COBB & DOUGLAS PUBLIC HEALTH
Healthier lives. Healthier community.

PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE

September 25, 2025

Protect Yourself from the Flu and Other Seasonal Respiratory Viruses

The 2025-26 respiratory disease season (which includes COVID-19, influenza, and RSV) starts next week (September 28). CDC expects the upcoming U.S. fall and winter respiratory disease season will likely have a similar combined number of peak hospitalizations due to COVID-19, influenza, and RSV compared to last season. CDC's outlook is based on historical trends, expert opinion, and scenario modeling results.

The 2024-25 flu season was classified as "high-severity" season, with 168 flu-confirmed deaths in Georgia. For more information on Georgia flu surveillance, visit flu reports, For

information on Georgia COVID surveillance, visit COVID reports. Flu, COVID and RSV are not reportable on an individual case level; however, all outbreaks and deaths are reportable to public health authorities.

Protect yourself and your loved ones by:

- Preventing the spread of respiratory viruses when you're sick. When you are sick with respiratory virus symptoms, stay home and away from others! You can go back to your normal activities when, for at least 24 hours, both are true:
    - Your symptoms are getting better overall, and
    - You have not had a fever (and are not using fever-reducing medication).

For vaccination information, visit the CDPH website or make an appointment.

CDPH Now Offering Septic Repair Service Grants for Homeowners in Cobb

This project, designed for low-income Cobb residents, aims to support regular septic tank maintenance, or repair if needed, thereby preventing system failures, protecting water quality, and ensuring a cleaner, healthier environment for all. *Please note:* low-income is defined as a household income at or below 200% of the current year's Federal Poverty Level as adjusted for the specified household size. For example, a qualifying income for a household of four in 2025 would be $64,300 or less.

Proper septic tank maintenance is essential for the efficient operation of septic systems and managing household wastewater in many areas. Without regular pumping (recommended every 3-5 years), septic tanks can overflow, leading to costly repairs and potential environmental hazards.

Additionally, many low-income homeowners may be having septic system malfunctions, but be unable to afford the repair. These malfunctions can create health risks for the family, their neighbors and the overall community. Income-eligible primary

Cobb homeowners who participate in the project will receive a subsidy of up to $500 (based on actual cost of service), paid directly to the certified service provider, to complete their septic tank pumping. Upon inspection, if repairs are needed, the project will subsidize up to $15,000 to repair the system or connect the home to local sewer. The project collaborates with certified local service providers to ensure that all septic tank pumping and repairs meet all state and local requirements.

Eligible services must occur between March 26, 2025 and September 30, 2026, or until grant funds are exhausted.

Homeowners interested in applying can enroll by:

- Completing the **Application Online** or by downloading and printing a **PDF** version. If you print the application, please mail it with the supporting documents to:

Cobb Environmental Health
Septic Pump/Repair Project
1650 County Services Parkway
Marietta, GA 30008

- Once household income eligibility is verified, an Environmental Health Specialist will contact the homeowner to schedule inspections and select a certified vendor.

For FAQs, visit: **Low-Income Septic System Pump/Repair Project FAQs**

For more information, please **email** or call 770-435-7815.

CDPH WIC Program Now Offering Hybrid Access to WIC Services

WIC Clients at Cobb & Douglas Public Health now have the option to access WIC services remotely via telephone in addition the the in-person option. This expands the reach to clients who may have a medically fragile child, transportation challenges or any other reason they may not be able to be present in person.

When scheduling an appointment, clients are offered the option of what type of appointment they prefer. They are told the next steps and are given the required paperwork.

Learn more by visiting the **CDPH website** or call 770-514-2389.

Need Help Applying for Government Assistance Programs or Looking for Community Resources? Get Help from a Free Benefits Specialist

Cobb & Douglas Public Health and Community Organized Relief Effort (CORE) have partnered to provide free assistance to individuals and families when applying for government assistance programs.

These trained Benefits Specialists can:

- Assist with applications for programs such as Medicaid (including PeachCare for Kids), TANF, SNAP, WIC, and CAPS.
- Connect you to local health services offered by CDPH and other community resources.
- Provide general health education and accurate information on available services.
- Offer follow-up support to ensure you receive the help you need beyond the initial application or referral.

If you are interested in receiving assistance, please complete the intake form **here**.

For more information about this service, call (943) 888-6840 or contact us by **email**.

Measles, Whooping Cough and Chicken Pox Cases on the Rise in Georgia; U.S.

