

Press Release

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NATIONAL HEALTH SURVEY UNDERWAY IN MORRIS COUNTY

The National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES), the most comprehensive study of the health and nutritional status of the U.S. population gets underway in the northern part of Morris county beginning on *June 8, 2010*.

What is the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey?

- Unique program that monitors the health and nutritional status of the U.S. population
- Valuable tool for developing effective health policies and programs
- It is an opportunity to gain information about one's health
- The survey includes health interviews and health measurements

Each year, approximately 7,000 randomly-selected residents in 15 counties across the nation have the opportunity to participate in the latest National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS).

"NHANES is very much like a 'health exam center on wheels,' that goes out into actual communities to get data on real Americans," said NCHS Director Edward Sondik. "It truly is a unique resource for health information in this country, and without it we wouldn't have data on a number of important health conditions.

NHANES has been conducted by NCHS for nearly 50 years and provides annual estimates on a range of diseases such as the number of individuals who have heart disease, diabetes, osteoporosis, hypertension, respiratory disease, and other conditions.

The information gathered in NHANES is used by public health officials, legislators, and physicians to develop sound health policies, direct and design health programs and services, and expand the health knowledge for the nation. In addition, NHANES data is used to create standardized growth charts used by pediatricians across the country to track children's growth.

Individuals selected for the survey represent the U.S. population of all ages. Additional emphasis in the current NHANES is placed on the health of older persons, African-Americans and Hispanics.

Respondents first participate in a health interview conducted in the respondent's home. The health examination that follows takes place in one of three mobile examination centers that travel to different communities, large and small, urban and rural, across the country for data collection.

A team of health personnel, including a physician, nutritionists, and health and laboratory technicians using high-tech, state-of-the-art equipment, staffs the mobile examination centers. A team of specially-trained professionals conducts the household interviews.



All participants receive an examination by a physician, as well as a dietary interview, and body measurements that include height and weight. Some will be eligible for a hearing test, a scan to evaluate skeletal health, a breathing test, as well as a blood pressure test. The various tests and procedures depend upon the age of the participant.

No medical care is provided directly in the examination center, but a report on the medical findings is given to each participant along with an explanation from survey medical staff.

All individual information collected in the survey is kept strictly confidential, and privacy is protected by public law.

Participants selected to undergo the physical examination receive reimbursement for travel expenses and remuneration of up to \$125 per person.



Questions and Answers for Municipalities

Q. What is the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES)?

A. You, or a member of your family, may have a chance to take part in an important national health survey. The National Center for Health Statistics, a part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, is responsible for this survey - The National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES). This survey teaches us about the health and diet of people in the United States. Over the years, this survey has led to improvements in the food we eat and the health care we receive.

Q. How was I selected?

A. Participants are selected through a complex statistical process using the most current Census information. In simple terms, NHANES divides the United States into communities. The communities are divided into neighborhoods. The neighborhoods are selected at random. From each neighborhood, housing units are selected at random. You may have received our introductory letter, sent to "resident" at your home address.

Selected households are approached by our interviewers who ask a few short questions to determine if their household is eligible for the study.

Q. Why was I selected?

A. You have a unique health profile; if you are selected to be a participant, no other person can be substituted for you. You were selected based on your age, gender, and racial/ethnic background. No one can take your place in this survey. Each person represents approximately 65,000 other U.S. residents. The identities of all participants are held strictly confidential.

Q. Who participates?

A. Approximately 5,000 individuals will be examined each year across the United States.

Q. How do I know this is a legitimate survey?

A. NHANES has a long history; it has been in existence since the early 1960s and has surveyed over 140,000 people. Past Participants have gained new insight into their health and have enjoyed taking part in the survey. The feedback we have received from participants includes:

- "My daughter and I went through the survey and exam and we were both glad we did it. Everyone was so nice."
- "I was impressed by how professional everyone was."
- "I think it is great that the government helps keep us informed about health issues."
- "I was impressed by all of the high tech equipment."

Additionally, many national organizations and Universities have endorsed NHANES through letters of endorsement.

The NHANES staff consists of professional individuals with a variety of health, research, and academic backgrounds. The staff at the mobile examination center include: a doctor, a phlebotomist, health technicians and highly trained interviewers.

Q. Is my information confidential?

A. Public laws keep all information participants give confidential. We will hold all data we collect in the strictest confidence. Federal laws prohibit us from giving out information that identifies you or your family without your consent. This means that we cannot give out any fact about you, even if a court of law asks for it. We will keep all survey data safe and secure. We assign code numbers in place of names or other facts that could identify you.

Q. What is involved in Participating?

A. There are two main parts to this survey, the home interview and the health examination.

The Interview

An NHANES interviewer will come to your home to talk to you about the survey. This interviewer should present a CDC photo identification badge which identifies this person as a health representative working on the study. The interviewer will then ask you a few questions to see if you qualify to participate. If you do, the interviewer will set up an appointment with you for an in-home interview. During this interview you will be asked questions about your health, disease history, and diet.

Again, anything you say during this interview is confidential.

The Health Examination

The Mobile Exam Center (MEC) is made up of four trailers, linked sideways, which contain high-tech medical equipment. The MEC is situated in a location convenient for participants. The NHANES staff can help you with transportation to the MEC if needed.

You will have a health examination consisting of a number of measurements and tests. The exams will depend on your age and gender and current medical conditions.

****This exam is not a substitute for your regular health care examination. There will be no invasive internal exam and no drug testing.**

Q. What are the Benefits of Participating?

- Many of the measurements and tests performed in the Mobile Exam Center are unique, and they are not commonly done in doctor's offices during routine physical exams. This is a chance for you to gain additional health information about yourself and your family's health. These tests are done at no expense to you.
- Every participant will receive results from their examination. Participants will receive a preliminary report of findings when they leave the mobile exam center and a complete report of their results will be mailed to participants 12-16 weeks after the exam. These results are yours to discuss with your doctor or keep for your own medical records.
- Contributing to the Health Knowledge of the U.S.
- NHANES has traditionally published findings on a range of topics often through the news media. Topics include: obesity, cholesterol, hypertension, blood lead levels, growth charts, osteoporosis and dietary intake
- All participants, regardless of age, are given a cash payment as a "thank-you" for their time and effort. NHANES will also reimburse participants for transportation and baby/elder care.

For more information, please call 1-800-452-6115 or visit www.cdc.gov/nhanes