

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Give Your Heart Some Love

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) wants you to “Give your heart some love” during American Heart Month through regular health screenings. Now more than ever, with obesity and diabetes on the rise in the US, it is time to take note of your health status and know your risk factors for heart disease.

SWNPHD recommends heart health screenings like cholesterol checks should be done every 5 years starting from the age of 30 years old. The American Diabetes Association recommends that adults start annual glucose screening at age 45. Those who are overweight or obese should start screening for Type 2 diabetes at age 40 and repeat the screening every three years if the results are normal. Your doctor can help you decide which health screenings to get and how often, based on your individual risk factors.

Making healthy choices and managing any medical conditions you may have can help you gain control of your health risks. The following facts can help reduce your risk for heart disease.

- Blood Pressure – Should be less than 120 systolic and 80 diastolic. High blood pressure can be present for years without showing any symptoms. High blood pressure can be lowered by exercising regularly, eating a balanced diet that is low in sodium, cutting back on caffeine, and trying to reduce stress.
- Cholesterol – Should be an LDL level below 130 mg/dL. High cholesterol has no symptoms. When you have high cholesterol, you may develop fatty deposits in your blood vessels. A healthy diet, regular exercise and medications can reduce high cholesterol.

If you are at higher risk of heart disease, it is important to know the signs of a heart attack. SWNPHD reminds women that the warning signs of a heart attack may be different for them. The most common heart attack symptom is chest pain (angina) or discomfort for both men and women. But women are somewhat more likely than men to experience some of the other common symptoms, particularly shortness of breath, nausea, and neck or jaw pain.

Through a grant with the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, SWNPHD works with women through a program called Health Hub. Health Coaches within this program offer assistance to women to improve their cardiovascular health, educate them on health screenings, and monitor their progress toward healthy living.

SWNPHD is located at 404 West 10th St (1 block north of Arby’s) in McCook and can be reached by calling 308-345-4223. The website www.swhealth.ne.gov contains many resources and additional information helpful to prevent disease, promote and protect health. You can also follow SWNPHD on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. SWNPHD serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins, and Red Willow counties.

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