

## Prostate screenings free Saturday

Fathers' Day is a few days away, and local health officials are making sure every dad or man in someone's life is screened for prostate cancer.

The Dallas County Health Department and medical professionals from Urology Centers of Alabama will offer a free 10-minute prostate screening exam on Saturday.

Dallas County Health Department administrator Stacey Adams and others at the department have spread word about the screenings to various areas of the county.

"We've really tried to promote it in the community," she said. "We've shared information with International Paper, Bush Hog, local barbershops and convenience stores. City Hall has actually put the information in pay stubs of city employees, and the county is doing that. We've asked our staff to share the information with their churches, so it could be announced in pulpits and congregations."

A few weeks ago screenings were held in Greenville and about 121 men showed up for the free exams, Adams said.

She said she's confident the men in Dallas County can produce a larger number of examinees.

It's every man's duty to be accountable for his well-being, said Dr. Thomas Moody of Urology Centers of Alabama.

He encourages men to start getting tested annually once they reach age 40.

"This is an opportunity for early detection because when prostate cancer is caught early it's curable," he said. "What he loses [if not tested] is the opportunity to be sure he's OK because if he doesn't come in it's like he's rolling the dice."

Alabama is third in the nation for prostate cancer deaths. The disease sometimes produces no symptoms until the cancer has reached a more developed stage

For those reasons, Moody said it's vital men get checked before it's too late.

"We have the highest death rate from prostate cancer among African Americans in Alabama," he said. "We think we can reduce the number of men who die from prostate cancer by diagnosing them early."

Adams said she's excited to partner with Moody and his staff because of the great services they will offer to those in the community.

"It's Father's Day weekend," she said. "I just encourage everyone to ask the men in their lives to really focus on their health, and to come out and be screened."

Screenings will be held at the Dallas County Health Department from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m.

For men whose screenings need additional examination, follow-up procedures will be recommended.

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