The 3-4-50 concept is defined as three behaviors (poor diet, physical inactivity and tobacco use) which contribute to four chronic diseases (vascular disease (which includes heart disease and strokes), cancer, lung disease, and type 2 diabetes) causing over 50 percent of all deaths in the United States. Throughout the nation and in Santa Barbara County, the four chronic diseases impact the quality of life and result in premature death for many of our residents.Outlined below are two recommendations that will steer behavioral changes towards a more healthy way of life in this New Year.

Diet and exercise are critical for health and one way to guide healthy eating is to follow My Plate. Put simply, half your plate should be fruit and vegetables and half your plate should be protein and grains, with some dairy on the side. Most of us need to increase our portions of fruits and vegetables and decrease our portions of the other foods. An adult who consumes 2000 calories should eat 2.5 cups of vegetables and 2 cups of fruit daily. A cup is about the size of a baseball. It is also important to make healthy choices from each food group, such as whole grains that are high in fiber and protein foods that are not highly processed or deep-fried. Avoiding or decreasing consumption of sweet drinks and eating more home-cooked food can be important first steps.

In addition to healthy eating it is recommended that adults get 150 minutes of physical activity each week. While the advice may be easy to remember, it is much harder to do. Try making small steps toward your goals. For example, if you drink soda every day, try cutting back to twice a week. Find a type of exercise you enjoy, and do it with a buddy. Remember, these changes can have a big impact. The Diabetes Prevention Program Study found that people with pre-diabetes were able to reduce their risk of getting diabetes by 58% through diet and exercise.¹

For more information visit the My Plate website (http://www.choosemyplate.gov), or ask your doctor for a referral to see a registered dietitian.

The annual Sentinel Influenza Project administered by the Public Health Department Epidemiology Unit monitors influenza-like illness (ILI) across Santa Barbara County during the flu season which starts at the beginning of October and continues through mid-May. The Sentinel Influenza Project uses a multi-pronged approach to capture information from a variety of sources. On a weekly basis, there are seven reporting health providers that fax the number of ILI patients seen as well as total patients seen each day (see chart below for percentage of ILI seen by the sentinel providers the past 3 years). This provider information is inputted into a CDC U.S. Outpatient Influenza-like Illness Surveillance Network (ILINet). Daily, the five Emergency Departments in the County report the number of ILI patients seen, total patients seen, as well as number of ILI admissions using the Reddinet system. The CalREDIE electronic reporting system used by medical providers captures Intensive Care Unit Hospitalizations of 0-64 year olds and deaths of 0-64 year olds due to influenza. Locally the Vital Records office monitors all death certificates for any mention of influenza as a cause of death. Each year, there are a handful of flu-related deaths in the over 65 population. These deaths are usually associated with underlying conditions that make them more susceptible to influenza. Additionally, the Public Health Disease Control Program investigates all outbreaks of ILI in congregate settings such as long term care facilities. The Public Health Laboratory PCR tests hospital specimens and also surveys the hospital labs for inpatient flu testing counts and rapid flu test results.

The Local Influenza Update (which includes a more robust version of the chart above) found on the Epidemiology Seasonal Influenza webpage (http://cosb.countyofsb.org/phd/epi.aspx?id=46273) will be updated each Friday for the remainder of the influenza season. Although flu activity has reached epidemic levels on the East Coast and other areas of the United States, locally the numbers of flu cases reported are on trend with this time of year. The majority of circulating influenza is flu A. Influenza reports are expected to climb in January as consistent reporting after the holidays continue. As in previous years, the peak of the flu season is estimated to arrive in February.

---

2 Influenza-like illness (ILI): Fever (>100 deg F [37.8 deg C] oral or equivalent in office or reported) PLUS cough and/or sore throat (in absence of other known cause)