

JMHCC educating patients about high blood pressure

In North Dakota, 29.7 percent of adults have been told they have high blood pressure. And, 1 in every 3 adults has high blood pressure and doesn't know it. High blood pressure causes your heart to work harder than normal; this can damage your overall health and lead to problems such as heart disease and stroke.

Jacobson Memorial Hospital Care Center cares about its patients and communities it serves. JMHCC wants to educate communities on high blood pressure and improve the health and management of the individuals who already have the diagnosis of hypertension. JMHCC applied for and received a grant to help with the education and management of high blood pressure.

In the next couple of weeks, some people in the community will be receiving or have received a phone call and letter asking them to meet with their primary providers to discuss their high blood pressure. JMHCC encourages all individuals in the community to monitor their blood pressure and will do free blood pressure checks any time during regular office hours.

High blood pressure or hypertension is when the force of blood pumping through your arteries is too strong. Arteries are the vessels that carry blood from the heart to the rest of your body. Hypertension forces your heart to work harder to pump the blood to your body. Having hypertension puts you at risk for heart disease, stroke and other problems.

Some risk factors for high blood pressure cannot be controlled, such as race, age and gender. There are other factors that can be controlled, which are exercise/physical activity, being overweight, diet, tobacco use and use of alcohol.

Things to keep in mind to manage your blood pressure are as follows:

- Know your blood pressure. Have it checked regularly by your health care provider
- Eat healthier. Eat more fruits and vegetables. Read food labels. Limit amount of sodium intake.
- Be active, exercise regularly.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Quit smoking
- Reduce alcohol consumption.