



News Release

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Platte County Lifestyle Coalition urges community members to take better care of their hearts during February's American Heart Month

For Immediate Release

(COLUMBUS, Neb.) – The Platte County Lifestyle Coalition is a local coalition dedicated to promoting healthy lifestyles. Its messages focus on the benefits of physical activity and healthy nutrition.

This month, the coalition is educating the public on how they can take better care of their hearts since February is American Heart Month.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. A few risk factors for heart disease, such as age and family history, are out of people's control. However, several of the risk factors are lifestyle-related like smoking, inactivity, stress, diabetes, obesity, high blood pressure, elevated triglycerides and elevated LDL cholesterol.

Joan Plummer, registered dietician at Columbus Community Hospital offered the following advice on how people can adapt healthier lifestyles to reduce their risk:

- If you smoke, quit smoking. For free help and support to quit smoking, you can call the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Smoking Quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669).
- If you get little physical activity, find ways to move more. Work up gradually to at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity aerobic exercise each week.
- If you are overweight, try to lose at least 5-7% of your body weight.
- If you have diabetes or pre-diabetes, get your blood sugars into the recommended range.
- Control your stress. Stress can contribute to high blood pressure and other heart disease risk factors.
- If you have high blood pressure, work to keep your blood pressure at 140/90 or less. Weight loss, activity and reducing your sodium intake may all help control your blood pressure.
- Choose a heart healthy eating plan to control your weight, cholesterol, blood pressure and blood sugars. Eat more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, and low-fat dairy and protein foods. Limit fast foods, processed foods and foods high in saturated fat, trans fat, sugar and salt. Also, try to limit or avoid alcohol.

To learn more about the PCLC or how people can become involved, contact Gene Vis, Platte County Lifestyle Coalition coordinator, at 402-562-4480 or edvis@columbushosp.org.

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