

555 Towner St., Ypsilanti, MI 48198 Phone: (734) 544-6700 http://publichealth.ewashtenaw.org

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: April 24, 2013

Contacts: Susan Cerniglia Public Information Officer

734-544-6759

ringlers@ewashtenaw.org

## **MI Healthier Tomorrow**

County Medical Director "Weighs In" on Choosing a Healthier Future

YPSILANTI, Mich., April 24, 2013 – Dr. Alice Penrose, MD, MPH, Washtenaw County Public Health Medical Director, wants county residents to know our healthier tomorrow starts today. The MI Healthier Tomorrow campaign asks overweight Michiganders to pledge to lose 10% of their body weight and track their own key health measures. The pledge and other resources are available at <a href="https://www.michigan.gov/mihealthiertomorrow">www.michigan.gov/mihealthiertomorrow</a>.

"Good habits can be as addicting as bad habits. Once you have adjusted to a healthy lifestyle, you won't ever want to give it up," says Dr. Penrose.

Michigan is the 5<sup>th</sup> fattest state in the county – a trend the MI Healthier Tomorrow campaign strives to curb. Overall rates of overweight and obesity in Washtenaw County are slightly better than the state averages, but like elsewhere, these rates are moving in the wrong direction and are worse among some populations in our community. The local Health Improvement Plan Survey found overweight and obesity increased nearly 10% among adults surveyed from 2005 to 2010 (http://hip.ewashtenaw.org).

MI Healthier Tomorrow aims to support Michiganders as they launch a healthier tomorrow – starting now. When overweight Michiganders pledge to lose 10% of their body weight at the MI Healthier Tomorrow site, they receive a starter kit by mail and motivational emails and/or text messages twice per month. Over 22,000 have pledged already.

## **Getting Started with MI Healthier Tomorrows**

<u>Take the Pledge</u>. Are you ready to change your future? Start here. Start today.

Print the Know Your Numbers sheet. Talk with your health care provider to set a healthy, realistic weight loss goal. MI Healthier Tomorrow encourages everyone to know and track their numbers. These are four key health measures closely linked to several chronic diseases:

- Weight and body mass index
- Blood pressure
- Cholesterol level
- Blood sugar level

Start doing something healthier today. Use the MI Healthier To-Do List, MI Daily Plan and Food Journal pages for ideas.

Like the <u>MI Healthier Tomorrow Facebook page</u>, where you can learn more, share your experiences or challenge your friends and family to join the MI Healthier Tomorrow movement with you.

According to the MI Health Tomorrow campaign, losing just 10% of your body weight can make significant improvements to both your physical and mental health. A 10% weight loss for those who are overweight can:

- Improve blood pressure
- Lower cholesterol levels
- Improve heart health
- Decrease risk of Type 2 diabetes
- Strengthen the immune system
- Decrease back and joint pain
- Improve breathing and sleep
- Increase energy and stamina
- Improve mood and self-confidence

Dr. Penrose hopes local residents can make use of the tools available through the state's program to get healthier – and to share it. Together we can all enjoy a healthier tomorrow.

Washtenaw County Public Health promotes health and works to prevent disease and injury in our community. Visit us online at <a href="http://publichealth.ewashtenaw.org">http://publichealth.ewashtenaw.org</a>.