

HOSPITAL HAPPENINGS

February 2010

When you think of February, many of you think of Valentine's Day. During this month we also turn our attention to National Heart Month and educating people about heart disease.

Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death in Colorado. On average one Coloradan dies every hour due to cardiovascular disease. Of all deaths in Colorado, 6,403 (22 percent) were due to heart disease; 1,907 (6.5 percent) were due to stroke, the third leading cause of death in Colorado; and 1,015 (3.5 percent) were due to heart failure, hypertensive heart disease, and diseases of the arteries, veins and circulatory systems. So, now that we scare you with all of the statistics, what should you do about it?

First of all be informed and take care of your body. Have regular checkups and follow your care providers' recommendations. Eat right and exercise. Do you know what your cholesterol level is? What is your ratio between good (HDL) and bad (LDL) cholesterol? Take advantage of the MMH Health Fair and Early Blood Draws. For an incredibly low price of \$40 you can have the chemistry profile blood test done which includes a cardiac risk profile that will give you information about your risk for heart disease. Prevention is the #1 key to reducing cardiovascular disease.

If you smoke -Quit! I know you've heard all the reasons before, so we won't go into them again. If you need help, talk with your health care provider. They can provide advice and recommend medications to help you, if needed.

Know the warning signs of a heart attack in order to recognize a medical emergency when it occurs. Cardiac arrest occurs suddenly and dramatically. When the heart goes into cardiac arrest, the heart's electrical impulses become chaotic. During cardiac arrest, people lose consciousness, stop normal breathing and lose pulse and blood pressure. If you witness any of the warning signs; pressure or crushing pain in your chest, sweating, nausea or vomiting, pain that extends from your chest into the jaw, left arm or left shoulder, feel tightness in your chest or have shortness of breath for more than a couple of seconds-call 911- immediately! Take a CPR class at the hospital for you and your loved ones!

And last, but not least, know that the staff and physicians at MMH are here to help you keep your heart healthy. Our cardiology department performs diagnostic cardiac procedures, angiograms, pacemaker implants and much more. The cath lab staff works closely with Cardiologists Dr. Brad Huhta and Dr. Paul Becker, and provides expert service with a personal and caring touch. The physicians and staff in the Emergency Department are specially trained in emergency medicine and are current in the

latest treatment for chest pain and heart attack. The Cardiac Rehabilitation staff at the Rehab Center provides an incredible and supportive environment for people recovering from heart-related illnesses and surgeries.

So, as you are prepare for Valentine's Day and hang the heart decorations around your home, take a minute and focus on your own heart. If there are changes you would like to make, or information you need, don't hesitate to contact Montrose Memorial Hospital. As your regional hospital, we'll do all we can to help!