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News

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* * * * * "Here's to Your Health"
focuses on self-care
for laymen

DALLAS--Would you like to be able to read your own blood pressure? Determine what fever, respiratory distress and other common symptoms indicate? Trace any genetic flaws in your family tree? Break the cycle of a "killer lifestyle"? Or effectively utilize the disturbingly complex health care delivery system?

Contrary to most popular opinion, you don't need an M.D. degree to tackle these--and other--common medical situations. All you need is the determination to take responsibility for your own health and a desire to acquire the skills that will enable you to work as an "activated patient" in partnership with your physician.

This is the intriguing message of "Here's to Your Health," a national television series geared solely to providing medical self-care tools and information to the consumer. Produced by KERA-TV, Dallas/Fort Worth, in cooperation with The University of Texas Health Science Center at Dallas, the 26-week series is made possible by grants from The St. Paul Companies, Inc., the Hillcrest Foundation and Public Television Stations.

Co-hosts for the series, which premieres Saturday, May 26 at 7:30 p.m. ET* on PBS, are Dr. Al Roberts, associate dean of The University of Texas Southwestern Medical School at Dallas, and Dr. Anne Race, director of mental health services at both Southwestern Medical School and Southern Methodist University. During the course of the series, Dr. Roberts, an internist, and Dr. Race, a psychiatrist, will present self-care advice soundly supported by the expertise of some of the nation's top medical authorities who will appear on the program. Upcoming guests include Dr. Keith Sehnert, author of How to Be Your Own Doctor--Sometimes; Dr. Lowell Levin, author of Self-Care: Lay Initiatives in Health; Dr. John Meeks, director of child and adolescent services at the Psychiatric Institute of Washington, D.C.; Dr. John Rush, associate professor of psychiatry at The University of Texas Health Science Center and a national authority on depression; and Dr. Jay Arena, director of the Poison Control Center at Duke University Hospital.

first add "here's to your health"

The series will also feature guest hosts who will each introduce and narrate several programs, including Academy Award-winning actress Rita Moreno; John Houseman, star of "The Paper Chase," and Michael Learned, Emmy-winning star of "The Waltons." The format is designed to make the topic of self-care and health scientifically stimulating as well as entertaining.

Interspersed with in-depth interviews will be numerous film segments, charts, graphs and animated cartoons which will aid in translating the secrets of disease prevention and personal health maintenance into language and perspective that laymen can readily understand. Each half-hour program within the series is treated as an individual "mini-documentary," which provides a concise and credible look at a contemporary--and oftentimes controversial--health topic.

The purpose of "Here's to Your Health," as explained by Drs. Roberts and Race, is fourfold: (1) to provide reliable information on diagnosis and treatment that can be done at home, as well as to explain when and why to seek the aid of a physician; (2) to promote individual responsibility for good health; (3) to aid the consumer in preventing disease; and (4) to provide a continuing consumer guide to available information and services in order to produce a better-informed public.

The first six programs of the new series, which will be narrated by Rita Moreno, will include discussions of the growing self-care movement in the United States, prenatal care, treatment of upper respiratory and gastro-intestinal complaints, ways to become an "activated patient" and the development of autonomy and responsibility for health in childhood. Other program topics will focus on such issues as nutrition, exercise, depression, accident prevention, heart disease, cancer and hypertension.

Producer/director for "Here's to Your Health" is David Dowe with Jane Touzel as producer/writer, Dave Gardner as associate producer/director and Lana Henderson as researcher/writer.

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NOTE: *Please check local listings for area broadcast time. KERA will have a "sneak" preview at 6:30 p.m. Sunday, May 27. Regular programming for the show will begin Monday, June 11 at 7:30 p.m. on a regular basis.