



Fremont County Program News

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NOVEMBER 2019 : *Blood Pressure Awareness*

BP Awareness: Take Me, for Example

During the blood pressure challenge, I encourage people to check their blood pressure regularly, even if it has always been normal and you have no concerns. I would like to provide an example as to why this is so important. I have always had normal blood pressure, and, although it runs in my family, my numbers were always normal, except for an occasional higher reading. Over the past year or so, I noticed my higher readings were a little higher, and they occurred a little more often. Still, they weren't too concerning to me, after all I eat healthy (could do better), I exercise (could do better), and I teach Tai Chi (teaching is different than doing).

Over the years, I have also endured the bad habit of burning my candle at both ends, times 4. My mind usually goes in 12 different directions as I try to juggle 4 or 5 or 6 things. That is, until today.

Within the past month or so, while juggling even more things than usual with an occasional crisis thrown in for good measure, I noticed my higher readings were now 155/97. However, it was coffee, my head hurt, and I would check it again later when I got the chance. On the occasions I did check my blood pressure, although it would be lower, it wasn't low enough to be good- and that 155 / 97 seemed to be a lot more common. But, my back hurt, I had a cold, and I had too much coffee, and it would probably go down when I got home.

Last Thursday, my blood pressure started at 155 / 97. Within a few hours it was down, but still considered high. By the afternoon, it was back up to 155 / 97. That evening at home, I had consistent readings of 170/100...and with each measurement I became more nervous until finally I had no choice but to go to the emergency room to have it checked. (If you could see the timeline of stressful life situations happening alongside, it would be clear why).

There I was lying in a hospital ER bed with a cuff strapped to my arm. The doctor checked for signs of stroke, kidney damage, and heart attack. I watched as my husband paced nervously, and I talked to my kids (one at home, one away at college) reassuring them that I was doing fine, all the while wondering if I would end up going home or on a helicopter.

After learning the only thing the tests showed was my potassium was a little low, I was able to go home. Now I am on a strict regimen of taking a medication, monitoring my blood pressure, and weeding out everything from my head not necessary- oh, and putting all but 1 end of my candle out. Now, my blood pressure is leveling off and I feel much better. I am certain I would have had to begin medication and do all this stuff anyway by closely watching my blood pressure and taking it more seriously. The thing is, I didn't. I barreled through life believing I would be fine, not taking time to acknowledge the seriousness of the signs I saw in front of me. I ended up with blood pressure that could have caused some major damage and a family worried sick.

I may not have been able to prevent having high blood pressure, but I could have prevented this.

So, please monitor your blood pressure. An *occasional* higher reading is nothing to be too concerned about, but if higher is your new normal, and your highest blood pressure reading increases and becomes more common, please go see your doctor!

If you happen to take at least 15 readings now through Nov. 22, you could win won of 3 prizes drawings for the Blood Pressure Awareness Challenge! (My prize: NOT taking a helicopter ride!)

Requirements to Receive Prescription Coverage

Complete 3 Rx Program Newsletter Quizzes and Complete A Physician Statement Once Per Year.

2019 PHYSICIAN STATEMENTS ARE DUE BY DEC. 31.

These show that your prescriptions have been renewed this year. Thank you to everyone who has already turned in their statements. If you have questions, please contact me!

In October, I will be mailing letters to any participants who do not have their statements turned in.

Can Vitamin D Lower Blood Pressure?

A study by the National Institutes of Health completed a study testing whether or not Vitamin D plays a role in blood pressure: does a deficiency cause high blood pressure, or can supplements help lower blood pressure? The study concluded nothing definitive for either question, but since Vitamin D indirectly plays a role in controlling blood pressure, more research should be done.

If you have high blood pressure or other form of heart disease, or feel you are risk, it may be a good idea to complete a Vitamin D test to make sure your levels are not low. Vitamin D testing is included in the Fremont County health fair test bundle offered by Wyoming Health Fairs. Vitamin D tests are covered by county insurance one time per calendar year.

Vitamin D also plays a role in the absorption of calcium, neuromuscular health, immunity, and even inflammation reduction. So, those without concerns for heart disease may want to test their Vitamin D levels too!



Blood Pressure Awareness

DUE DEC 31

Name: _____ Dept: _____

Blood Pressure Reading	Date	Time
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

While it is normal for blood pressure to be higher than normal every once in a while, if your blood pressure is consistently in the:

- Stage 1 Category: speak with your doctor.
- Stage 2 Category: See your doctor ASAP
- Crisis Category: Seek medical attention immediately

* Blood Pressure	Normal	Elevated	Stage 1	Stage 2	Crisis
Systolic	< 120	120-129	130-139	140 >	180 >
Diastolic	< 80	< 80	80-89	90 >	120 >

* New 2017 Standards