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## Oneida County ranks 47th in the state for overall health

Published 11/20/2008 - 10:45 a.m. CST

According to a report on the health of counties released by the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, Oneida County ranked 47th in the state.

The 2008 Wisconsin County Health Rankings summarize the current health of the county using different information sources, including data on premature deaths and people's reports about their health.

"Research has shown that the health of a community is determined by a number of factors, including health care access and quality, health behaviors, social and economic factors, and the physical environment," said Dr. Patrick Remington, Director, Population Health Institute.

Oneida County has one of the highest ranks in the state for its physical environment and also ranks in the top half of all counties for its health care, scoring well for the percent of women who receive regular mammograms (3rd) and for the quality of diabetic care (12th).

On the other hand, Oneida does not compare well with other counties in the percentage of those who do not receive needed health care (61st) and do not have regular visits to the dentist (50th).

Oneida ranks in the middle of Wisconsin's counties in health behaviors but faces particular challenges in rates of smoking (60th) and off-road motor vehicle crashes that lead to emergency room visits (61st).

Oneida County fares worse in the social and economic factors that influence health. For example, Oneida County has high rates of high school noncompletion and unemployment, ranking 67th and 57th, respectively. The county ranks 63rd for its high rate of divorce.

The good news about the county is its physical environment. It ranks 30th for air quality, 21st for a low level of nitrates in the water, 11th for low exposure to lead in the household and 12th for risk of radon exposure.

Perhaps the biggest surprise is the county's relatively high ranking (21st) for the category of binge drinking: 51 counties in the state do worse.

"Our community's health plan, Healthy People Healthy Oneida County, focuses on four ways to improve upon the health of Oneida County residents," said Linda Conlon, director of the Oneida County Health Department. "By working together we can make our community a healthier and safer place to live."

Oneida County is focusing on a number of health priorities that have been identified by community members. The four health priorities identified by the coalition is to increase access to health care, improve nutrition and increase physical activity; support mental health and prevent mental disorders and reduce alcohol and tobacco use in the community.

Conlon said that as a state, Wisconsin compares poorly with Minnesota. While Minnesota ranks second in the nation in health, Wisconsin has been falling in rank in recent years. "Our state spends only about \$7 per person for public health and ranks 47th in the nation in public health spending. Minnesota spends seven times that amount," Conlon said.

To learn more about the Oneida Community Health Plan, visit [www.co.Oneida.wi.us](http://www.co.Oneida.wi.us) or call the Health Department at 715 369-6115. For more information or to view the 2008 Wisconsin County Health Rankings, [click here](#).