

News Release

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Health Center offers discounted heart health screenings

While February is traditionally the month for heart-shaped candies and valentine cards, the Knox County Community Health Center recognizes all things heart-related during American Heart Month with an emphasis on how patients can take better care of their hearts. This annual recognition began in 1963 to encourage Americans to join the battle against heart disease.

As part of American Heart Month, the Community Health Center is offering a \$20 discounted screening package, which includes: blood pressure, BMI, glucose check, and a full lipid panel. These screenings are available at the Health Center's Mount Vernon and Danville locations for a limited time and by appointment only. For more information or to make an appointment, call the Community Health Center at 740-399-8008.

“Coronary artery disease (CAD), also known as coronary heart disease, is the most common form of heart disease in Knox County,” said Health Center Nurse Practitioner Jackie Neighbarger. “It kills more Americans annually than the next seven leading causes of death COMBINED!”

Data collected by Knox Public Health in 2019 shows that heart related issues were the leading cause of death in residents, with 46 percent of county deaths attributed to a heart-related cause. Statistically, more women die of heart disease than men, yet heart disease and related risk factors or conditions are often missed in women. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), one in every five female deaths in the United States is related to heart disease. “Believe it or not, women can show signs of CAD as young as 20 years old,” said Neighbarger.

“CAD is caused by plaque buildup on the walls of the arteries that supply blood to the heart, and other parts of the body, which is what ultimately leads to a heart attack or stroke,” Neighbarger said.

Symptoms of coronary artery disease, including heart attack, for example, are often different in women than their male counterparts. These symptoms vary in each individual and it is estimated that half of all United States citizens have at least one risk factor for heart disease.

Heart disease is preventable for many people, and staying on top of wellness exams and screening numbers is key to prevention. To get started improving your heart health, Neighbarger suggests the following: Get regular physical activity; maintain a healthy weight; get regular heart health screenings (blood pressure and glucose checks); and see your primary care provider on a regular basis.

“All of these tips help lower your blood pressure to maintain optimal blood pressure and blood sugar levels,” said Neighbarger. Participating in regular physical activity and living a healthy lifestyle can help you maintain a healthy weight thus lowering and maintaining optimal blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar levels.

“Establishing a primary care provider and seeing them regularly - even for a well visit - can make a huge positive impact on your health,” said Neighbarger. “A healthcare provider can provide you with the proper tools, advice, and medical management to keep your whole body strong, healthy, and disease-free,”

So be a heart-healthy Valentine this year and visit the Health Center for discounted screenings and an annual wellness exam.

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