

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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PHONE LINES OPEN FOR SHERIDAN HEALTH FAIR BLOOD DRAWS

The phone lines are now open and volunteers are making appointments for wellness screenings offered to the public during the 2008 Annual community blood draws offered by Sheridan Memorial Hospital. Appointments can be made by calling the Health Fair appointment line at (307) 672-1196 on weekdays from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. The blood draws will be held Aug 11-22 in the lobby at Sheridan Memorial Hospital from 6 a.m.-10:30 a.m. Monday through Friday. There will not be a Saturday blood draw this year.

"The Health Fair is a community event and the blood draw is our kick-off," says Cecile Pattison, community relations director. "We know we reach new people each year. Every year we hear testimonials of how someone was alerted to a health issue by having a blood screening."

The blood screening provides information used by healthcare providers to measure a person's overall health. There are 29 different tests which screen liver and kidney functions, muscle and bone functions, electrolytes, blood, thyroid, heart (including cholesterol and triglycerides), pancreas and gout. If a person's iron values in the wellness screening are abnormal, a Ferritin test will automatically be run. "We include this test at no additional cost," says Pattison.

According to Pattison, "The fee for the wellness screen is \$35 and the Complete Blood Count (CBC) is being offered for an additional \$15. The CBC tests for anemia, hematocrit and hemoglobin, as well as providing white and red blood cell counts."

Men also have the option of a Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) blood screening for an additional \$28. This blood test measures a specific protein that is produced by the male prostate gland. The recommended age for this screening varies from 45-50, depending on an individual's risk factors. Participants should talk with their doctor about prostate screening.

The Hemoglobin A1c, which was added to the screening selection several years ago, is recommended twice a year for diabetics and measures blood sugar control for the previous 3 months. Participants who are unsure if they need this test should check with their physician.

"A 12-hour fast is required for the wellness screening, which requires not eating or drinking anything except water for 12 hours preceding the blood draw. "We do encourage people to drink lots of water during the 12-hour fast. The fluid assists with the draw and hydrates the veins," Pattison added. People on prescribed medications should continue taking them as directed and people with diabetes should not fast.

Since appointment times fill up fast, interested individuals are encouraged to call (307) 672-1196 now to schedule their appointments. Anyone receiving a reminder card in the mail is encouraged to bring the card to their blood draw appointment to facilitate registration.

Last year more than 4,000 people took advantage of the blood screening. "Screening and early detection of risk factors for future health problems are the best way to assist individuals in making positive lifestyle changes which can help them lead healthier lives," Pattison says. Sheridan Memorial Hospital recommends that individuals share results with their personal physicians for maximum benefit.

This year, blood draw results will be mailed directly to the person by the first week of September. Participants can still bring results to the Health Fair for interpretation and wellness information by healthcare professionals. The Health Fair will take place Sat., Sept. 13 at the Sheridan College Bruce Hoffman Dome from 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

For more information or to make an appointment, call (307) 672-1196.