

SOUTHWESTERN NEWS

Contact: Ione Echeverria
214-648-3404

ione.echeverria@utsouthwestern.edu

UT SOUTHWESTERN MEDICAL EXPERTS ADDRESS PERSONAL HEALTH, HABITS IN FREE PUBLIC FORUM

DALLAS – September 5, 2000 – Obesity and cholesterol, vitamins and herbal remedies, exercise and bed rest, and hypertension and vascular tone will all be addressed by medical experts from UT Southwestern Medical Center at the Southwestern Medical Foundation Public Forum Sept. 19.

The free public forum, “Your Health is in Your Hands: The Influence of Personal Habits on Your Health and Life Expectancy,” begins at 7 p.m. in the Tom and Lula Gooch Auditorium on the UT Southwestern South Campus. It will address the importance of understanding how lifestyle choices affect long-term health.

Over the years, a great deal has been learned about the influence of personal behavior on health. Individuals have come to view health largely as a function of physician-mediated activity.

Drs. Norman Kaplan, clinical professor of internal medicine; Jere Mitchell, director of the Harry S. Moss Heart Center; Ronald Victor, chief of hypertension; and Margo Denke, associate professor of internal medicine, will each make presentations at the forum and answer questions.

Kaplan, who was an Emmy nominee for his medical programs on the Public Broadcasting Service, will talk about obesity and cholesterol. With more than 55 percent of adults now overweight, obesity has reached epidemic proportions in the United States.

“Everyone understands the role cholesterol plays in cardiovascular disease,” said Kaplan. “But it’s also important to know that obesity causes very serious cardiac and diabetic lesions. Therefore, diet and measures taken to lower cholesterol and to keep body weight at a reasonable level are very critical.”

Kaplan said almost all of the major causes of diseases and deaths in the United States are related to lifestyle. But if people would take a few simple steps to better their health, they might prevent many illnesses from arising.

(MORE)

PUBLIC FORUM - 2

One step would be to increase physical activity.

Mitchell said exercise is important not only in preventing diseases but in maintaining overall health. "Exercise won't add years to your life, but it will determine quality of life as you grow older," said Mitchell, who will focus on exercise and bed rest at the forum.

In 1966 he published a seminal paper on the effects of physical inactivity (bed rest) and of increased physical activity (endurance training). Thirty years later the study was repeated with the same subjects, now 50. Mitchell will talk about how this research study and others have revolutionized cardiac treatment.

Another controllable, heart-damaging disease is hypertension.

According to the American Heart Association, nearly 50 million individuals have high blood pressure. When left untreated it can cause irreparable damage to the heart, kidneys and brain. Victor will present information regarding hypertension and vascular tone and how people can reduce their chances of developing this disease, known as "the silent killer."

Many people think herbal remedies are the answer to many of these diseases. But Denke, an investigator in UT Southwestern's Center for Human Nutrition, said she thinks they may be taking a health risk or just throwing their money away on empty advertising promises. She will help separate the facts from the hype about vitamins and herbal remedies.

The foundation initiated its series of public forums in 1995 as a community service to Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex residents. Although the forum is free, please call 214-648-8836 to reserve your seats. For more information, please call Southwestern Medical Foundation at 214-351-6143.

###

This news release is available on our World Wide Web home page at
http://www.swmed.edu/home_pages/news/

To automatically receive news releases from UT Southwestern via e-mail, send a message to
UTSWNEWS-REQUEST@listserv.swmed.edu. Leave the subject line blank and in the text box, type
SUB UTSWNEWS