriowa.org](http://www.canceriowa.org)

Become an official member! Membership fee = \$20/year. \*Scholarships available.

**Contact: Rachel Schramm, Program Manager, Iowa Cancer Consortium**  
[schramm@canceriowa.org](mailto:schramm@canceriowa.org)

Visit [www.canceriowa.org](http://www.canceriowa.org) for more information

## Iowa Cancer Plan

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The Iowa Cancer Plan brings Iowans together to reduce the burden of cancer in Iowa. It's Iowa's blueprint for cancer control. It contains chapters with sections that include priorities, strategies, and specific action steps which may be tailored to many settings to guide cancer control activities.

Created by experts and Iowans across the state, the Iowa Cancer Plan includes five chapters focused on cancer as it relates to:

1. Health Equity: identify and eliminate cancer health disparities.
2. Prevention and Risk Reduction: whenever possible, prevent cancer from occurring.
3. Early Detection and Screening: promote the benefits of screening tests to ensure early diagnosis.
4. Diagnosis and Cancer-Directed Therapy: reduce barriers to care, promote evidence-based practices and encourage participation in clinical trials and other forms of research.
5. Survivorship and End-of-Life Care: ensure resources to optimize quality of life for cancer survivors and their families

**For more information visit:** <https://canceriowa.org/iowa-cancer-plan/>



## Iowa Rural Health Association

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**Mission:** To strengthen health systems for rural residents and communities through leadership, education, advocacy, public awareness and networking.

**Vision:** Optimal health for all Iowans, with a focus on rural populations.

### **Programming/Activities:**

- Webinars
- Annual conference
- Rural Iowa representation at state, regional, and national levels

**For more information visit** [www.iaruralhealth.org](http://www.iaruralhealth.org) or [iaruralhealth@gmail.com](mailto:iaruralhealth@gmail.com)

## Environmental Exposures and Health Risks Fact Sheets

These fact sheets were made in response to concerns from community members about the connections between environmental contaminants in our environment and health outcomes such as cancer and other diseases. Links Environmental Health Fact Sheets:

- [Arsenic](#)
- [Atrazine](#)
- [Glyphosate](#)
- [Nitrate](#)
- [Radon](#)



These fact sheets provide information on cancer and non-cancer health risks for each environmental exposure, how the exposures are regulated, and what you can do to limit your exposure.

### Arsenic & Health

- Arsenic is a toxic metalloid found in water, air, and soil. This factsheet discusses the EPA's regulation of arsenic levels in drinking water and the need for regular testing, especially for private wells, and outlines effective methods for removing arsenic from drinking water.

### Atrazine & Health

- Atrazine is an herbicide used to control broad-leaved weeds, especially in cornfields. This factsheet discusses exposures to atrazine, health risks, regulations of atrazine in drinking water, and safety measures you can take to minimize exposure.

### Glyphosate & Health

- Glyphosate is a widely used herbicide effective against various weeds and grasses, commonly found in agricultural and residential settings. This factsheet discusses sources of exposure, health risks, and regulations surrounding the use of glyphosate.

## **Nitrates & Health**

- Nitrate is a water-soluble chemical found in high concentrations in some Iowa waterways and private wells. This factsheet discusses Nitrate contamination, exposure and health effects.

## **Radon & Health**

- Radon is a naturally occurring, odorless, colorless, and tasteless gas that originates from the breakdown of uranium in soil, water, and air. It is the second leading cause of lung cancer after smoking. This factsheet discusses risks from exposure to radon, radon testing, and radon mitigation systems.

**For more information visit:**

<https://ehsrc.public-health.uiowa.edu/communityengagement/resources-information/>



## **Agricultural Health Study**

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The Agricultural Health Study (AHS) has been working for more than 30 years to understand factors that impact the health of farmers and their families.

- Includes over 50,000 pesticide applicators from Iowa
- Linked with Iowa Cancer Registry data to study risk of developing cancer among pesticide applicators

The aim of this study is to understand what risks there are to farmers and how they can protect themselves.

