

By Randy Vlasin

Executive Director

Chase County Hospital Foundation

Chase County Community Hospital is offering a Mini Health Fair in September that will consist of blood draws and lab testing at substantially reduced prices.

Getting screening tests regularly to detect common health problems is a simple and effective first step to maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Screening tests can give you the information needed to identify health risks and take preventive measures before they become more serious problems.

Screening tests include self-checks, clinical exams, x-rays and laboratory tests. The focus of the CCCH Mini Health Fair is on laboratory screening tests.

Choosing to have routine lab tests performed even though an individual has no symptoms can help discover problems early. Also, it can help them benefit from easier and more effective treatment, and sometimes even prevent disease. It is easy to take these tests for granted, but their power to lengthen healthy years should not be underestimated.

The following are dates and times for lab draws: Sept. 23, 24 and 25 from 6:30 to 8:30 a.m. at Chase County Community Hospital. Lab draws will be taken at the Wauneta Clinic on Tuesday, Oct. 1, from 7 to 9 a.m.

To register for the lab draws at Chase County Community Hospital, residents can call 882-7299 through Sept. 20. To register for draws at the Wauneta Clinic, call 394-5593 through Sept. 30.

People can download a registration form by going to the Chase County Community Hospital website at www.chasecountyhospital.com, then drop the form by the clinic in Imperial or Wauneta.

Individuals participating in the lab draws will have four tests to choose. Descriptions of the lab tests are as follows:

General Health Profile: This profile includes tests for CBC, CMP, TSH and lipid profile. CBC (complete blood count) is used as a screening test to determine an individual's general health status and to help diagnose various conditions, such as anemia, infection, leukemia or a bleeding disorder. Also, the CBC is useful to monitor treatment that is known to affect blood cells, such as antibiotic, chemo or radiation therapy.

CMP (comprehensive metabolic panel) provides important information about an individual's kidneys and liver. It includes acid/base balance, blood glucose and blood proteins levels; monitors known conditions, such as high blood pressure; and checks for side effects on the kidney and liver related to medication.

The TSH test is often the test of choice for evaluating thyroid function and is used to monitor treatment for various thyroid conditions.

The lipid profile is used as a screening to help determine an individual's risk of heart disease and to help make decisions about what treatment may be best if risk is borderline or high. Depending on the lipid results and other risk factors, treatment options may involve lifestyle changes such as diet and exercise or lipid-lowering medications. **NOTE:** This test requires that you do not eat anything and only take small sips of water for at least 12 hours prior to the lab draw.

Separate tests that can be requested included:

Hemoglobin A1C—A common blood test used to diagnose type 1 and type 2 diabetes and then

to gauge how well you're managing your diabetes. By measuring the percentage of A1C in the blood, you get an overview of your average blood glucose control for the past few months.

The PSA test, together with an exam by a doctor, is used to screen men for prostate cancer. If prostate cancer is diagnosed, the PSA test may be used as a monitor to help determine the effectiveness of treatment, and it may also be ordered at regular intervals after treatment to detect return of the cancer.

Vitamin D Level test is used to determine if bone weakness, malformation or abnormal metabolism of calcium is happening as a result of a shortage or excess of Vitamin D. Vitamin D may also be used to monitor the effectiveness of treatment when vitamin D, calcium, phosphorus and/or magnesium supplementation is prescribed.

As the health care system in the U.S. evolves, individuals are taking a more active role in the medical care they and their loved ones receive. Fortunately, by engaging in preventive medicine individuals take more responsibility and control of their care, gain better understanding, and improve communication with their doctor to help extend a healthy life.

It is also important to consider testing for children.

People often think of this type of screening is for older adults but these tests can also be critical in prevention and early detection of certain disorders in children. Children that are 18 years or younger will receive an additional 15% discount on the lab tests offered through this Mini Health Fair.

Once a person completes their chosen lab draws, a copy of the results will be mailed in approximately one week. It will be important for participants to keep a copy of the results and share this information with their healthcare provider. The results will only be available for 30 days to healthcare participants.

For more information, contact Sue Peterson at 882-7283 or Susan Castle at 882-7241.