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From the Knox County Health Department

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**For more information, contact
Pam Palm, 399-8002**

Free diabetic screenings, educational program set for March 27

Diabetes is a serious disease that strikes nearly 26 million children and adults in the United States, and a quarter of them—7 million—do not even know they have it. On March 27, as part of Alert! Day, sponsored by the American Diabetes Association, Knox County residents will have the opportunity to be tested for diabetes. And it's free.

Next Tuesday (March 27) from 8:30 a.m. to noon, the Knox County Health Department is partnering with area fire departments to offer free diabetic screenings to local residents. Then in the afternoon, there will be a free informational program on diabetes in the health department conference room beginning at 12:30 p.m.



“With the growing epidemic of obesity, it is important for everyone to get checked for diabetes,” said Health Commissioner Julie Miller. One in three American adults, have pre diabetes, which puts them at high risk for developing type 2 diabetes. “Once you are diagnosed as a diabetic, it is with you for life. There is no going back,” said Miler. For many people, diagnosis often comes 7 to 10 years after the onset of the disease, after disabling and even deadly complications have had time to develop. “Therefore, it’s important to get diagnosed early to delay or prevent some of its complications from diabetes including heart disease, blindness, kidney disease, and amputation.”

Participating fire departments offering the free diabetic screenings include College Township Fire Department, 102 E. Brooklyn St., Gambier; both stations with Eastern Knox County Joint Fire District, 7 W. Walnut St. in Danville and 23059 Coshocton Rd. in Howard; Fredericktown Fire & EMS, 139 Columbus Rd., Fredericktown; and the Central Ohio Joint Fire District, 5138 Columbus Rd., Centerburg. The Mount Vernon Fire Department will provide screenings from a squad unit parked at the health department, 11660 Upper Gilchrist Rd.

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For the most accurate results, it is recommended that anyone participating in the diabetes screenings, fast for 8-10 hours prior to the screening. If an individual is unable to fast, the screening can still be done, but the results will not be as accurate.

The afternoon program at the health department will feature Dr. Tracy Schermer and Florence Schermer a registered dietitian and certified diabetic educator, who will discuss what the screening numbers mean and how to prevent diabetes for those who are pre diabetic. Chad Wilcox, a diabetic and also executive sous chef with AVI food service will demonstrate how to prepare diabetic versions of Mandarin chicken salad and homemade pickles. The last half of the program will feature new advances in the field of diabetic care including insulin pump therapy and continuous glucose monitoring.

“Join us on Tuesday to get tested, learn about eating healthier and how to avoid diabetes,” said Miller. “It could be a life changing experience.”

The screenings will be conducted on a first-come, first-served basis. Pre-registration is not necessary for the afternoon program. For more information, call 399-8002.