

Mercy Insights

Health care's bright spot

WINTER 2011



◀ **Going digital.** Technician Jillian Haseleu, RT, is excited about the faster, more accurate detection offered by digital mammography.

The better to see you with

According to Schiller, today's new technology allows technicians to digitally capture images and adjust them to more clearly detect any changes or abnormalities.

"Staying current with technology is important," he says. "We're excited to offer this improved and enhanced service."

Along with digital mammography, Mercy will also provide computer-aided detection, or iCAD. This highlights and overlays the areas the radiologist should view more closely, helping ensure that any potential problems are detected.

MAMMOGRAPHY

Digital detection now at Mercy

CHANGES in technology bring welcome innovations in medical imaging. Mercy Hospital is now the home of one of those vital innovations—digital mammography.

Digital mammography is a key advancement in helping women maintain good breast health. Starting in their 50s, women find that their breast tissue becomes more fibrous, making it more difficult to detect potential problems. With

digital mammography, detection becomes faster—and more accurate.

"We are a community hospital, and we want our patients to stay in our own community for their care," says Brad Schiller, Mercy's imaging services director. "That takes significant investments, and Mercy is doing that by bringing digital mammography to our hospital."

Digital mammography allows images to be adjusted for clearer viewing.

Get screened

Screening mammograms do not require an order from a physician. Appointments can be made directly with Mercy's imaging services department.

Upon completion of a screening, Mercy will send the results to the patient's doctor.

Imaging services can be reached directly at **701-845-6441**.



Visit us online at www.mercyhospitalvalleycity.org.



Information at the click of a button

Last summer, Mercy Hospital proudly kicked off its awareness campaign: Health care's bright spot. The campaign's goal is to ensure that you're informed about the breadth and depth of services Mercy offers right here in Valley City. Delivering high-quality care close to home remains our priority, and we want you to know that we're here to serve you 365 days a year.

We have completely overhauled our website. While the old address will redirect you to our new website, the new address is www.mercyhospitalvalleycity.org.

You'll find the site packed full of helpful information about our services, useful procedure definitions, important numbers to know, where to go for certain services, information about classes and other community services, and much more.

It's our way of helping you stay connected to your local hospital, providing information at your fingertips, whenever and wherever you need it.

We encourage you to check out our newly revamped website, which offers more information than ever before.

On the radio and in your mailbox. You can also learn more about the latest happenings at Mercy through the *Voice of the Valley* radio program on KOVC 1490 AM. Mercy Administrator Keith Heuser is on the air the first Monday of every month at 11:30 a.m.

And we'll continue to send you *Mercy Insights* three times a year.



Cardiac rehab's focus is help, education

February is National Heart Month and a good time to think about your risk for heart disease, the leading cause of death in America.

Since 1994, Mercy's cardiac rehab program has provided education and exercise for people who have experienced a heart attack, have had heart surgery or who have heart disease. Three phases of cardiac rehab are available, and a variety of exercise machines help patients increase their strength and reduce their risk of future heart problems. Educational sessions address diet, lipid levels, stress management and medications.

The goals of cardiac rehab include increasing physical capacity through exercise and improving the quality of life for people with heart disease.

In the community. Mercy Hospital's cardiac rehab program works year-round to

help patients and educate the community. Here's a roundup of news and activities:

► Feb. 4 is National Wear Red Day. Yvonne Steidl, RN, Mercy's cardiac rehab coordinator, encourages women to wear red and educate themselves about heart health.

"Women with heart disease may have different symptoms than men," Steidl says. "For example, chest pain may not be a symptom of heart attack in women."

► "Call 911 within minutes" was the take-home message from Mercy's annual cardiac rehab supper and speaker event. Mindy Cook, of Sanford Health in Fargo, spoke about the importance of rapid response if someone has heart attack symptoms.

► Mercy's cardiac rehab staff members learned the latest about nutrition, depression, underserved groups, legislative action and more at the national conference of the American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehab.

For more information about cardiac rehab at Mercy, call **701-845-6561**.



Special dental services now offered

General dentistry with anesthesia is a new service offered at Mercy Hospital.

Valley City dentist Brian Bulik, DDS, will provide general dentistry services with anesthesia to people with disabilities and adults and children with high anxiety.

Using anesthesia is the only way some people with disabilities can have dental cleanings or restorative work completed, says Stephanie Kruta, RN, MSN,

surgery manager at Mercy.

"This is a unique opportunity for us to serve a population here that otherwise would have to travel to Bismarck for these services," she says.

Dr. Bulik saw the need in the community and asked Mercy to consider offering such services. Kruta anticipates seeing four to six people per month for dentistry with anesthesia.

Act fast

Mercy's stroke team moves quickly to help young mom

CRISTAL Larsen was drying her hair to get ready for work when she collapsed on the bathroom floor in her Valley City home.

