FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Kelly Campbell
Health Communication, Education and Planning Supervisor
(970) 304-6470, ext. 2325
kcampbell@weldgov.com

Weld County, CO – May is National High Blood Pressure Education Month and Stroke Awareness Month. It makes sense to observe both in the same month because when you control your blood pressure, you reduce your risk of stroke—the fourth leading cause of death in the United States. Unfortunately, 1 in 3 U.S. adults—an estimated 68 million of us—have high blood pressure, also called hypertension.

Right now, half of those Americans with high blood pressure still don’t have it adequately controlled. African Americans and Hispanic Latinos are at particular risk—often having more severe hypertension, and developing it at younger ages.

“The biggest risk factor for stroke is high blood pressure. Keeping your blood pressure low (120/80 or lower) by eating a healthy diet, being physically active, and taking medication if prescribed for you are all important,” said Dr. Mark E. Wallace, MD MPH, Executive Director of the Health Department. “Most strokes can be prevented by managing certain risk factors.”

There is much we can do to improve our health and decrease our chances of developing high blood pressure, and it’s time we all take these steps toward better health.”

- Maintain a normal weight;
- Get at least 30 minutes of physical activity most days;
- Limit alcohol intake;
- Eat more fresh fruits and vegetables;
- Avoid tobacco; and
- Reduce salt;
- Know your ABCS:
  - Aspirin – talk to a healthcare provider about whether you should take aspirin
  - Blood Pressure – have your blood pressure checked several times each year
  - Cholesterol – have your cholesterol levels checked
  - Smoking Cessation or not ever starting tobacco use
- Take control of your heart health by following your doctor’s instructions for medications and treatment.

For information on high blood pressure visit the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute’s website at www.nhlbi.nih.gov. For more information on healthy eating and active living visit:
http://www.co.weld.co.us/Departments/HealthEnvironment/

####