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# Program keeps you young

by **Connie Gorrell**  
*for Fort Wayne Newspapers*

The month of April historically holds the potential for frequent showers to usher in the flowers that bloom in May. But with the coming of April look for showers of other opportunities in Fort Wayne. It's springtime and seniors are stepping out to take advantage of a special event targeting older adults ages 50 and older.

St. Joseph Hospital and Lutheran Health Network's Healthy LifeSteps program present the fourth annual Forever Young Expo on Friday, April 16, at the Grand Wayne Center from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. This year's theme is "April Showers Bring May Flowers" in celebration of the awakening of spring and the awareness of good health.

Admission to the Expo is free which includes two hours of free parking in the Civic Center Garage. This gives participants ample time to take advantage of health screenings offered at little or no cost. Among the free opportunities is bone density screening for osteoporosis. This bone disorder is a major health concern for over 44 million older adults in this country. Recent studies report more than 10 million American adults have

osteoporosis today, and another 34 million have low bone density that places them at an increased risk for fractures in the future. The Forever Young Expo offers other free services such as glucose, blood pressure, skin cancer, and body mass index screenings.

In any disease, early detection is vital. Cholesterol and colon cancer screenings are offered at the Expo for about the same price as a big burger combo meal at a local fast food shop. Though not intended to replace an annual physical examination, health screenings are an effective tool to use as a "snap shot" of your current health state. Awareness of blood cholesterol levels is a must, and with colon cancer rating second in cancer deaths, these quick and simple screening tests become more important than ever.

The stage is set for enjoyment. Find delight each hour with surprise presentations, free massages, food, fun, and education. "Calling all early birds," invites Coleen Arribasplata, coordinator of Healthy LifeSteps. "We have shortened the Expo and getting started earlier this year. We offer lots of free screenings and booths with information to keep you young and healthy." To be certain, getting involved in Healthy LifeSteps programs is a step in the right direction.