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## **Help Spread the Word on Men's Health**

As women, we tend to be “mother hen” over our husbands and children’s health. We try to make them to eat healthy, take their vitamins, and exercise. Our children usually conform to our requests, because we can pretty much make them do it! However, the men in our lives are a different story. They tend to procrastinate and don’t put their health at the top of their priority list. Courtney J. Schoessow, MPH, Extension Program Specialist – Texas AgriLife Extension Service and Meghan Wenicke recently released the following Press Release on this subject. Please join us as we spread the word on preventative medical testing for men.

Recently, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) joined with The Advertising Council to launch a national public service campaign designed to raise awareness among middle-aged men about the importance of preventive medical testing.

Why is this campaign being launched? Because most men aren’t getting the preventive medical testing they need. Men are 25 percent less likely than women to have visited the doctor within the past year and are 38 percent more likely than women to have neglected their cholesterol tests. Furthermore, men are 1.5 times more likely than women to die from heart disease, cancer, and chronic lower respiratory diseases.

The new campaign encourages men over 40 to learn which preventive screening tests they need to get and when they need to get them. This campaign complements AHRQ’s existing efforts toward improving the safety and quality of health care and promoting patient involvement in their own health care, including the “Questions Are the Answer” campaign launched with the Ad Council in March 2007 and the “Superheroes” Spanish-language campaign launched in March 2008.

“We hope this campaign will inform men about the importance of prevention and show them that they should work with their health care providers to find out what they should do to stay healthy,” said AHRQ Director Carolyn M. Clancy, M.D.

Created pro bono for the Ad Council by McCann Erickson Detroit, the public service advertising campaign includes new television, radio, print, and web advertising featuring the theme “Real Men Wear Gowns.” The lighthearted ads incorporate family as a key motivating factor for men to take a more active role in preventive health. They show the target audience that being a real man means taking care of themselves (and their health) in order to be there for their families now and in the future. Ad Council research showed this was a strong motivating factor for men. To view the PSAs, visit <http://www.ahrq.gov/realmen/watchvideos.htm>.

The campaign has created a comprehensive website, <http://www.ahrq.gov/realmen/>. The site provides the recommended ages for preventive testing (as well as a list of tests), a quiz designed to test your knowledge of preventive health care, tips for talking with your doctor, a glossary of consumer health terms, and links to online resources where you can find more medical information.

Texas AgriLife Extension Service and Texas Cancer Council encourage all men to stay up to date on all recommended preventive medical testing.

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The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.