

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT



1555 North 17th Avenue
Greeley, CO 80631



www.weldhealth.org



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Health Communication
(970) 400-2325
kmartinez@weldgov.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May is National Stroke Prevention Month

Weld County – May is National Stroke Prevention Month and the aim is to educate the public and increase awareness of hypertension, which is also commonly known as high blood pressure. What you don't know about high blood pressure could hurt you. High blood pressure affects one in three Americans yet many people with the condition don't know they have it. To lower your risk, get your blood pressure checked regularly and take action to control your blood pressure if it is too high.

- Young people can have high blood pressure, too. High blood pressure doesn't just happen to older adults. About one in four men and nearly one in five women ages 35 to 44 has high blood pressure. The Colorado Department of Public Health reports that between 2013-2015, 23.1% of Weld County residents aged 18+ years had been told by a health care provider that they had high blood pressure. According to the Weld County Community Health Survey, that number was slightly higher in 2016 with 27.3% of respondents aged 18+ years saying a health professional had told them they had hypertension.
- High blood pressure is a leading cause of stroke, a condition that is on the rise among younger people. Experts think the increased risk for stroke among young adults is a direct result of the rising rates of obesity, high blood pressure, and diabetes – conditions that are preventable and treatable.
- According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), high blood pressure may be linked to dementia. Recent studies show that high blood pressure is linked to a higher risk for dementia, a loss of cognitive function. Timing seems to matter: Some evidence suggests having uncontrolled high blood pressure during midlife (age 45 to 65) creates a higher risk for dementia later in life.
- High blood pressure usually doesn't have any symptoms. High blood pressure is sometimes called the "*silent killer*." Most people with high blood pressure don't have symptoms, such as sweating or headaches. Because many people feel fine, they don't think they need to get their blood pressure checked.

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- Women and minorities face unique risks when it comes to high blood pressure. Women with high blood pressure who become pregnant are more likely to have complications during pregnancy than those with normal blood pressure. High blood pressure can harm a mother's kidneys and other organs, and it can cause low birth weight and early delivery.
- African American men and women have higher rates of high blood pressure than any other race or ethnic group. Experts think this is related to higher rates of obesity, diabetes and stroke among this group.

Fortunately, you can keep or lower your blood pressure to a healthy range by practicing the following lifestyle habits:

- Eating a healthy diet which emphasizes vegetables, fruits, beans, whole grains and limits sodium and added sugars
- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Getting enough physical activity
- Not smoking
- Limiting alcohol use

For more information on how to prevent or control high blood pressure visit:

https://www.weldgov.com/departments/health_and_environment.

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