



The Collaborative

Working Together to Improve the Health Status of the Community
The Bexar County Community Health Collaborative

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Calories. Salt. Fat. Fiber. Vitamins.

Eating correctly starts with grocery shopping correctly. And for those with diabetes, heart conditions or other restricted diets, meal planning can be confusing.

As a free service to the community, the Bexar County Community Health Collaborative offers the Shopping Partners program, in association with the H-E-B Grocery Company. Volunteer registered dietitians accompany participants down the aisles of a grocery store for a 45-minute tour tailored to the participants' dietary needs.

The registered dietitians teach participants how to read food labels, offer recipe suggestions and cooking tips, provide nutritional information and supply resources to help them adhere to their prescribed diets.

"We have a wonderful group of volunteers who are truly providing a valuable service to the community," said Pennie Koopman, chair of Shopping Partners. "Our goal is to increase the participants' knowledge of nutritional information so they can improve their overall health."

The program, which started in April, is offered quarterly: January, April, July and October. In this start-up phase, the service is restricted to those on special diets who were recently discharged from a hospital. As the program expands,

the goal is to make Shopping Partners available to the general public.

Shopping Partners is an efficient use of the sponsoring health systems' resources in that it is not a service currently provided to patients and offers significant potential for health improvement

To schedule a Shopping Partners appointment in July with a registered dietitian at an H-E-B, call (210) 938-4547.



Organizations Providing Shopping Partners Registered Dietitians as Volunteers

Baptist Health System
Brooke Army Medical Center
CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Health Care
H-E-B Grocery Company
Methodist Healthcare Ministries
Morrison Healthcare Food Services
Southwest General Hospital
University Health System
Wilford Hall Medical Center

Collaborative Advocates PE in Schools

The Bexar County Community Health Collaborative has joined with other education and health organizations to advocate restoring physical education programs in schools. The Texas Coalition for Coordinated School Health and Physical Education, coordinated by the Texas Medical Association, is tracking and supporting bills in the state Legislature that call for nutrition and physical fitness programs in public elementary schools.

"It is vital that our children learn that eating right and regular exercise are important to their long-term health," said Alex Garcia, secretary of

the Health Collaborative representing Southwest General Hospital. "They can only develop good habits if they have the proper tools."

The Health Collaborative supports such legislation as part of its strategy to address the overall nutrition and fitness

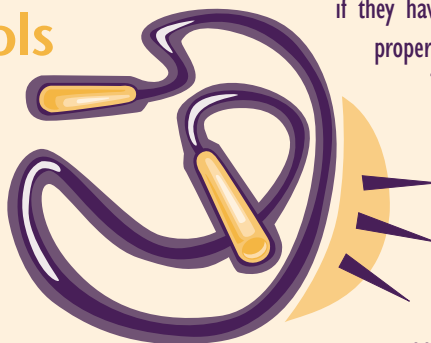
needs of Bexar County residents, particularly as they relate to diabetes and other chronic conditions.

In a comprehensive community health assessment conducted in 1998, the Health Collaborative determined that 37.2 percent of adults in Bexar County are overweight, which is twice the national goal. In addition, approximately 55 percent of adults are considered sedentary. The same study found that almost 11 percent of Bexar

County residents have diabetes, significantly higher than the 6.6 percent found among the general population nationally.

"These facts are frightening," said Jean Setzer, vice president of the Health Collaborative representing University Health System. "We all must do our part to improve the health of the community. We need help from not only the healthcare community, but from business, education, neighborhood groups and policymakers."

Since 1995, physical education classes have not been required at public elementary schools in Texas. The statewide coalition reports that new research shows that children who exercise regularly score better on exams. Of 11-year-olds who scored above average in national English tests, 79 percent were exercising at least three times per week. Of those who scored below average, only 38 percent were exercising.



A joint community effort sponsored by:

Baptist Health System

CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Healthcare

Methodist Healthcare

San Antonio Metropolitan Health District

Southwest General Hospital

University Health System

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Board Members Visit with Elected Officials

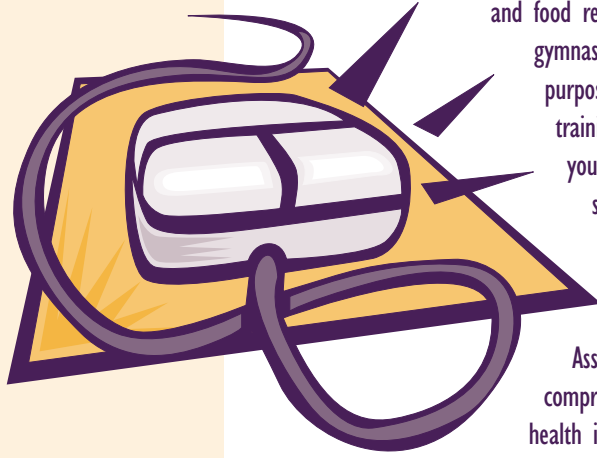
In order to spread the word about the good works of the Bexar County Community Health Collaborative, members of the board of directors have been meeting with elected officials.

Meetings have been held with members of the City Council, state legislators and the local congressional delegation. The purpose is to highlight critical local health issues and demonstrate how key healthcare providers are putting aside competitive differences to work together to improve the health status of the community.

“Our elected officials are very interested in learning about the innovative approaches we are taking to address priority health issues,” said Geoffrey Crabtree, president of the board representing Methodist Healthcare. “As far as we know, there is no other community in the country where competing healthcare systems are coming together as we are in San Antonio.”

In addition to local meetings, board members tout the Health Collaborative’s accomplishments as they make their rounds with their regular jobs. For example, treasurer Sr. Michele O’Brien from CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Health Care has met with every local member of Congress in Washington, D.C., where she travels frequently as a lobbyist for hospital issues.

“It is such a pleasure to talk to our elected officials about our achievements, because we have so much to be proud of,” she said. “They are fascinated to see local cooperation and dedication to such important health issues.”



Nutrition and Fitness Resource Guide Online

“San Antonio Lite: A Resource Guide to Fitness and Nutrition” is now available via the web site of the Bexar County Community Health Collaborative: www.healthcollaborative.net.

The guide features information on more than 375 local programs. Fitness and nutrition listings include data on clinical and wellness programs, educational and food resources, dance, gymnastics, martial arts, multi-purpose facilities, personal training, weight management, youth activities and team sports. The web site also features “The 1998 Bexar County Community Health Assessment,” a comprehensive report on key health indicators.

Health Collaborative’s Target Issues

- Nutrition and fitness, as they relate to diabetes and other chronic conditions
- Fluoride in the drinking water
- Youth depression

Mission: To improve the health status of the community through collaborative means. The result of this collaboration is a more robust approach to solving critical community health needs, and at the same time realizing efficiencies in the use of resources. The focus is to maximize synergies created by working together instead of duplicating efforts.

**BEXAR COUNTY
COMMUNITY HEALTH
COLLABORATIVE**



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