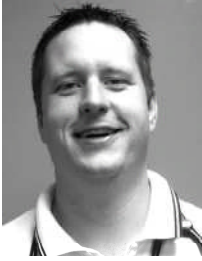


HEALTH TIPS FOR HEALTHY LIVING



By Derek Nelson, PA-C

TCH RURAL HEALTH CLINIC

High Blood Pressure, the Silent Killer

May is National High Blood Pressure Month. High blood pressure, also known as hypertension, is an extremely common health condition. It affects one in three adults and is known as the “silent killer” because people with high blood pressure often have no symptoms. High blood pressure can lead to heart disease, stroke, kidney failure and

heart failure.

There are many misconceptions about high blood pressure; here are a few of them:

- 1) *If your blood pressure goes down after taking blood pressure pills, then you can stop the medications.* FALSE - High blood pressure is a treatable but not curable disease. Once the medications are stopped then your blood pressure goes back up.
- 2) *I feel fine so my high blood pressure isn't a problem.* FALSE – High blood pressure is generally asymptomatic. Often times people stop their hypertension medications because they don't feel any different on the medications than off of them. Again hypertension is the silent killer, even though you may not feel any different on the medications, they are still of a great benefit to your health.
- 3) *There is one pill that will control my blood pressure forever.* FALSE – There are many different types of high blood pressure medications. Your healthcare provider will prescribe you a medications based your health history. Often times people need to be on multiple medications to control their blood pressure. Your blood pressure goes up naturally as you age so it is common to start up on one medication and add medications as you get more birthdays.
- 4) *My blood pressure is only high at the doctor's office.* There is a condition known as “white coat hypertension” where your blood pressure goes up only while in the doctor's office. This is commonly due to a feeling of anxiety. In order to know if you have white coat hypertension then you need to monitor your blood pressure outside of the clinic. This can be done by purchasing a home blood pressure cuff or with an ambulatory blood pressure monitor. An ambulatory blood pressure monitor can be placed on you here at the TCH Medical clinic and will monitor your blood pressure for 24 hours.

If you are concerned that you may have high blood pressure or would like to see if your medications are controlling your blood pressure, stop by the TCH Medical Clinic for a free blood pressure check. Enjoy your summer.