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Media Contact: Emily Killian, Community Engagement Specialist, (828) 695-6637, ekillian@catawbacountync.gov

JUNE IS A MONTH FOR MEN'S HEALTH

HICKORY, NC – June is an important month for men – Father's Day is June 18, Men's Health Week is June 12-18, June 16 has been reserved as Wear Blue for Men's Health Day, and the entire month has been designated as National Men's Health Month. Although Father's Day and men's health may not seem on the surface to have much in common with each other, a deeper look shows these observances actually can have a great deal to do with each other.

Most fathers want to spend as many years with their children as possible. To do that, dads need to ensure that they stay healthy through screenings for chronic disease, including cancer, and by maintaining a balanced diet with plenty of physical activity.

Heart disease, cancer, injuries, stroke, chronic lower respiratory disease and suicide are the top causes of death for men, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In many cases, these problems are preventable. For men interested in improving their overall health and reducing their chances of developing chronic conditions, there are some basic steps you can take:

- Adopt a healthier diet with more fruits and vegetables
- Move more
- Eliminate tobacco products
- Get enough sleep
- Manage stress and seek treatment for depression
- Protect your skin
- Complete preventive screenings

Another disease that men must be mindful of is cancer. Every year, cancer claims the lives of more than 300,000 men in the United States, according to the CDC. The most common kinds of cancer among men in the U.S. are skin cancer, prostate cancer, lung cancer and colorectal cancer. Prostate cancer is typically slow growing and may not cause problems for patients. According to the CDC, 26,866 men in the U.S. died from colorectal cancer, which can be detected in screenings that begin at age 50. Testicular cancer can affect males of any age, although about half of cases are in young men between the ages of 20 and 34.

Men of all ages can work to prevent or reduce the spread of sexually transmitted infections (often called STIs). Debilitating and potentially deadly STIs include HIV and AIDS, along with hepatitis, chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis, herpes and more. Men can receive STI testing from their primary care providers, or can obtain testing at Catawba County Public Health in the Adult Health clinic. All tests are confidential. If results come back positive, treatment is provided for some diseases; others require referrals to specialists. To make an appointment for testing, call 828-695-4445.

Catawba County Public Health promotes and protects the health of all Catawba County residents through preventive services, innovative partnerships, and community health improvement initiatives. For more information, please call (828) 695-5800 or visit www.catawbacountync.gov/phealth.

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"Leading the Way to a Healthier Community"