



Saint Anthony's Offers Cholesterol & Glucose Screenings

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As part of National Nutrition Month, Saint Anthony's Health Center is offering free nutritional handouts during the monthly cholesterol and glucose screenings on Tuesday, March 26 in the lobby of Saint Anthony's Health Center at #1 Saint Anthony's Way, and Thursday, March 28 in the lobby of Saint Clare's Hospital, 915 East Fifth Street. Screening times each day: 12:30 to 2 p.m.

The fee for the non-fasting screening is \$10 per person. Free blood pressures screenings will also be available. Nutritional information includes healthy recipes, along with tips for smart snacking and eating on the run from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Americans are making progress in their cholesterol health. Compared to previous decades, fewer adults have high cholesterol. The proportion of the population ages 20-74 with high cholesterol has dropped by half, from 33% in 1960-1962 to 16.3% in 2003-2006.

"Knowing the facts about cholesterol can reduce your risk for a heart attack or stroke," says Tammy Stilwell, RN, Community Outreach Coordinator for Saint Anthony's. "But understanding what cholesterol is and how it affects your health are only the beginning."

High cholesterol is one of the major controllable risk factors for coronary heart disease, heart attack and stroke, she says. "As your blood cholesterol rises, so does your risk of coronary heart disease. If you have other risk factors (such as high blood pressure or diabetes) as well as high cholesterol, this risk increases even more," notes Stilwell. The more risk factors a person has, the greater the chance of developing coronary heart disease.

The CDC notes:

- Approximately one in every six adults — 16.3% of the U.S. adult population — has high total cholesterol. The level defined as high total cholesterol is 240 mg/dL and above.
- People with high total cholesterol have approximately twice the risk of heart disease as people with optimal levels. A desirable level is lower than 200 mg/dL.
- For adult Americans, the average level is about 200 mg/dL, which is borderline high risk.
- More women than men have high cholesterol in the United States

According to the American Heart Association, individuals can keep their cholesterol levels under control by:

- schedule a screening
- eat foods low in cholesterol and saturated fat
- maintain a healthy weight
- exercise regularly
- follow your healthcare professional's advice

The fingerstick screening at Saint Anthony's includes glucose, total and HDL cholesterol levels as well as the total/HDL ratio. Information on early heart attack care is reviewed.

For more information on the cholesterol screening or information about early heart attack care, please call 618-465-2264.