Visit the Ag Health website at <https://aghealth.nih.gov/> to read their annual study updates related to pesticides and other agricultural exposures and cancer.

## **CHEEC Center for Health Effects of Environmental Contamination**

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The University of Iowa Center for Health Effects of Environmental Contamination (CHEEC) supports and conducts research to identify, measure and study adverse health outcomes related to exposure to environmental toxins. CHEEC was established through the 1987 Iowa Groundwater Protection Act and has focused its efforts to date mainly on drinking water contaminants.

**Visit <https://cheec.uiowa.edu/> for more information or contact at via email: [cheec@uiowa.edu](mailto:cheec@uiowa.edu)**

## Iowa Health and Human Services

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There are many different programs at Iowa HHS that address cancer, including the following:

### The Care for Yourself – Breast and Cervical Cancer Program

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The Care for Yourself – Breast and Cervical Cancer Program (CFY-BCC) at Iowa HHS provides free breast and cervical cancer screenings across Iowa.

#### Eligibility

- Between 21 and 64 years old:
  - Age 40-64 years old for breast cancer services
  - Age 21-64 years old for cervical cancer services.
  - Under the age 40 years for those who are symptomatic or high-risk and those over 64 years old who do not have Medicare Part B.
- Are uninsured, underinsured or have insurance with barriers to receiving care.
- Are at or earn less than 250% of the Federal Poverty Level
  - For more information refer to this website:  
<https://aspe.hhs.gov/topics/poverty-economic-mobility/poverty-guidelines>

#### Screening Services

- |                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| • Clinical Breast Exam | • Diagnostic testing for abnormal screening results and referrals to treatment |
| • Mammograms           | • Patient navigation   |
| • Breast MRIs          | • Help understanding provider recommendations                                  |
| • Pap tests            | • Appointment reminders  |
| • HPV tests            |  |

#### Contact Information

- Call (866) 339-7909 to speak to a confidential coordinator immediately.
- CFY-BCC coordinators are available to help you Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

**For more information on CFY-BCC visit**

**<https://hhs.iowa.gov/public-health/cancer/cfy>**

## **Iowa Get Screened (IGS): Colorectal Cancer Program**

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The IGS: Colorectal Cancer Program at Iowa HHS partners with the Iowa Primary Care Association (Iowa PCA) and Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) to increase colorectal cancer screening by implementing evidence-based interventions.

Participating FQHCs (clinics) include: 1) All Care Health Center, 2) Community Health Care, Inc., 3) Community Health Center of Fort Dodge, 4) Infinity Health, 5) Community Health Centers of Southeastern Iowa, 6) Crescent Community Health Center, 7) Eastern Iowa Health Center, 8) Primary Health Care, Inc., 9) Promise Community Health Center and 10) River Hills Community Health Center.

Additionally, the IGS program provides limited colorectal cancer screenings to eligible Iowans at the Black Hawk County Health Department (Waterloo) and the Polk County Health Department (Des Moines). This program serves Iowans statewide, ages 45-75, who are at or below 300% Federal Poverty Level, and are uninsured or underinsured. Services are provided through partnerships with Broadlawns Medical Center, MercyOne Waterloo, MercyOne Cedar Falls, and Mercy Clinical Labs.

**For more information on IGS visit**

<https://hhs.iowa.gov/public-health/cancer/colorectal-cancer-screening-program>

## **Iowa Comprehensive Cancer Control Program (CCCP)**

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CCCP at Iowa HHS partners with many organizations, including the Iowa Cancer Consortium, Iowa's cancer coalition. CCCP is involved in the revision and implementation of the Iowa Cancer Plan. Currently CCCP is focused on increasing HPV vaccination, increasing lung cancer screening, and supporting cancer survivors.

