



# The Well Being

A Monthly Newsletter Covering Health and Wellness

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## Home Safe Home: The Carbon Monoxide Detector Law



Starting January 1<sup>st</sup> of this year, Illinois homeowners, landlords and owners of “occupied buildings with one or more sleeping areas” are required to install carbon monoxide (CO) alarms within 15 feet of any room used for sleeping.

According to the state fire marshal, the Illinois Carbon Monoxide Detector Act “applies to occupancies that use fossil fuel such as natural gas for residential heating, cooking and hot water heating, as well as occupancies connected to a residential garage.”

A CO alarm will alert you to the presence of carbon monoxide in your home before it reaches toxic levels. Early symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning include nausea, headaches and dizziness, and may be mistaken for the flu.

Here is some info to help you comply with the new law, and keep your family safe from carbon monoxide poisoning:

- A carbon monoxide alarm can be battery operated, a plug-in with battery backup or a unit that is wired into

your home’s AC power, with secondary battery back up. Follow the manufacturer’s instructions for installation and maintenance.

- A CO alarm must carry the label of a nationally recognized testing laboratory, such as Underwriters Laboratory, and must comply with the most recent safety standards.
- Install the alarm at least 15 to 30 feet away from the furnace or other source of natural gas combustion to prevent false alarms.

### Not To Be Confused With

Carbon Monoxide (CO) is “the silent killer,” an odorless, colorless, gas that can be deadly in a short period of time.

Carbon Dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) is part of the atmosphere. It’s a colorless, odorless, tasteless gas that doesn’t burn, and is normally stable, inert and nontoxic.

- Carbon Monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless gas produced by incomplete burning of propane, natural gas, kerosene, gasoline, oil, wood and charcoal. Common sources are malfunctioning gas-fired

appliances, space heaters and chimney flues, which is why you should have a qualified technician inspect appliances and chimneys regularly.

- CO alarms and smoke alarms are NOT the same. Smoke alarms respond to particles of combustion (smoke). while CO alarms are responding to the presence of gases. You need both in your home. CO alarms *can* be combined with smoke detectors, but the combined unit must comply with the rules relating to each of the devices and the alarm sounds must differentiate between smoke and carbon monoxide. Make sure every family member can identify the sound of a carbon monoxide alarm, and can tell the difference between that alarm and a smoke alarm.
- When a CO alarm sounds, you have more time to act than you do if a smoke alarm sounds. Here is what you should do: Operate the reset/silence button, call the fire department or 9-1-1, and move to a source of fresh air. Go outside or to an open window or door. Stay outside until the house has been checked out.

Source: Underwriters Laboratory and Office of Illinois State Fire Marshal

Pictured: CO Detector from Kidde

## Good Lipos, Bad Lipos

When your doctor tells you your cholesterol is high, he or she is referring to LDL, the “bad” stuff. Many people actually need to increase their HDL, the “good” kind - in addition to lowering HDL. A really good total cholesterol number would be one that is under 200, with the HDL over 40 and LDL at or below 100.

An easy way to remember which cholesterol is which is to think higher highs and lower lows. LDL or low-density lipoproteins, is the one you want to lower, and HDL, high-density lipoproteins, should be increased. That's because HDLs help remove excess fat from the blood so it won't build up on blood vessel walls. On the other hand, the role of LDLs is to move cholesterol and triglycerides around the body, through the arteries, to supply cells with those substances. The problem occurs when there are excess amounts that build up on arterial walls.

Fortunately, there are simple things you can do to get those numbers in balance without drugs.

One of the most effective ways of boosting HDL is *regular* exercise. Recent research indicates that burning around 800 to 1,200 calories each week through exercise can increase HDL up to 20%. That would translate to walking at a pace of 3 miles per hour for a total of eight to 12 hours in a week's time.

If friends and loved ones say they just don't have time to devote to exercise most days of the week, point out that

lowering cholesterol and protecting their heart can *give* them time – and a better quality of life.

Once you begin exercising regularly, start taking in higher-quality fuel to power your body. You've heard this before, but one of your best strategies is to change your oil! Drop the trans fats, reduce saturated fats and focus on the healthy fats in fish, nuts, seeds, and plants (olives, avocado, etc.). If you are worried about mercury in fish, try taking a fish oil supplement.

Again, friends and family may say it's too hard to make big dietary changes and give up convenient, pre-packaged foods and snacks. But nothing is harder than watching someone you love struggle with serious illness or a chronic condition.



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February is heart month.  
Do a little something for the  
hardest-working organ in  
your body.

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## Why Not Take Olive Them?

It's heart healthy, flavorful and versatile. Olive oil is fast becoming a favorite for cooking, marinating and dressing greens and vegetables. All olive oils are not the same, however. Here's a guide to the main varieties.



### Extra Virgin

This oil is made from full-flavored ripe olives that are pressed immediately after harvest. It has the most full-bodied taste and aroma of the olive oil varieties. Use it in salads and vegetable dishes, for basting meats and seafood, as a dip for bread or for seasoning soups, marinades and sauces.

### Olive Oil (Pure)

This type is more golden than extra virgin. It has a mild flavor so you can use it as an all-purpose cooking - for

sautéing and stir-frying, as well as basting grilled or oven-roasted meats, poultry and seafood. Add it to sauces, marinades and dressings as a flavor enhancer.

### Extra Light Olive Oil

Extra light olive oil is the mildest flavored variety with “just a hint” of olive flavor. You can use it for baking and for high-heat cooking methods, because “it remains extremely stable and won't burn.”

Note that all types of olive oil have the same nutrient profile and the same number of calories. (Light refers to flavor, not caloric content.)

Source: The North American Olive Oil Association



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