



NEWS RELEASE

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Alabama Together One Step at a Time" campaign targets obesity

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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National Women's Health Week, May 8-14, is a time to focus on the importance of incorporating simple preventive and positive health behaviors into everyday life and to raise awareness about manageable steps women can take to improve their health. Obesity is the leading preventable cause of death in the United States after smoking.

Realizing that overweight and obesity increase the risk of adverse health conditions affecting women, the Office of Women's Health, in cooperation with the Minority Health Section and the Nutrition and Physical Activity Unit of the Alabama Department of Public Health, is launching a weight loss initiative to incorporate good nutritional habits with a healthy lifestyle along with the Alabama Obesity Task Force.

The campaign for women is titled "Alabama Together One Step at a Time." This innovative project will be piloted in Lowndes, Greene and Macon counties in 2005 and then later in other Alabama communities.

"Losing weight and getting healthy is a difficult challenge without help," according to Belinda Miller, chair of the Office of Women's Health Steering Committee. "Our goal is to let every woman in Alabama know that she is not alone in facing and meeting this challenge."

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the National Center for Health Statistics, thousands of deaths in the United States each year are associated with being overweight and obese. In Alabama, the death rate ranking for diseases related to obesity is among the highest in the nation.

"The first step toward helping Alabama's women is to promote proper nutrition and exercise," said Jessica Hardy, Office of Women's Health director. "We plan to get the wives, mothers, sisters and daughters of Alabama healthy, together, one step at a time. All of these aspects together will help women lead healthier lives."

The mission of the Office of Women's Health is to promote the health of women throughout the state. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and an alliance of organizations sponsor the observance nationwide.

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