**For more information on CCCP visit**

<https://hhs.iowa.gov/public-health/cancer>

## **Tobacco Use Prevention and Control**

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Iowa HHS has many programs and services related to tobacco use prevention and control, including Quitline Iowa (adult cessation), My Life My Quit (youth cessation), youth prevention (ISTEP, Iowa Students for Tobacco Education and Prevention), Smoke Free Homes and the Smoke Free Air Act (statewide law, plus voluntary tobacco/nicotine-free policy adoption efforts).

Quitline Iowa is a free tobacco cessation program based on proven strategies that have helped more than 1.5 million people quit tobacco. The professional quit coaches and online community provide support including connections to resources like nicotine quit medications.

**For more information on tobacco use prevention and control programs visit**  
<https://hhs.iowa.gov/programs/programs-and-services/tobacco-use-prevention-control>

**For more information on Quitline Iowa and to connect with a personal coach visit**

- <https://quitlineiowa.org/>
- Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (784-8669)
- Text START to 300500

## **Immunization Program**

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The Immunization Program at Iowa HHS provides information about immunization recommendations. Some immunizations, including the HPV vaccine and the hepatitis B vaccine, can prevent certain types of cancers from developing.

**For more information on the Immunization Program visit**  
<https://hhs.iowa.gov/immunization>

## **The Hepatitis Program**

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The Hepatitis Program at Iowa HHS works to raise awareness about viral hepatitis and provides essential information on the condition. Hepatitis C is a leading cause of liver cancer and is associated with other types of cancer. The program focuses on reaching populations disproportionately affected by hepatitis C, using screening and testing initiatives to identify individuals at increased risk for early detection and linkage to treatment. Additionally, Iowa HHS conducts surveillance follow-up for Iowans newly diagnosed with hepatitis C, ensuring swift connection to treatment for those diagnosed with hepatitis C.

**For more information on the Hepatitis Program visit**

**<https://hhs.iowa.gov/immunization>**

## **Iowa Private Well Grants Program**

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Grants are available to local county health departments to provide financial assistance to their residents for private water well services. Grants provide reimbursement for the following activities:

- Water tests to ensure that private well water is safe to drink
- Well closure to ensure that abandoned wells do not cause groundwater to become contaminated
- Well reconstruction or repair to bring the well up to current standards
- Well assessments to ensure the integrity of the well construction
- Shock chlorination to address bacteria issues in the well water

Resources for Well Owners:

- Contact your local environmental public health office to see if your county participates in the PWG Program.
  - [Iowa DNR Private Well Testing Information](#)
  - [Iowa DNR Well Plugging Information](#)

**For more information on private well grants, visit**

**<https://hhs.iowa.gov/public-health/environmental-health/private-well-grants>**

## Instructions for Private Well Testing ([Iowa DNR Private Well Testing Information](#)):

1. Contact your [county health department \(click here\)](#) and notify them that you are wanting one of the following services: Shock Chlorination, Well Assessment, Well Plugging, Cistern Plugging, Well reconstruction or Renovation.
2. Contact a DNR certified well contractor to perform the work. The bullets below tell what type of work each type of contractor can perform, and links to a list of those contractors sorted by their city of residence.
  - i. [Well Drillers \(click here\)](#) - (Shock chlorination, well assessments, reconstruction, well plugging (except pump and plumbing work))
  - ii. [Pump Installers \(click here\)](#) - (shock chlorination, well assessments, reconstruction (upper 10 feet only), well plugging)
  - iii. [Well Pluggers \(click here\)](#) - (can only plug Class 1 and Class 3 wells - all other well plugging must be performed by a well driller or pump installer)
3. Non-certified contractors or non-certified people are not legally allowed to perform well services in Iowa, so always double check with the person you hire to ensure they are certified by and on the lists linked above.
4. Tell the contractor you are seeking Private Well Grants funds and will require the following documents following completion of work:
  - i. Fully completed DNR form based on the type of work
    - \$400 - Shock Chlorination ([Form 542-0503](#))
    - \$600 - Well Assessment ([Form 542-0502](#))
    - \$700 - Well Plugging ([Form 542-1226](#))
    - \$400 - Cistern Plugging ([Form 542-1226](#))
    - \$2,000 - Well Reconstruction or Renovation ([Form 542-1519](#))
  - ii. Itemized "paid" invoice
5. Submit these items to the [county health department \(click here\)](#)
6. The county will reimburse you directly once your required forms and invoice have been reviewed and approved.

