** This news release from K-State Research and Extension is available online at www.ksre.k-state.edu/news/stories/2022/08/health-diabetes-prevention.html

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**K-State, KU partner on diabetes prevention program**

Extension agent says program has been successful in Lyon County

*By Pat Melgares, K-State Research and Extension news service*

MANHATTAN, Kan. – Emily Prouse shudders at statistics indicating that as many as half of Americans have pre-diabetes and don’t know it.

“That’s a lot of Kansans (and) a lot of Americans that are at high risk,” said Prouse, a family and community wellness agent with K-State Research and Extension’s office in Lyon County.

“When it comes to diabetes,” she adds, “(controlling) blood sugar is not our only concern. It’s also looking at other risks, such as an increased risk for heart disease, stroke and obesity. All of those tie in together.”

Prouse recently offered a program in partnership with the University of Kansas Medical Center called Prevent T2 to help people in her county prevent or manage type 2 diabetes. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, type 2 diabetes most often develops after age 45 and affects an estimated 35 million people in the United States.

Type 2 diabetes is characterized by the body’s inability to use insulin well or keep blood sugar at normal levels. It can be prevented or delayed with healthy lifestyle changes, including losing weight, eating healthy food and being active.

“Whether or not we have pre-diabetes ourselves, chances are we know someone who does,” she said.

Prouse said Prevent T2 was based on guidelines from the CDC. The program she taught recently focused on moderate weight loss (5-8% of a person’s current weight), nutrition and exercise.

Prouse said she encourages participants to “take small steps” such as simple food choices and setting a goal of losing just a few pounds.
“I like to tell people, six months from now you’ll be happy you started today,” she said. “It’s keeping in mind what you’re eating from meal to meal, and sometimes it’s writing that down so you can keep it in the forefront of your mind.”

For some, the weight loss goal is less than 10 pounds over several months time. It’s about adding fruits and vegetables to meals. And exercising 30 minutes a day, five days a week – or a total of 150 minutes of moderate exercise per week.

On top of that, “getting an annual physical is really important,” Prouse said. “You need to get your labs checked (and) make sure you stay on top of that to know how you are trending.”

Prouse’s initial class – part of a pilot project – attracted 16 participants who attended the weekly sessions for six months. They became so involved that they asked to continue the sessions for another six months – meeting monthly.

“If you have any interest in learning how to eat healthier and implement healthy habits, this is a great program,” she said.

K-State Research and Extension offers the popular Dining with Diabetes program in nearly every Kansas county; information is available at local extension offices. Prouse said K-State Research and Extension also is continuing to work with the KU Medical Center to offer a diabetes prevention program in Kansas.

More information on preventing diabetes also is available online from the CDC.

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FOR PRINT PUBLICATIONS: Links used in this story
U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (diabetes),

CDC National Diabetes Prevention Program,

K-State Research and Extension statewide offices, www.ksre.k-state.edu/about/statewide-locations.html

Dining with Diabetes, https://www.k-state.edu/diningwithdiabetes

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