

News Release

October 2, 2024

For Immediate Release

Contact: Diana Garcia, Program Manager, 308-345-4223

Why to Check Your Cholesterol Levels

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department encourages residents to check their cholesterol levels as part of their regular health and wellness checks. Cholesterol is a waxy fat-like substance that flows through your bloodstream and is needed by your body. However, when there is too much cholesterol it can begin to build up on your artery walls. This build up can lead to heart disease which is one of the leading causes of death in southwest Nebraska, along with cancer.

Cholesterol Facts

- One in six adults have high cholesterol.
- High cholesterol itself does not show symptoms so many people are unaware that they have high cholesterol.
- Risk factors for high cholesterol include age, gender, and heredity (risks you cannot control).
- Other risk factors include an unhealthy diet, being overweight, and not enough physical activity (risk factors you can control).
- Diagnosing high cholesterol is a simple blood test. Most adults should have their cholesterol checked at least every 4 to 6 years.

Prevent Heart Disease from High Cholesterol

- Eat a healthy diet low in saturated fat.
- Maintain a healthy weight. Losing weight can help lower your overall cholesterol numbers and reduce your risk of heart disease and other chronic illnesses.
- Exercise regularly. Try to be active for 150 minutes (2 ½ hours) each week.
- Don't smoke. Talk to your doctor if you need help to stop smoking.

Talk to your healthcare provider about your health history and how often you should check your cholesterol. SWNPHD has a program called Target Your Health that will conduct cholesterol and glucose checks at businesses and worksites, along with education about preventing chronic disease. To learn more about cholesterol testing at your workplace, contact SWNPHD at 308-345-4223.

Visit [cdc.gov/cholesterol](https://www.cdc.gov/cholesterol) for more information. Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins, and Red Willow counties. SWNPHD is located at 404 West 10th St (1 block north of Arby's) in McCook and 418 North Spruce St (across from the Methodist church) in Ogallala. You can also follow SWNPHD on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.