

Alton Memorial Hospital Hosts 19th Annual Diabetes Fair

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ALTON - Close to 160 people visited the 19th Annual Alton Memorial Hospital Diabetes Fair, which included informational tables, health screenings, a fantastic presentation by endocrinologist Dr. Wael Girgis, and a free boxed lunch from Firehouse Subs of Alton. Alton Memorial's next big event will be the 22nd annual Heart Fair on Saturday, Feb. 1.

Dr. Girgis gave helpful advice for living with and managing diabetes during his presentation, which was titled “Do Not Sugar Coat It.”

“The most important words in diabetes management are stress reduction, physical activity and healthy eating, which all help you to lose weight,” Dr. Girgis said. “Weight loss, in turn, helps your insulin to work better, and when insulin works better, your insulin needs go down, which helps you to lose even more weight.”

Girgis told the audience that to lower your morning blood sugar, try to cut the fat out of your diet, eat nothing after dinner, reduce insulin resistance through exercise and weight loss, and time your medications correctly.”

Lisa James, RN, is the certified diabetes educator at AMH.

“When people are newly diagnosed with diabetes, they always want to know what they can eat,” James said. “But diabetes is a complex disease and it is about food but it’s also about a lot of other things like exercise, taking your medication, monitoring blood sugar, stress levels, these are all things that have an impact.

“The Diabetes Fair is our way of supporting the community because we want to give people an opportunity to keep track of their health. Some people can’t afford to see a physician or don’t see one often enough and this is a way for them to keep up on what’s going on.”