

Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Taking Action Against Heart Disease

Don't forget that National Wear Red Day is taking place on Friday, February 7, 2014. The staff at the Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency will be wearing **RED!** By wearing red, we are increasing awareness of the dangers that heart disease poses in our country and right here in our tri-county area. A heart attack can occur without any previous symptoms or pain, so it is vital to stay physically active, eat a balanced diet and know the facts and warning signs. It is the leading cause of death for both men and women, killing about 600,000 people in the United States annually – that's one out of every four deaths. 64% of females who die suddenly of heart disease have no previous symptoms. Prevention is vital for our heart health and yet, only 4.6% of Michigan residents reported that they are engaging in all four healthy lifestyles (having a normal Body Mass Index, or BMI, consuming the recommended number of fruits and vegetables, abstaining from smoking and maintaining adequate physical activity).

The five major symptoms of a heart attack are:

- Pain or discomfort in the jaw, neck or back
- Feeling weak, light headed or faint
- Chest pain or discomfort
- Pain or discomfort in arms or shoulder

- Shortness of breath

Know the signs of a heart attack and do everything you can do to prevent it from happening to you by not smoking, maintaining a healthy body weight, monitoring your blood pressure and cholesterol levels, and exercising regularly. These things will minimize your risk of heart disease, but it is necessary to work closely with your family physician to maximize your heart health, especially if you have a history of heart disease in your family.

If you have more questions about preventing heart disease or the signs and symptoms of a heart attack and what to do, check out our website at www.bhsj.org! Be sure to wear red tomorrow and make your heart health statement!

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