



## NEWS RELEASE

### ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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## Schedule a check-up during Women's Health Month

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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One of the most important steps a woman can take for better health is to get regular check-ups and to ask her health care provider about screenings for heart disease, diabetes, cancer and sexually transmitted diseases.

"National Women's Check-up Day is May 10, the day after Mother's Day," says Jessica Hardy, director of the Alabama Department of Public Health's Office of Women's Health. "This is a great time to remind all the women you care about to take steps to protect their health."

In recognition of U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' focus on Women's Health Month, the Alabama Department of Public Health offers screening test information cards. The card reads "To take care of others, you must first take care of yourself." The card was developed by the health department's Cancer Prevention Division.

The Women's Check-up Month cards are available at county health departments across the state during the month of May. The card offers a brief overview of the various types of screening tests available for women. Information on the card also encourages women to begin a dialogue with their healthcare provider about health concerns.

"During the month of May, when we recognize Mother's Day we also want women to take time for themselves and schedule routine health checks," says Brooke Thorington, public education coordinator for the Cancer Prevention Division. "Along with flowers for your mother this Mother's Day you might want to encourage her to see the doctor for a physical and offer to run some of her errands so she can take time to see her doctor."

People often fail to have regular check-ups and are not proactive in their healthcare. Reminding women to take steps to stay in good health can be life saving.

The Women's Check-Up Month card offers screening information for general, bone, breast, colorectal, diabetes, eyes, ears, heart, immunizations, mental, oral, reproductive and skin health.

Five county health departments are planning events in recognition of Women's Health Week, May 9-15. The Calhoun and Tuscaloosa county health departments are sponsoring special week-long activities, Cullman County is focusing on calcium to prevent osteoporosis, while Lee County is planning breast and cervical cancer screening events.

During the month of May the Etowah County Health Department is offering Pap smears and breast examinations to women ages 18-64 who meet income guidelines of 200 percent of the federal poverty guidelines and who have no health insurance or are underinsured.

In addition, an award secured from the Regional Office on Women's Health is sponsoring a women's health education track for Hale County women sponsored by Dr. Karen Moore from Hale County Hospital Clinic.

5/7/04