



WILLIAMSON COUNTY AND CITIES HEALTH DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Williamson County and Cities Health District Promotes Binational Health Week and National Health Education Week

October 11, 2011 (Williamson County) –

This year marks the eleventh anniversary of Binational Health Week, which is October 1-16th. This is a time for government agencies, non-profit organizations, and volunteers to work together on improving Latino/Hispanic health and wellbeing. Williamson County and Cities Health District (WCCHD) is recognizing both Binational Health Week and National Health Education Week this month.

Binational Health week is a large mobilization effort aimed at improving the health and well-being of the underserved Latino population living in the United States and Canada. WCCHD events this week will target diseases of the heart because they are the second most common cause of death in Williamson County, and the most common cause of death in Georgetown. Approximately 4.9% of all adults in Williamson County have cardiovascular disease (2009) and 3.6% have heart disease (2009). Hispanics represent 23% of the adult population in Williamson County and are at higher risk of mortality from cardiovascular disease.

National Health Education Week is celebrated each year during the third week of October in an effort to focus on providing education as a major public health issue. This year's theme for National Health Education Week is *Health Literacy: Gateway to Improving the Public's Health* and is being celebrated October 16-22nd. This event calls attention to the importance of health literacy and the critical role certified health education specialists and other health education advocates play in health literacy promotion and improved public health. According to Dr. Chip Riggins, Executive Director and Health Authority of WCCHD, "The 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy suggests that only 12% of consumers have proficient health literacy skills. This is a real issue for all of us because health education impacts the quality of care we receive as well as the outcomes of that care."

In celebration of Binational Health Week and National Health Education Week, WCCHD is conducting activities countywide. WCCHD is holding Cardiovascular and Stroke Prevention Classes in English and Spanish the evening of Thursday, October 13th at the Georgetown Public Health Center's Education Building. Please call Billye Navarro at 512-260-4240 to register. A "Health Consumer" Class in English will be held the evening of October 19th at the Taylor Public Health Center. Please call Ivah Cantu at 512-238-2121 or 512-352-4121 to register.

Free information will be available on cardiovascular and stroke health as well as health literacy at each of the WCCHD Public Health Centers in Cedar Park, Georgetown, Round Rock, and Taylor. Please visit www.wcchd.org for links to these materials and more information on Public Health Center locations, services, and hours.