



Press Release
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American Heart Month Highlights the Importance of Routine Wellness Exams

Knox County Hospital District encourages residents to take a proactive approach to heart health

KNOX CITY, Texas (Feb 6, 2026) — As February marks American Heart Month, Knox County Hospital District is encouraging residents to take a proactive role in protecting their heart health by scheduling regular wellness exams with their local healthcare provider.

Heart disease remains one of the leading causes of death in the United States, yet many of the conditions that increase cardiovascular risk — including high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, and obesity — often develop without noticeable symptoms. Routine wellness exams allow providers to identify these concerns early and work with patients to reduce risk over time.

“Many heart-related issues don’t cause symptoms in the early stages,” said Dr. Ruth Ebangit of the Knox City Clinic. “A wellness exam gives us the opportunity to monitor key indicators like blood pressure and cholesterol and talk with patients about steps they can take to protect their heart.”

Wellness exams serve as an important foundation for preventive care. During these visits, providers review medical history, assess risk factors, and discuss lifestyle habits that influence cardiovascular health, including nutrition, physical activity, stress, sleep, and tobacco use.

“Knowing where you stand is one of the most important parts of prevention,” Dr. Ebangit said. “Once we understand a patient’s risk factors, we can make informed recommendations and help them set realistic goals to support heart health.”

Healthcare providers emphasize that heart health is shaped by everyday choices. Regular physical activity, balanced nutrition, and maintaining a healthy weight all contribute to cardiovascular wellness. Even small, consistent changes can have a meaningful impact when practiced over time.

“Heart health isn’t about making drastic changes overnight,” said Dr. Ebangit. “It’s about building habits that are sustainable and checking in regularly to make sure things are on track.”

American Heart Month is also a reminder of the importance of ongoing care. Establishing a relationship with a primary care provider allows for continuity, making it easier to track changes in health over time and address concerns early.

“When patients come in consistently for wellness exams, we’re able to see trends and respond sooner,” Dr. Ebangit said. “That continuity can make a real difference in preventing more serious heart problems

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down the road.”

Family history can also play a role in cardiovascular risk. Providers encourage patients to share information about relatives with heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, or diabetes, as this knowledge can help guide screening and prevention strategies.

“Understanding family history gives us valuable insight,” Dr. Ebangit said. “It helps us tailor care and decide when additional monitoring may be appropriate.”

Wellness exams also provide an opportunity for patients to ask questions, review medications, and address everyday concerns that may affect heart health but often go unmentioned during busy routines.

Dr. Ebangit also reminds residents to be aware of symptoms that may indicate a heart-related concern, such as chest discomfort, shortness of breath, unexplained fatigue, dizziness, or swelling in the legs or feet. Sudden or severe symptoms should be treated as a medical emergency.

While Heart Month places a spotlight on cardiovascular health in February, providers stress that heart monitoring should be a year-round priority.

“Heart Month is a great reminder to schedule a wellness exam,” said Dr. Ebangit. “But ongoing preventive care is what truly supports long-term heart health.”

Residents are encouraged to contact their healthcare provider at either KCHD clinics to schedule a wellness exam and discuss any concerns related to heart health. To schedule an appointment, call the Knox City Clinic at 940-657-3906 or the Munday Clinic at 940-422-5271.

About Knox County Hospital District

Founded in 1926, Knox County Hospital District provides healthcare for residents of Knox County and surrounding areas. The district offers a wealth of medical services, including 24-hour emergency care, advanced radiology services, a clinical laboratory, home health, physical therapy, long-term care, patient education, and more. For additional information, please call 940-657-3535 or visit www.knoxhospital.org.

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