



**Reeves County**  
Hospital District

**Press Release**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Media Contact**  
Venetta Seals | [rhcacares@rchd.care](mailto:rhcacares@rchd.care)  
(432) 447-3551, ext. 6350

## **Heart Disease Highlighted in February**

*Reeves County Hospital District encourages area residents to talk with their medical provider about cardiovascular diseases during American Heart Month.*

Pecos, Texas (Jan. 31, 2022) – Nationwide statistics continue to show that heart disease remains the number one cause of death in the United States and that is no less true in the state of Texas. Even with the rapid onset of the Omicron virus, the latest variant of the Covid-19 pandemic, raging through the state, heart disease is still the leading killer in our communities.

February is American Heart Month and in Texas roughly about 23 percent of deaths are due to heart disease, according to the Texas Department of State Health Services. Since many of these deaths could have been prevented, Reeves County Hospital District urges members of the community to be aware of their heart health.

Four major risk factors for cardiovascular disease have long been identified, all of which are controllable to some degree. According to healthcare providers, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, smoking and lack of regular exercise are all potentially deadly elements that can contribute to heart complications.

Dr. Deitrick Gorman, Family Practice with OB at the Pecos Valley Rural Health Clinic, a service of Reeves County Hospital District, observed that “the first step is knowing your level of risk, the second is learning how to lower it. All of us at PVRHC encourage our patients to take the time to learn where you stand and to take steps to lower your risk of heart disease,” she added. “Even though February is observed as American Heart Month, good heart health should be practiced every day of the year.”

A thorough physical exam of your family medical history, weight, blood pressure and cardiovascular fitness can help identify possible complications. A medical provider can also advise whether you might benefit from an electrocardiogram (EKG), a test performed at Reeves County Hospital District that allows the provider to take a closer look at your heart’s performance.

If you are found to be at high risk for heart disease, your medical provider can supply you with the tools and a program that can help you fight back. Prescribed medication, a medically directed diet, and an exercise program are the usual options prescribed to improve your health.



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Those who are physically active are twice as likely to prevent a heart attack. According to the American Heart Association, exercise is beneficial in the long run as it decreases the risk of developing cardiovascular disease and other medical related illnesses.

Remember that physical activity can improve the condition of your heart and lungs. Exercise routines should be brisk enough to raise your heart and breathing rates, sustained for at least 30 minutes without interruption and repeated at least three to five times per week. "Be sure to check with your doctor to see if you are okay to start an exercise program," Dr. Gorman added.

In addition to regular exercise, keeping stress levels at bay, monitoring your cholesterol levels and eating a healthy diet are all key to helping ensure overall good cardiovascular health.

For more information about cardiovascular disease and whether you or someone in your family may be at risk call Pecos Valley Rural Health Clinic at 432-447-0565 to schedule a wellness exam with your local medical provider.

**About Reeves County Hospital District**

Reeves County Hospital District (RCHD) provides healthcare services for people in Reeves County and neighboring communities in West Texas. Founded in 1954, RCHD, a Level IV Trauma Center, offers a wide variety of medical services, including emergency care, diagnostic radiology, physical therapy, general surgery, a clinical laboratory and more. RCHD also operates American Home Health and Hospice and the Pecos Valley Rural Health Clinic, which offers family care, immunizations and other medical services. For more information, please visit [www.reevescountyhospital.com](http://www.reevescountyhospital.com).

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