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ST. ELIZABETH'S HOSPITAL TAKES STEPS TO STOP DIABETES
Special programs available for children and adults

Belleville, Ill – During American Diabetes Month this November, St. Elizabeth's Hospital is encouraging people to make healthful changes in their diets and exercise routines to reduce their risk of diabetes.

Nearly 26 million children and adults have diabetes in the United States. The American Diabetes Association estimates that the total national cost of diagnosed diabetes in the United States is \$174 billion. Further published studies suggest that when additional costs for gestational diabetes, pre-diabetes and undiagnosed diabetes are included, the total diabetes-related costs in the United States could exceed \$218 billion.

Diabetes is a serious disease. If it isn't managed, it can damage many parts of the body, leading to heart attacks, strokes, amputation, blindness, kidney failure and nerve damage. But there is good news: diabetes complications can be prevented or delayed by properly managing blood glucose, blood pressure and cholesterol levels. Eating healthy, being physically active and quitting smoking also can help lower the risk of diabetes complications.

"Recent estimates project that as many as one in three American adults will have diabetes in 2050 unless we take steps to stop diabetes," stated Haley Riechmann, RD, LDN, St. Elizabeth's Hospital Outpatient Nutrition Counselor. "We need to unite and pledge to end a disease which puts a serious emotional, physical and economic toll on all those affected."

Riechmann counsels patients on ways to prevent diabetes, manage existing diabetes and prevent or decrease the rate of developing complications due to the disease. Medicare beneficiaries diagnosed with diabetes are eligible for 3 hours of one-

on-one medical nutrition therapy the first year of diagnosis and 2 hours each year after that.

She also notes that diabetes is one of the most common chronic diseases in children and adolescents. About 151,000 people below the age of 20 have diabetes and thousands more are undiagnosed. "Obese children are more likely to be obese adults and are at greater risk for diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease," says Riechmann. "The CDC reports 19 percent of children ages 6 to 11 nationwide, and 17 percent of those ages 12 to 19 are overweight."

As these statistics rise, St. Elizabeth's Hospital is introducing a Pediatric Weight Management Program, conducted by Riechmann and beginning in January of 2012, to educate children and their parents on proper nutrition to prevent diseases, such as diabetes.

Create Your Weight for Pediatrics is an 11-week program based on guidelines from The American Dietetic Association (ADA) and developed by Registered Dietitians who specialize in Pediatrics. The first introductory session, on Monday, January 30, is offered for free.

This scientifically based program is designed for children ages 7-12. The program encompasses nutrition education, physical activity and the role of behavior therapy in weight reduction and life-long weight management. Nutrition education focuses on basic nutrition, meal planning, portion sizes, snacking, grocery shopping and dining outside the home. Physical activity focuses on the activity pyramid and exercise requirements for children. Behavior therapy focuses on building a child's self-esteem, family involvement and understanding hunger and satiety.

For more information about diabetes prevention and management, or the *Create Your Weight* pediatric wellness program, call 618-641-5498.

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About Hospital Sisters Health System

Hospital Sisters Health System is a Roman Catholic health care mission founded to continue the healing ministry of Jesus Christ. Sponsored by the Hospital Sisters of St. Francis, HSHS provides state-of-the-art health care framed in traditional values taught by St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi. It is dedicated to serving all people, including the poor and the needy, at each of its 13 Local Systems and physician practices in Illinois (Belleville, Breese, Decatur, Effingham, Highland, Litchfield, Springfield and Streator) and Wisconsin (Chippewa Falls, Eau Claire, Sheboygan and two in Green Bay). For more information about HSHS, visit www.hshs.org.