As of mid-September, there have been a total of 1,491 confirmed measles cases reported in the United States, including 10 cases reported in Georgia. This is the most cases in the U.S. since measles was declared "eliminated" in 2000.

Why is this?
According to the CDC:

- Measles was **declared eliminated** in the United States in 2000. This was due to a very high percentage of people receiving the safe and effective measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine. In recent years, however:
  - **U.S. national MMR coverage among kindergarteners** has decreased and is now below the 95% coverage target—with even much lower coverage in some communities.
  - **Global measles activity** is increasing, meaning more chances of an unvaccinated person infected with measles abroad returning to the U.S.
  - Measles is not a seasonal virus. However, measles is often spread over times of high travel, for example, during spring break, summer break, or during the holidays or in situations where unvaccinated persons are in close quarters, like summer camp.

Among Georgia kindergarteners in the 2024-25 school year, the measles, mumps & rubella (MMR) vaccine coverage was 86.8%. This is a continual decline in Georgia, with the 2020-21 school year at 88.5% and 2016-17 school year at 93.3% vaccination coverage. This is well below herd immunity thresholds to help stop the spread of measles. Learn more **here**.

Measles isn't just "a little rash" - it can be a dangerous infection, especially for babies and young children. **Read more here** to learn about measles symptoms and complications.

Several other vaccine-preventable diseases are also on the rise in the U.S. and in Georgia, particularly pertussis (whooping cough) and varicella (chicken pox). For more information on symptoms, spread and prevention of these diseases, visit:

- **Pertussis**
- **Chicken Pox**

Get vaccinated for Measles, Pertussis and Chicken Pox at CDPH. Make an appointment here.

USDA Recognizes CDPH with WIC Breastfeeding Award of Excellence

Cobb & Douglas Public Health was recently honored with the 2025 WIC Breastfeeding Award of Excellence – Gold Designation, by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The award recognizes local agencies that provide exemplary breastfeeding promotion and support activities to WIC participants. The award seeks to highlight unique breastfeeding programs in WIC local agencies and provides models that strengthen breastfeeding promotion and support. This recognition is valid for four (4) years from receipt of the award.
Learn more about WIC **here** or call 770-514-2389.

POPULAR SERVICES AVAILABLE AT COBB & DOUGLAS PUBLIC HEALTH

Adult Health: Offers testing and treatment for STIs for both men and women. Birth control and women's health exams. HIV prevention medications Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) available. Call 770-514-2300 or make an appointment.

Immunizations: Offers a regular schedule of vaccinations from infancy through adulthood, including required school forms and screenings. Costs vary. Call 770-514-2300 or make an appointment.

WIC: Provides nutrition assessments, health screenings, nutrition education, breastfeeding support and eWic cards for healthy foods. Offers hybrid or in-person services. Call 770-514-2389 to make an appointment.

Travel Health Services: Provides education and vaccinations to help travelers avoid health risks during international travel. Call 770-514-2300 or make an appointment.

Safe Kids: Injury prevention program for children from birth to 18 years of age (education, car seat checks, and free or reduced-cost car seats). Call 770-850-3285 or make an appointment for a car seat inspection.

TB/Refugee Health Services: Provides TB surveillance, including case finding, case reporting, case management and contact investigations. Refugee Health Services provides domestic health screenings to newly arrived refugees. Call 770-514-2362 or make an appointment.

Family Planning & Birth Control: Services offered include: physical exams, breast and cervical cancer screening, STI screening and Intrauterine Device (IUD) and other contraceptive methods. Call 770-514-2300 or make an appointment.

Express Clinic: Offers quick and affordable services include pregnancy testing, Hep C testing, lab titers and testing for several STIs including Syphilis, Gonorrhea, Chlamydia and HIV. Call 770-514-2300 or make an appointment.

Pregnancy Assistance: Offers early prenatal care, assisting with Medicaid enrollment. Provides healthy pregnancy education and community referrals. Call 770-514-3112 or make an appointment.

Child Health: Offers well-child checkups from one month to 21 years of age to achieve and maintain optimal health. Call 770-514-2300 or make an appointment.

Children 1st: Identifies medical and developmental needs for children through assessments and home visits, and provides links to community services. Call 770-514-2759 for more information.

Babies Can't Wait/Children's Medical Services: Statewide **c**ase management programs that serve children with developmental delays (birth to 3 years of age) and special health needs (birth to 21 years of age). Call 770-514-2759 for eligibility requirements or to learn more.

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www.cobbanddouglaspublichealth.org