

**For Immediate Release**  
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## **ALEGENT HEALTH AND LIFE LINE SCREENING TEAM UP TO SAVE LIVES**

OMAHA, Neb. – Alegent Health is joining forces with Life Line Screening, the nation's largest provider of preventive screenings to reduce the risk of stroke and fractures. Preventive health screenings can identify risk factors that lead to stroke or fractures before they happen.

Combining Life Line Screenings with Alegent Health's state-of-the-art diagnostics and nine hospitals creates a continuum of care that is unsurpassed in Nebraska and Iowa. "We understand the value of preventive health care and have made a commitment to help prevent catastrophic events like stroke," said John May, vice president of cardiovascular services at Alegent Health. This partnership is an important illustration of that commitment."

The metro area's first screening, sponsored by Alegent Health, will be held Thursday, May 22, 2008 at the Tangier Shrine center, 2823 S. 84<sup>th</sup> St. At that screening, highly skilled sonographers will screen for health problems ranging from stroke to osteoporosis.

Provided screenings include:

- Carotid Artery Screening – painless, non-invasive Doppler ultrasound is used to visualize the carotid arteries, the arteries that bring blood to the brain. The majority of strokes are caused by plaque build up in these arteries.
- Atrial Fibrillation Screening (Afib) – An ECG machine is used to identify this irregular heart rhythm. During Afib, the blood may not pump out of the heart completely and can pool in the heart chambers, forming a clot. This clot may then travel to the brain where it can cause a stroke or travel elsewhere to block the arteries to the arms, legs, kidneys or other organs. Individuals with atrial fibrillation have a five-fold increased risk of stroke.
- Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening –Ultrasound is used to visualize the abdominal aorta, the largest artery in the body, to measure the diameter of the aorta. This measurement can indicate if there is a weakening in the aortic wall which can cause a ballooning effect known as an aneurysm. Aneurysms can burst, which generally is fatal.
- Peripheral Arterial Disease Screening – PAD is also known as "hardening of the arteries." Sufferers have a 4-6 fold increased risk of cardiovascular disease. Risk is evaluated through a measurement called the "Ankle-Brachial Index," which is obtained by reading the systolic pressure in the ankle and arm.
- Osteoporosis Screening – Ultrasound is used to estimate the bone density of the heel. This can indicate if there is a reduction in bone density, which may indicate the presence of osteoporosis. The heel is used because it is similar in composition to the hip, where disabling fractures often occur.

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These diseases are considered “silent killers” that strike with no previous symptoms or only subtle ones. In fact, half of all stroke victims are asymptomatic yet a simple screening may prevent death or disability. And that is critical when you consider that someone suffers a stroke every 45 seconds in this country. It illustrates just how important these kinds of screenings are to people especially as they age.

“We are very pleased to be partnering with Alegent Health,” says Colin Scully, Life Line Screening Chairman and CEO. “Life Line Screening is dedicated to helping people live fuller, healthier lives, and this partnership is a concrete example of putting that mission into practice.”

A special Wellness Package of all five screenings is available for only \$149. The whole process takes less than an hour.

For a complete listing of screening events, you can log onto [www.alegent.com](http://www.alegent.com), contact Life Line Screening at [www.lifelinescreening.com](http://www.lifelinescreening.com) or call 1-800-690-0295 to register.

### **About Alegent Health**

Alegent Health is the largest not-for-profit, faith-based health care system in Nebraska and southwestern Iowa with nine acute care hospitals, more than 100 sites of service, over 1,300 physicians on its medical staff and 9,000 employees. Alegent Health is making healthcare better with an exceptional commitment to quality and by providing patient focused care for the body, mind and spirit of every person consistent with its faith-based mission. Alegent Health continues the health ministry begun by its sponsors, Catholic Health Initiatives and Immanuel Health Systems, more than a hundred years ago. At Alegent Health, patients and their families find a continuum of care, from women's and children's services, primary care, wellness counseling, and senior care to cardiovascular services, orthopaedics, oncology, physical rehabilitation, home care and behavioral health.

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