## Radon

Iowa HHS contracts with the American Lung Association to maintain the [Health Air - Radon in Iowa](#) website, and staff Iowa's Radon Hotline.

### There are two types of test kits available:

Be sure to follow the directions provided with the test kit you are using.

### What is Radon?

- Radon is a colorless, tasteless, and odorless gas that causes lung cancer.
- Radon forms naturally from the breakdown of Uranium found in soil or rock.
- Radon enters a building through cracks in walls, basement floors, foundations, and other openings.
- Exposure to radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States, after smoking.

### Short-Term Radon Test Kits (3-7 days in length)

- Testing for radon for the first time
- You have done a short-term measurement before that reported elevated levels and you need to conduct a second verification test
- A mitigation system was recently installed in your home, and you need to do a follow-up test to confirm your radon levels are low.
- Your home already has a mitigation system, and you want to verify your radon levels are low and confirm the mitigation system is working properly
- Suggestions: one kit per foundation type; Test every 2 years even if you have a mitigation system; Test after major renovations
- **Place test kit in lowest live-able area in home**

### Long-Term Radon Test Kits

- You have done a short-term measurement before that reported low or elevated levels and you would like to conduct a second test for verification
- You would like to know what your radon level is as an average over a longer period.
- **Place test kit in lowest live-able area in home**

**For additional information from IHHS on radon visit**

<https://hhs.iowa.gov/radiological-health/radon>

**Another resource to learn more about radon testing and mitigation in Iowa is the Iowa Cancer Consortium's website [canceriowa.org/radon/](https://canceriowa.org/radon/)**

## Engage American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN)

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The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network aims to lessen the cancer burden by advocating for evidence-based public policies. ACS CAN engages volunteers across the country to influence policymakers at every level of government, to make cancer a top priority.

### ACS CAN helps to raise awareness for

- Access to Healthcare
- Cancer Prevention
- Cancer Research Funding
- Quality of Life
- Tobacco Control

You can get involved with ACS CAN by volunteering, donating, fundraising, or sharing your own cancer story. **For more information visit the ACS CAN website**

<https://www.fightcancer.org/>

### ASC CAN Iowa

- Advocates for policies and investments to reduce the burden of cancer in Iowa and across the Nation.
- Advocates for leaders take real steps toward decreasing the number of people suffering and dying from cancer.

For information about what ACS CAN is doing in Iowa, visit the ACS CAN Iowa website at <https://www.fightcancer.org/states/iowa>

## **Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)**

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The cancer risk factor and prevention data come from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS).

The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is a key resource for understanding the health of people in the United States. It is the nation's leading system of health-related telephone surveys, collecting data about health habits, long-term health issues, and the use of preventive services for U.S. residents aged 18 and up. BRFSS collaborates with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to conduct and review the survey. Each year, the BRFSS completes more than 400,000 adult interviews, making it the largest ongoing health survey system in the world.

Since 2011, adult students living in college housing have been included as eligible respondents. College housing is defined as a dormitory, graduate student or visiting faculty housing, or other housing arrangement provided by a college or university.

Each state has a BRFSS coordinator who manages the annual survey data collection. The data is gathered through phone surveys. Once collected, data is sent to the CDC where it is prepared and analyzed to calculate national and state-level statistics. Researchers and others use this data to study health behaviors and trends.

