



SRMC's Wound Healing Center Raises Awareness About the Importance of Heart Health

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February is American Heart Month, and the staff of Salem Regional Medical Center's (SRMC) Wound Healing Center is urging residents to take steps to keep their hearts healthy.

According to Dawn Thomas, RN, BSN, Program Director at SRMC's Wound Healing Center, maintaining a heart healthy lifestyle is vital for everyone, but especially for those with chronic or non-healing wounds.

"While there are many factors that can affect wound healing, heart health is one of the most important," she explained. "Blood carries oxygen and other nutrients that your body needs to heal wounds. Medical conditions related to the heart and blood vessels, such as coronary artery disease and peripheral artery disease, can damage the vessels and decrease the flow of blood to a wound. Without sufficient blood flow to deliver oxygen and nutrients to the affected area, the wound may heal slowly."

"Other conditions, such as high cholesterol, diabetes and high blood pressure, can also increase your risk of heart problems and make healing a wound more difficult. If left untreated, chronic wounds can lead to a diminished quality of life and possible removal of the affected limb," she added. "Therefore, it's important to make healthy lifestyle choices to help avoid these conditions and improve the health of your heart."

SRMC's Wound Healing Center offers the following tips to help keep your heart healthy:

- Maintain an active lifestyle. While you should always check with your doctor before starting an exercise program, try to fit in at least 30 minutes of physical activity on most days.
- Don't smoke or use tobacco products.
- Eat a heart-healthy diet consisting of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, beans and other low-fat sources of protein.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Ensure you get quality sleep by making it a priority in your life. Most adults need seven to nine hours of sleep each night.
- Manage your stress in healthy ways. Use positive self-talk, do things you enjoy and take time to relax on a regular basis.

- Visit your health care provider for regular screenings, including blood pressure, cholesterol and diabetes screenings.

Local Treatment

“When an acute, chronic or non-healing wound occurs, the specially-trained physicians and clinical staff at SRMC’s Wound Healing Center use advanced treatment procedures, including hyperbaric oxygen therapy, to help our patients heal and return to their normal activities,” Thomas continued. “Last year, over 95% of patients who came to us with wounds that had not healed in 30 days were discharged from our care fully healed.”

For more information about the special care provided at SRMC’s Wound Healing Center, call 330-332-7415 or visit www.salemregional.com.

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