Her husband called for an ambulance, which transported her to Mercy Hospital. There, the team quickly assessed and addressed Larsen's condition—a stroke.

"I'm 35 years old," Larsen says. "You don't expect to have a major health issue."

Minutes matter

Stroke is a time-sensitive condition, says Alana Wendel, RN. In Mercy's emergency department, Wendel sees improved outcomes when stroke patients get immediate help.

"We have a stroke team and can stabilize a patient, so it's important that people come to us right away," Wendel says.

Mercy was one of the first North Dakota hospitals to establish a stroke team. A code green alerts the team that a stroke patient is on the way. The team takes steps to prepare for immediate care, such as warming up the CT scanner and preparing tissue plasminogen activator (TPA), a clot-busting drug for patients who have had a stroke caused by a blood clot.

According to the American Stroke Association, TPA works best when given within three hours of the onset of symptoms. In some cases, TPA can be given within 4½ hours of the onset of symptoms. Generally, only 3 to 5 percent of those who have a stroke reach the hospital in time to



▲ Strong survivor. After having a stroke, Cristal Larsen (seen here with her husband and two daughters) received the clot-busting drug TPA at Mercy Hospital.

be considered for this treatment.

Larsen arrived at Mercy in time to have TPA.

"Mercy did a great job," she says. "Many rural hospitals don't have TPA, so we're lucky."

Mercy's stroke team moves into action even before the patient arrives.

Road to recovery

Once stabilized, Larsen was transported

to Fargo for the next phase of care. She spent three weeks in the hospital, followed by many months of occupational, physical and speech therapy in Fargo and Valley City.

"I couldn't say anything right after the stroke," Larsen says. "Getting my speech back has been the hardest part."

The stroke took an emotional toll on Larsen's husband and two young daughters. Larsen says the family is grateful for the generous support from Mercy and the community.

"So many people in Valley City helped out and prayed for me," she says. "People I didn't even know had heard my story."

Larsen still has therapy a few days a week and hopes to go back to work soon.

"Now I don't take anything for granted," she says. "Just when you have a plan for your life, God has a different plan. He's the one in charge."

Be alert: 5 signs of stroke

Recognizing the signs of a stroke can save a life. The quicker medical help arrives, the better the chances of recovery.

If any of these stroke symptoms occur suddenly, call 911 immediately:

- 1. Walk:** Is the person's balance off?
- 2. Talk:** Is speech slurred or the face droopy?
- 3. Reach:** Is one side weak or numb?
- 4. See:** Is vision lost, partially or completely?
- 5. Feel:** Does the person have a severe headache?

Source: The Stroke Collaborative

MERCY INSIGHTS is published as a community service for the friends and patrons of MERCY HOSPITAL, 570 Chautauqua Blvd., Valley City, ND 58072-3199, telephone 701-845-6400, www.mercyhospitalvalleycity.org.

Keith E. Heuser, Administrator

Information in MERCY INSIGHTS comes from a wide range of medical experts. If you have any concerns or questions about specific content that may affect your health, please contact your health care provider.

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Snow day. The Darla and Tyler Jacobson family joined the program as a family and have fun exercising in the snow.

local businesses and nonprofits.

“We want to help people make a personal commitment to start exercising—and have fun doing it,” Buhr says.

Making a difference

Recurring themes in this year’s program focus on exercise as a way to lower heart disease risk and to reduce the risk of colon cancer. On the Move received a \$4,000 grant from the American Heart Association and a \$6,200 grant from the North Dakota Cancer Coalition.

Through other funding, On the Move will expand its programming beyond the Valley City School District, reaching students at schools throughout the Barnes County area in March.

Exercise classes, information and having fun are the major elements of the program, which runs through April 15. You can find more information and register at

 www.barnesonthemove.org. The website is loaded with program schedules, health information and a personal exercise record.

You can also call **701-845-6456** or e-mail info@healthyheartprogram.com.

On the Move

Annual program encourages exercise goals, new activities

GET moving! That’s the simple, motivating purpose of the 13th annual Barnes On the Move program led by Mercy Hospital.

“While this program is about making a personal commitment to exercise, we also hope people benefit from the collective energy of the community supporting each other and doing something healthy together,” says Sharon Buhr, MPH, LRD, On the Move program coordinator at Mercy.

The \$12 registration fee includes

a T-shirt, coupons for free and discounted items, and free admission to dozens of On the Move classes and programs.

On the Move classes include strength training and walking using hand weights and an introduction to exercise equipment. For those who want to expand their exercise experience, On the Move offers free, one-time sessions to sample kickboxing, yoga, zumba, tai chi and more.

On the Move organizers hope to have 500 participants this year. Mercy is the lead partner in a group that includes 13 government agencies,