



Northwest Medical Center

A Tradition of Community Healthcare

Contact:

Ashley Shisler
Marketing Manager
Northwest Medical Center
c: (660) 254-3876 w: (660) 726-3941
ashley.shisler@northwestmedicalcenter.net
www.northwestmedicalcenter.org

For Immediate Release:

Northwest Medical Center and Local Emergency Systems Hold Successful STEMI Heart Attack Drill

(Albany, MO) July 8, 2014 - On Monday, June 16, Northwest Medical Center teamed up with local business Shoat's, Heartland Regional Medical Center, LifeNet and Grand River Ambulance to hold a STEMI heart attack drill. STEMI is an acronym for ST Segment Elevation Myocardial Infarction, which, in laymen's terms, means an acute heart attack with a prolonged period of blocked blood supply to the heart.

The drill began at Shoat's in Albany, MO. Local coffee drinkers at the store experienced a "customer" having chest pains and owner, Bob Hogue, dialed 911 to report the emergency. Grand River Regional Ambulance paramedics arrived on-scene to assess the "customer" and transported her to Northwest Medical Center's Emergency Department for prompt care and stabilization. The patient was then transported by LifeNet to the Cardiac Catheterization Lab at Heartland Regional Medical Center.

One purpose of the drill was to help educate the community about the signs and symptoms of a heart attack with the intention of raising awareness and providing education. "We believe by educating the community on heart attack symptoms, we can drastically reduce the number of deaths caused by heart attacks," says Kim Shields, RN, NMC Emergency Department Director.

People may or may not experience any or all of the symptoms of a heart attack. They may experience mild chest symptoms such as pressure, burning, aching or tightness. These symptoms may come and go until finally becoming constant and severe. Other symptoms include nausea, pain that travels down one or both arms, jaw pain, fatigue, anxiety, back pain, shortness of breath and/or feeling of fullness. According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), about 50% of sudden cardiac deaths occur outside a hospital. This suggests that many people don't act on early warning signs and call 911.

"When it comes to matters of the heart, 'time is muscle' and every minute when someone is experiencing chest pain is critical," said Shields. The longer the blockage exists, the more heart muscle is damaged. That is why Northwest Medical Center is partnering with other organizations to educate the community on the importance of calling 911 once symptoms begin. She adds, "Bringing a STEMI patient to the nearest hospital possible ensures they receive prompt care and quick transport to a cardiac cath lab."

In addition, the STEMI drill allowed local caregivers to practice the process of treating an individual experiencing chest pain on site, transporting the patient to NMC's Emergency Department for evaluation and eventually



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moving the patient via LifeNet's helicopter to the most equipped tertiary care facility for our area, Heartland Regional Medical Center, for further evaluation and treatment.

After the drill, all organizations involved in the patient's care met to discuss the process and identify areas for improvement. Customers who were present during the drill at Shoat's were provided education on emergency situations and what to do if they see someone having chest pains.

"By conducting mock scenarios, Northwest Medical Center's Emergency Department can look for ways to increase efficiencies in the services provided to the community," says Shields. "The focus is on emergency systems working together, which includes the 911 Dispatcher, Grand River Regional Ambulance Service, NMC Emergency Department, Life Net, and Heartland's Emergency Department and Cardiac Catheterization Lab. There is an emphasis put on providing holistic care to the patient. Drills such as this enable us to identify opportunities for change and growth while delivering patient-centered care," notes Shields.

To learn more about the early signs and symptoms of a heart attack, visit www.northwestmedicalcenter.org, www.deputyheartattack.org or call the NMC Emergency Department at 660-726-3941.

About- Northwest Medical Center has provided high-quality health services to residents in Northwest Missouri since 1957. Along with five satellite clinics and a full-service home-health agency, Northwest Medical Center continues its tradition of community healthcare utilizing leading-edge diagnostic equipment and boasting one of the top emergency room facilities in the region.

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