



## Jefferson County PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

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### **The Jefferson County Public Health Service Observes National Public Health Week Theme: "Public Health is ROI. Save Lives, Save Money"**

*Watertown, NY April 1, 2013* - The Jefferson County Public Health Service (JCPHS) is encouraging Jefferson County residents to work together to make small changes to their lives in order to help prevent chronic diseases and communicable diseases. Every year in the United States, seven out of 10 deaths are due to preventable chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease. In fact, chronic diseases account for a whopping 75 percent of national health care spending, yet only 3 percent of our health care dollars go toward prevention.

The JCPHS hopes you will learn about the work of public health and its significant return on investment (ROI). From April 1-7, the American Public Health Association recognizes National Public Health Week, an opportunity to empower our families, friends, neighbors and, perhaps most importantly, ourselves to live healthier lives. The 2013 theme is "Public Health is ROI: Save Lives, Save Money." The theme was developed to highlight the value of prevention and the importance of well-supported public health systems in preventing disease, saving lives and curbing health care spending.

Poor health comes at a cost to all of us. Preventing diseases before they start is critical to helping people live longer, healthier lives, while managing health-related costs. Many small preventive steps can add up to make a big difference in transforming a health care system focused on treatment to one that equally values prevention. Research shows that supporting public health approaches to better health does reap life-saving returns. Some examples are:

- Up to \$11.80 in benefits can be gained for every \$1 invested in bicycling and walking opportunities. States with the highest levels of biking and walking also tend to have the lowest levels of costly chronic disease, such as high blood pressure, obesity and diabetes.
- Routine childhood immunizations save \$9.9 million in direct health care costs, save 33,000 lives and prevent 14 million cases of disease.
- Every \$1 invested in the nation's poison center system saves \$13.39 in medical costs and lost productivity, saving a total of more than \$1.8 billion every year. Poison centers receive about 4 million calls every year, 2.4 million of which are about poison exposures.
- Citing the protective health benefits of breastfeeding, research finds that a minimum of \$3.6 billion could be saved if more women began and continued to breastfeed their newborns through 6 months of age.
- Expanding the diagnosis and treatment of depression has an ROI of \$7 for every \$1 invested. Also, substance abuse treatment has an ROI of \$4-\$7 for every \$1 invested.

Good health does not happen by chance. Good health is shaped and nurtured — it is connected to the environments in which we live, work and play; it is tied to the resources available in our communities; and research shows that it's undoubtedly linked to a person's access to health care. These are the intersections where you find public health and prevention.

Public health and prevention are critical pieces in creating a healthier nation. Join us in working to make Jefferson County a healthier place to live, work and play. Take a moment and make just one positive change a day that will help you live a healthier life. These seemingly small actions can have a big impact when they are spread throughout an entire family, community and nation.

Help celebrate National Public Health Week and see what small changes you can make to live a healthier life by visiting [www.jcphs.org](http://www.jcphs.org). Also, throughout the week, join us on Facebook for the tip of the day.

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