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PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Openings for Participants Still Available for Diabetes and Cardiovascular Prevention Program

A new program that is proven to reduce the risk of developing diabetes and cardiovascular disease currently has openings available for those who qualify.

The "Inch by Inch" program, offered by St. Peter's Hospital in collaboration with the Lewis and Clark City-County Health Department, is a 16-week course of nutrition counseling and physical activity coaching for adults identified as being at risk of developing type 2 diabetes or cardiovascular disease. The program is funded through a grant from the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services. The program is based on several studies that have shown that intensive lifestyle changes reduce the incidence of diabetes in persons at risk of developing the disease.

"We're trying to enroll at least 20 more participants by the end of March," says Lifestyle Coach Yvonne Tapper-Gardzina, a registered dietitian at St. Peter's Hospital. St.

To be eligible, participants must have a referral from their physician, and be ready to commit to a 16-week series of classes, which includes keeping a daily log of food intake and physical activity (with a goal of spending 150 minutes a week engaged in moderate physical activity). After the core program is completed, there will be monthly follow-up with participants for six months. Participants must also meet certain medical eligibility criteria, such as being overweight, elevated blood pressure, a history of gestational diabetes or lipid disorder.

"People who lose seven percent of their body weight, and maintain that weight loss, and integrate 150 minutes of moderate physical activity a week into their lives can reduce the risk of developing diabetes by 58%. The "Inch by Inch" program will work with participants to help them make and maintain these changes," says Tapper-Gardzina.

St. Peter's offers classes and access to workout equipment at the hospital. In addition, the health department provides community education and space for classes with individual consultations, while the Helena YMCA is donating memberships for eligible participants, as well as meeting space for classes. Enrollment of eligible participants is on a first come, first serve basis.

For more information about the "Inch by Inch" program, contact Yvonne Tapper-Gardzina at 406.444.2386.

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