



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 5, 2018

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Doug Bolnick, Public Information Officer, 636-949-7408

NEW HEALTH SERVICES' SCREENINGS AIM TO PROTECT HEARTS

ST. CHARLES COUNTY, MO – Heart disease accounts for 1 in 3 deaths according to American Heart Association statistics. This ranks among the leading causes of death for Americans. The incidence of cardiovascular disease also is high in Missouri, which has led the St. Charles County Department of Public Health to introduce heart health screening programs this month.

“The goal of public health is primary prevention, focused on minimizing the occurrence of disease and promoting the health of the community,” says Department of Public Health Director Hope Woodson. “We recognize that knowing your numbers is an important part of the effort to prevent chronic disease. Because of this, our Health Services’ Clinic presents convenient, affordable ways for our citizens to obtain baseline health information, educational resources and treatment assistance.”

Located at 1650 Boones Lick Road in St. Charles, the Health Services’ Clinic now offers a variety of services to help citizens prevent chronic disease. The heart health screenings will include blood testing of cholesterol and glucose levels, blood pressure examination and Body Mass Index analysis. To introduce these services during American Heart Month, there will be no appointment required in February. These tests are conducted between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. For more information on the new services available, please call 636-949-7319 or visit www.sccmo.org/healthservices.

Heart health screening programs will monitor:

- **Cholesterol levels** – It is recommended that individuals ages 20 and older have their cholesterol levels checked every four to six years. A small sample of blood is collected during this test, which should be completed after fasting for 9-12 hours prior.
- **Blood Sugar levels** – It is recommended that individuals who are pre-diabetic or who have a BMI of 25 or higher undergo annual blood glucose testing. A small sample of blood is collected during these tests. An A1C test measures average blood glucose control for the past 2-3 months and does not require fasting, but the Fasting Glucose Test should be completed after not eating or drinking for about eight hours.
- **Blood Pressure** – It is recommended that individuals ages 18 and older undergo this screening at least every two years to provide information about their health. During the test, an inflatable cuff wraps around the arm to measure the pressure on arteries during blood flow.
- **Height/Weight analysis** – A measurement of an individual’s height and weight, Body Mass Index (BMI) can help screen risks for potential health problems. A BMI of 25.0 or higher is considered overweight and can indicate the need for other assessment by a medical professional.

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The heart health screening services through the Division of Health Services are payable by cash, check and credit card (includes a service fee) or through individual health insurance plans. Following is the fee schedule for the available tests:

<u>Test/Service</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Fasting glucose	\$5
Hemoglobin A1C	\$5
On-site glucose check	\$5
Fasting total cholesterol	\$5
Fasting triglycerides	\$5
Fasting High Density Lipoproteins (HDL)	\$5
Blood draw fee (per visit)	\$10
Blood pressure examination	No Charge
BMI analysis	No Charge

“Cholesterol build-up, high blood pressure, elevated blood sugar, and a high BMI (Body Mass Index) are recognized precursors to heart disease,” says Sara Evers, Director for the Division of Health Services. “These levels can increase for many years before any worrisome complications develop, sometimes to levels beyond that where simple changes and focused management can make significant improvements. That is why we’re introducing these screenings — to help our residents know where they stand now, before symptoms manifest.”

Despite the grim statistics and high incidences of cardiovascular ailments in our community, it is heartening to know that there are simple things you can do to prevent and manage heart disease:

1. Follow the mantra LOSE and INCREASE — **LOSE** weight, stress and cigarettes; **INCREASE** exercise, good eating habits and doctor’s care.
2. Recognize risk factors such as age, gender or family history and discuss these with your medical provider.
3. Establish a support network that will encourage and assist your efforts.

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About the St. Charles County Department of Public Health

Through the efforts of its three divisions — Environmental Health and Protection, Health Services and Humane Services — the St. Charles County Department of Public Health provides a wide range of services that enhance the well-being of the community. To learn how the department assists this region or to find out about volunteer opportunities with any of the divisions, visit www.sccmo.org/PublicHealth or call 636-949-7400.

The mission of St. Charles County’s Division of Health Services is to promote healthy choices and improve the health of the community. To achieve these goals, program services include an Immunization Clinic for children and adults; nutrition education and supplemental food services for women, infants and children; chronic disease screening and prevention; Communicable Disease reporting and investigation; educational programming; the collection and distribution of birth and death certificates; assistance in applications for U.S. passports; and much more. For information on programs offered and to discover ways the division assists the community, visit <http://www.sccmo.org/HealthServices> or call 636-949-7400.