

TO MEDIA:

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**HEADING TO THE WOODS? SIGN UP FOR HUNTER HEART CHECK
EXCELA HEALTH'S FREE SCREENINGS PINPOINT POTENTIAL RISKS**

GREENSBURG, PA, August 13, 2012 ... Heading into the woods is exhilarating for seasoned as well as novice hunters. But the experience can also be deadly.

"Hunting is hard work," noted Excela Health interventional cardiologist Robert M. Amory, DO, FACC. "But few hunters are prepared for the workout, because generally they lead a sedentary lifestyle."

Idle several months of the year, hunters now face changeable weather conditions, long periods on their feet, and if successful in bagging a deer, the exertion of moving a 150 to 200-pound carcass.

"Inactivity, being over or underdressed for the climate, an underlying medical condition can all factor into an unfortunate hunting experience," said Dr. Amory, himself a hunter with more than 20 years experience.

Being able to relate to his patients by sharing stories, Dr. Amory guides those in his care to take precautions to ensure a favorite pastime remains pleasurable.

"Never hunt alone," advises Dr. Amory. "I speak from experience here. I had no history of kidney stones but found myself in excruciating pain and my buddies were a half-mile away. I couldn't move until the pain subsided and then I had to walk to meet them. Fortunately they had a four-runner to haul me out of the woods. Now think about the person with an implantable device and heart disease hunting alone on private property. Is that really a wise idea?"

Even generally healthy individuals underestimate their ability to withstand

the rigors of the hunt. “Standing any length of time causes a drop in blood pressure,” Dr. Amory explained, “And you can be hours in a tree stand that’s only a few inches wide and 10 to 15 feet above ground. That’s why hunters are advised to tie themselves to the tree, so that in the event they become dizzy, they won’t fall. You might not have a heart attack, but a head injury is just as likely.”

Dr. Amory bonded with his father-in-law by sharing the call of the wild, and last year, the Greensburg physician introduced another generation to deer hunting by taking his 12-year-old son on his first expedition. “It’s was a great time to just be together and we have our first story of seeing a bear to remember,” he said. “These experiences help me build rapport with my patients, who then are more receptive to heeding the heart-healthy advice.”

To prepare individuals for the 2012 fall hunting season, Excelsa Health will hold its first Hunter Heart Check, 7:30 to 11:30 a.m., Saturday, Aug. 25 at Gander Mountain, 1040 Town Square Drive, Greensburg.

The event includes free screenings, breakfast and prizes. Screenings include blood pressure, body mass index (BMI), blood sugar and EKGs. A hearing test also will be available. An eight-hour fast is recommended.

Pre-registration is requested with the Excelsa Health Call Center, 1-877-771-1234. The first 150 registrants receive a fleece hunter’s cap or ear band.