

# County ranked among healthiest in state

For the ninth year in a row, Putnam County ranks among the healthiest counties in New York State, according to the annual County Health Rankings compiled by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute.

Putnam is third in health factors, the influencers of health, up from last year's fourth-place ranking. In health outcomes, based on length and quality of life, this year Putnam was sixth, compared to fifth last year, from among the 62 counties in the state.

"Putnam County continues to be a great place to live and work," said County Executive MaryEllen Odell. "We are fortunate to live in a safe, beautiful environment with easy access to parks, recreation and healthy, fresh food. This helps residents maintain a good lifestyle which translates to our health."

Dr. Michael Nesheiwat, Putnam County commissioner of health, said the consistency that Putnam has demonstrated in the annual rankings speaks for itself.

"The numbers always shift a bit. Changes in data collection and the performances of other counties affect the rankings," he said. "This data reconfirms much of what we already know and points to areas we will continue to work on."

One of the identified challenges in Putnam County is its higher rate of excessive alcohol use compared to the rest of New York State. Alcohol-impaired driving deaths that had decreased from 27 percent to 22 percent last year, are back up to 28 percent. County health officials said they are continuing to work on the issue, joining with two community organizations that spearhead the efforts, the Prevention Council of Putnam and the Communities that Care (CTC) coalition.

Similarly, the numbers of sexually transmitted diseases rose, as they have around New York State and the United States. Left undiagnosed and untreated, these illnesses can have serious health consequences including infertility and in rare cases, even death. The Department of Health con-

tinues to spearhead prevention and surveillance efforts, including working closely with county

physicians to increase routine testing.

For more information on the

2019 County Health Rankings and Roadmaps, visit [www.countyhealthrankings.org](http://www.countyhealthrankings.org).



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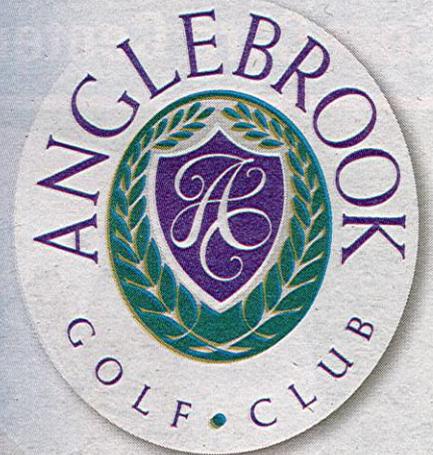
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