

National Men's Health Week

June 12-18, 2017



Pike County Health Department
Home Health & Hospice

Women live 5.1 years longer on average than men. Could the male tendency to avoid doctors have anything to do with it? It's a fact that women are quicker to see a doctor when they develop symptoms. In contrast, men are more likely to ignore symptoms and hope they go away. Often, by the time a man sees a doctor, his symptoms may be severe and harder to manage or treat.

Men are 24 percent less likely than women to have visited a doctor in the past year according to recent U.S. government statistics. For an African American or Hispanic male the odds of having seen a doctor are even lower. Ditto for men ages 18 to 44.

There are health conditions that only affect men, such as prostate cancer and low testosterone. Many of the major health risks men face can be prevented and/or treated with early diagnosis provided by screening tests. Men can take steps now to reduce their risk of developing heart disease, diabetes, hypertension, certain cancers, and other long-term illnesses.

Learn about steps you can take each day to improve your health:

- **Get good sleep** – adults need between 7-9 hours of sleep. Insufficient sleep is associated with a number of chronic diseases and conditions such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, obesity, and depression. Also, poor sleep is responsible for motor vehicle and machinery-related accidents.
- **Toss out the tobacco** – it's never too late to quit. Quitting smoking has immediate and long-term benefits. It improves your health and lowers your risk of heart disease, cancer, lung disease, and other smoking-related illnesses.
- **Avoid secondhand smoke** – inhaling other people's smoke causes health problems similar to those that smokers have. Babies and kids are still growing, so the poisons in secondhand smoke hurt them more than adults.
- **Move more** – adults need at least 2 1/2 hours of moderate-intensity aerobic activity every week and muscle strengthening activities that work all major muscle groups (legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders, and arms) on two or more days a week. You don't have to do it all at once, spread your activity out during the week and break it into smaller amounts of time during the day.
- **Eat healthy** – eat a variety of fruits and vegetable every day; they have many vitamins and minerals that may help protect you from chronic diseases. Limit foods and drinks high in calories, sugar, salt, fat, and alcohol.
- **Tame stress** – sometimes stress can be good, however, it can be harmful when it is severe enough to make you feel overwhelmed and out of control. Take care of yourself – avoid drugs and alcohol, find support, connect socially – stay alive.
- **Stay on top of your game** – see your doctor or nurse for checkups. Certain diseases and conditions may not have symptoms, so checkups help identify issues early or before they can become a problem.
- **Pay attention** to signs and symptoms such as chest pain, shortness of breath, excessive thirst, and problems with urination. If you have these or symptoms of any kind, see your doctor or nurse. Don't wait!
- **Keep track of your numbers** for blood pressure, blood glucose, cholesterol, body mass index (BMI), or any others you may have. If your numbers are high or low your doctor or nurse can explain what they mean and suggest how you can get them to a healthier range. Be sure to ask him or her what tests you need and how often you need them.

The Pike County Health Department offers many screening tests at little or no charge. These include blood pressure, blood sugar, cholesterol, hemoglobin A1C, tuberculosis, STD testing, and adult immunizations. Some tests may require a doctor's order. Call the Health Department at 573-324-2111 if you are interested in taking advantage of these screening tests. We are here to help you live a healthier life and feel your best. For more information on men's health go to the CDC website at www.cdc.gov/men/nmhw.