Sources:

[https://www.cdc.gov/brfss/data\\_documentation/pdf/UserguideJune2013.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/brfss/data_documentation/pdf/UserguideJune2013.pdf)

[https://www.cdc.gov/brfss/questionnaires/pdf-ques/2016\\_brfss\\_questionnaire\\_final.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/brfss/questionnaires/pdf-ques/2016_brfss_questionnaire_final.pdf)

<https://www.cdc.gov/brfss/about/index.htm>

[https://www.cdc.gov/brfss/annual\\_data/2023/pdf/Overview\\_2023-508.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/brfss/annual_data/2023/pdf/Overview_2023-508.pdf)

**For more information on BRFSS in Iowa, visit <https://hhs.iowa.gov/performance-and-reports/brfss>**

## The Community Guide

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The Community Guide provides recommendations and implementation resources for protecting and improving population health. Their cancer-specific resources include Community Preventive Services Task Force findings, implementation resources, presentations, and promotional materials.

For more information and access to these resources, visit:

<https://thecommunityguide.org/topics/cancer.html>

## Evidence-Based Cancer Control Programs

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The Evidence-Based Cancer Control Programs website is a searchable database of evidence-based cancer control programs. This site is designed to provide program planners and public health practitioners easy access to program materials.

Program areas include:

- Cancer Screening
- Diet/Nutrition Services
- HPV Vaccination
- Cancer prevention
- Survivorship

And more!

To search the database visit: <https://ebccp.cancercontrol.cancer.gov>

## **The George Washington University (GW) Cancer Center Training & Technical Assistance Program (TAP): Cancer Awareness Toolkits**

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The GW Cancer Center TAP provides toolkits, data, training, and other resources to help public health practitioners improve their approach to cancer control.

Cancer-specific topics include:

- Primary prevention
- Early detection and screening
- Survivorship
- Communication
- Treatment

To access these resources, visit: <https://cancercontroltap.org/resources>

## **Rural Health Information Hub: Economic Impact Analysis Tool**

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Rural Health Information Hub: Economic Impact Analysis Tool

The Economic Impact Analysis (EIA) tool can be used by any community health organization seeking to understand how its activities impact its state. For example, the tool can show how a community health project's spending benefits your state, or help you understand the impacts of grant funding in your community.

This resource provides instructions on how to use the EIA tool, including an example scenario, user guide, and video overview.

For more information about this tool visit: <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/econtool>

## Triage Cancer: State Laws

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Triage Cancer provides free education on the legal and practical issues that occur after a cancer diagnosis. This link provides information on laws and protections specific to your state.

State laws include:

- Health Insurance Options & Coverage
- Medicare
- Medicaid
- Work and Cancer
- Disability Insurance
- Access to Medical Records
- Estate Planning and Medical Decision-Making

And more.

For more information visit: <https://triagecancer.org/state-laws>

## **Center for Energy & Environmental Education's (CEEE) Environmental Health Program**

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The Environmental Health Program at the CEEE highlights upstream solutions that protect children, climate, and health, as well as raises awareness about the link between harmful chemicals and their impacts to both people and climate. Our initiatives focus on community practices and state strategies that significantly reduce Iowa's exposure to common hazardous pollutants.

### Initiatives:

- Good Neighbor Iowa
  - Aims to reduce unnecessary urban pesticide use and to transform lawn culture to encourage appreciation of diverse lawns to protect child health, water quality, pets, pollinators, and biodiversity.
  - State-wide public health initiative that works with school districts, childcare centers, city parks, and homeowners to reduce harmful exposures in the community
- Climate, Toxics, and Health
  - An actionable, educational initiative dedicated to empowering individuals with knowledge about the intersection of toxic chemicals, fossil fuels, and human health
- Farming for Public Health
  - A statewide initiative to build more understanding among healthcare providers and public health professionals about agricultural strategies that solve for a pattern of soil health, clean water, biodiversity, conservation, healthy food, rural economic vitality – collectively, public health.

For more information and resources on these initiatives, and how to reduce environmental exposures that may contribute to cancer development, visit <https://ceee.uni.edu/environmental-health-program> or contact Audrey Tran Lam at [uni-ceee@uni.edu](mailto:uni-ceee@uni.edu)