

May 2025 Health Officer's Update

Hello everyone- as we step into the warmer months, remember the importance of taking care of all aspects of our health and wellbeing. We are sure to be outside more from May, and I encourage all Montgomery residents to increase their cardiovascular activity by taking advantage of the [526 parks](#) and [22 recreational centers](#) across the County! May is a prime time to educate ourselves more about the dangers of prolonged sun exposure as it is [Skin Cancer Awareness Month](#) and bring attention to the risk of extreme heat as May 30th is [National Heat Awareness Day](#). So, as you partake in outdoor activities, do so with care, use your sunblock, wear good supportive shoes, be mindful of sun exposure and have a bottle of water on hand.



Photo by Liliana Drew: <https://www.pexels.com/photo/woman-and-a-girl-sitting-on-wooden-bench-with-water-bottles-8487885/>

This is a National Public Health Week (NPHW) Event

Getting Ahead of the Call: Driving Change and Building Resilience

We are thrilled to build upon the meaningful collaboration between the Maryland Public Health Association (MDPHA) and Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service (MCFRS) to host another special Fire Department Training as part of our ongoing efforts to celebrate National Public Health Week. The strong partnership between MDPHA and MCFRS aligns with MDPHA's vision of championing health equity for Marylanders through advocacy and community collaborations.

We invite you to attend this engaging webinar, which will celebrate this enduring partnership and explore new opportunities to work together for a healthier, safer future.

Speakers

Thursday, April 10, 2025
10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

This is a free virtual event.
[Register here](#)

Speakers:

- Assistant Chief Ben Kauffman
- Dr. Roger Stone, MD, Medical Director
- Amita Graves, MBA, MHA, NRP, Sales Program Manager
- Dr. Rebecca Lee, Staff Psychologist

For more information contact: info@mdpha.org

National Public Health Week: It Starts Here
April 7-13, 2025

MDPHA

In my April report, I highlighted the celebration of National Public Health Week (April 7-13). Our County's theme was "Success in Community. It Starts Here," and we hosted several activities during the week, including the **Dr. Ulder J. Tillman National Public Health Symposium**, which was well received. During this time, we also co-hosted a few events with the Maryland Public Health Association (**MdPHA**) and look forward to continued partnership with them. On April 12th, I hosted a Walk with a Doc event and, while overcast, we had a good turnout and look forward to supporting upcoming [Walk with A Doc events in Potomac](#). I want to commend the Babies



Photo provided by Dr. Anjali Srivastava MD, MBA, NPH

Born Healthy team for hosting a spectacular [Right From the Start](#) event on April 12th as we recognized [Black Maternal Health Week \(April 11th-17th\)](#), to bring attention to the need for improved maternal care, better access to healthcare, and greater support for Black maternal health.

May is **Teen Pregnancy Prevention Awareness Month**, and our Area Health Centers support adolescent pregnancy care through the [Montgomery Perinatal Program \(MPP\)](#). MPP ensures prenatal care, newborn pediatric care, well-child visits and access to community resources. It also helps teens continue their education while parenting and integrates home-based case management with school-based support from School Health Nurses, working to assist teen parents. Maternal Child Health Programs will continue offering comprehensive support to empower teens in achieving healthier futures while navigating parenthood.

[Mental Health Awareness Month](#), reminding us of the importance of prioritizing our emotional wellness and reducing the stigma towards mental health disorders is also during this time. As a community, we should work to eliminate stigma, encourage open conversations, and support those facing mental health challenges. Coincidentally, [Asian American Pacific Islander \(AAPI\) Heritage Month](#) is also celebrated in May. Mental health is often stigmatized within the AAPI community and these challenges can make it harder for individuals to seek the support they need. Alarming, [among women aged 15-24, Asian](#)

Americans have the highest suicide mortality rates across all racial and ethnic groups. Increasing awareness and access to mental health resources is essential to breaking this cycle. It is also Hepatitis Awareness Month and Hepatitis B disproportionately affects Asian Americans, accounting for over half of chronic Hepatitis B cases in the United States despite making up only 5% of the population. Approximately 1 in 12 Asian Americans is living with Hepatitis B, underscoring the need for culturally competent education, testing, and treatment within the community. Key things our Asian American Health Initiative in Montgomery County support to address health disparities that affect its members.

During this month, I also want to honor essential figures and relationships that strengthen our Montgomery County community. National Teacher Appreciation Day (May 6th) and Week (May 5th - May 9th) celebrate



Photo by Agung Pandit Wiguna:
<https://www.pexels.com/photo/a-man-and-a-woman-walking/>
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educators whose unwavering dedication shapes the future through their impact. Mother's Day is **May 11th** and reminds us to cherish the sacrifices and love of mothers. International Nurses Day follows, highlighting the compassion and care of nurses who tirelessly safeguard our health and well-being. Finally, International Day of Families- May 15th underscores the importance of familial connections- extended or immediate, large or small, traditional or nontraditional, tied by blood or chosen bonds, we celebrate the incredible diversity of families in our County!

Other May Observations:

- Older Americans Month: aims to celebrates the contributions of older adults and challenges stereotypes about aging while promoting independence and healthy aging.
- Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Month: - highlights efforts to improve treatments, raise awareness, and support research for those living with cystic fibrosis.
- **National Stroke Awareness Month & Hypertension Awareness Month**: Bring attention to stroke prevention, warning signs, and the connection to hypertension, encouraging lifestyle changes & regular health screenings.
- Celiac Awareness Month: focuses on educating the public about celiac disease, advocating for proper diagnosis, and supporting those who must follow a gluten-free diet.
- Lupus Awareness Month: raises awareness about this chronic autoimmune disease, while supporting patients and advancing research to improve treatments and find a cure.
- Menstrual Hygiene Day (May 28th): promotes awareness of menstrual health and hygiene, aiming to break taboos, improve education, and ensure access to menstrual products for all.

To end on an encouraging note, I am happy to share that our COVID-19 hospitalization rates are decreasing considerably, and across all Montgomery County hospitals, it is the lowest count since the beginning of the pandemic! Thank you for all you do for the continued well-being of our communities to make Montgomery County community a healthier, happier place to live, work, and play!

Kisha N. Davis, MD, MPH, FAAFP