

# UW-Madison: UW Carbone Cancer Center encourages radon testing

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MADISON, Wis. – As the Wisconsin Department of Health Services recently declared January Radon Action Month for Wisconsin, experts at UW Carbone Cancer Center also encourage the community to regularly test for radon in their homes.

According to the American Cancer Society, radon exposure is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States. While cigarette smoking is by far the greatest risk to developing lung cancer, exposure to high levels of radon is still connected to lung cancer according to Dr. Toby Campbell, medical oncologist, UW Carbone Cancer Center.

“When we find ways to prevent cancer, we jump at those chances,” Campbell said. “Having your home tested for radon is an easy way to prevent cancer which is why I encourage the people of Wisconsin to ensure radon levels in their home are low.”

According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, radon is responsible for about 21,000 lung cancer deaths every year.

Radon is a colorless, odorless, radioactive gas that forms naturally from the decay of radioactive elements, such as uranium, that is found in soil and rock. Radon can move into the air and water, which can lead to dangerously high levels indoors, per the ACS.

Do-it-yourself radon detection kits can be ordered through the mail or bought in home supply stores to then be used and mailed to a lab for analysis, according to the ACS. DHS also notes there are more than 100 radon mitigation contractors in Wisconsin certified to install radon mitigation systems if elevated

radon levels are found.

“Radon exposure varies by a person’s home, job and environment, but the more exposure you have the more you increase your risk of lung cancer,” Campbell said. “And you only know if you’re exposed with a test which is why we like to eliminate that risk wherever possible.”

Campbell is available for interviews on this topic today.