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Frostburg Lions offering free diabetic glucometers

FOR THE CUMBERLAND TIMES-NEWS

FROSTBURG — Frostburg Lions are offering free diabetic glucometers to individuals who are newly diabetic, seniors and others who do not have insurance to cover the cost of this equipment. Glucometers run \$20 or more at local retail outlets.

The glucometers are provided by a variety of manufacturers to the Lions District Diabetes Awareness Committee for free distribution. Units are brand new, with all original packaging. "We can not accept, or distribute, used equipment," Lion Donna Jackman said. "Health and safety laws do not permit it."

Jackman recommends that "Individuals have two meters so they have one at home and one at work. Or, at least have a backup." Typically, when a glucometer has reached its life expectancy, it provides no warning when it ceases to function properly.

"I feel the more we can help to control diabetes," Jackman said. "The healthier lifestyle a person can have."

Jackman is chairwoman of the Lions District Diabetes Awareness Committee and is a strong advocate for diabetes awareness, and care. The group also provides "camper-ships" to the Lions Diabetic Camp for Children.

Frostburg Lions are working closely with the Diabetes Awareness Committee and Jackman to help increase awareness of diabetes and the problems it can cause. The Lions dis-

tribute awareness materials and help with other diabetic issues.

"I have been diabetic for over five years," commented Lion Bill Munck of Frostburg. "You can never know enough about diabetes and how it affects you." Diabetes is a factor in many health issues, including heart attack, stroke and blindness. Munck's family history indicated only one great aunt had ever had diabetes, but it has now affected "one generation of the family and part of another."

Statistics indicate that someone is diagnosed with diabetes every 20 seconds, and, according to a survey from the American Diabetes Association, many Americans lack basic knowledge about the potentially life-threatening disease. Diabetes is responsible for more deaths each year in the United States than breast cancer and AIDS combined, but just 42 percent of those surveyed knew that diabetes could be so deadly.

New statistics from the

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention illustrate that diabetes has risen by more than 14 percent in the last two years. The CDC estimates that 20.8 million Americans — 7 percent of the U.S. population — have diabetes, up from 18.2 million.

Nearly a third of these Americans are undiagnosed. According to the American Diabetes Association, the new numbers highlight the growing diabetes epidemic in the United States and reinforce the need for increased research and prevention.

"Education is the key," said Jackman. "Folks need to be aware of diabetes, and what it can do." She has been working with the Lions District Diabetes Awareness Committee for more than four years.

For more information about diabetes, and the free glucometers, call the Frostburg Lions Club at (301) 687-0212. Donations may be sent to Frostburg Lions Club, Diabetes Awareness, P.O. Box 371, Frostburg, MD 21532.

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