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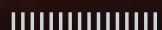
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## Fast Answers



## HIGH-TECH CARE



## Safe Sleeping Techniques for Babies

BONNIE .....  
WANTED TO  
HELP OTHERS  
PREVENT  
COPD  
page 6 .....



# Bourne to Quit

After 17 years of puffing,  
**MATT DAMON** embraced a  
new smoke-free identity



# Step by Step

*Walking for 30 minutes a day* can help reduce your risk for heart disease and diabetes. What are you waiting for?

Living with **VIGOR**





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## SPECIAL

### Timely Answers, Quality Treatment

By reducing the wait time for lab results to less than 36 hours for patients undergoing biopsies and mammograms, it means less worry and stress and a better experience.

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After 17 years of a daily pack-and-a-half habit, it was love that persuaded one of Hollywood's true nice guys to put down the cigarettes. For **inspiration, advice and a boy-meets-girl romance**, see how Matt Damon quit smoking—and how you can tackle it yourself.



# Healthcare: Your Way

*Bringing you the latest in  
medical advances*



John Gorski

**W**hat's new, you ask? We are pleased to share with you in this issue information on new technology and new outpatient centers that will make it easier to access our services closer to your home and work. As not-for-profit hospitals, Community Hospital, St. Catherine Hospital and St. Mary Medical Center continue to reinvest revenues into their facilities and their surrounding communities to enhance the services available to everyone.

Our hospitals have opened Immediate Care Centers with St. Catherine Hospital's Family Care Center in the Hessville neighborhood of Hammond, St. Mary Medical Center's Valparaiso Health Center in Valparaiso and, in addition to St. John, a new Community Hospital Outpatient Center in Schererville. These are just some of the ways we are bringing quality, convenient healthcare to you when you need it.

When it comes to improving patient care behind the scenes, our hospitals' laboratory services have changed processes (page 4) in order to ensure diagnoses are more accurate and efficient and provide information to our physicians and healthcare team more quickly than ever before.

The right combination of technology, resources and an extraordinary team of healthcare professionals is also changing the breast cancer treatment experience at the Women's Diagnostic Center in Munster (page 50). Read how Maria Lopez benefited from new technology, called PEM, that answered questions and got her on the right track to treatment and recovery.

New MRI technology at St. Catherine Hospital (page 52) is making the entire patient experience easier, less stressful from start to finish. Open MRI machines, such as the wide-bore style at St. Catherine's, are far less constricting—open on the sides with the patient's entire body not enclosed by the machine. With every advance, we have an opportunity to make your care a safer and more comfortable experience.

Designed with maximum comfort and healing in mind, St. Mary Medical Center's new \$40 million, two-story surgical pavilion (page 54) features state-of-the-art technology that provides the most innovative procedures for the best outcomes.

We'll continue to add programs and services so you won't have to look any further than your own neighborhood for the highest-quality healthcare.

John Gorski  
Chief Operating Officer  
Community Healthcare System



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McMURRY/TMG



# Healthcare Heroes

*Recognizing the best of the best*

**F**rom staff nurse to educator to nurse practitioner and nurse researcher, RNs use their knowledge, skills and experience to innovate and improve the patient care experience. The hospitals of Community Healthcare System salute this dedication and excellence and thank the extraordinary people who practice the art of healing every day on our behalf.

## COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

Intermediate Care Unit patient care technician Jim Phelan is recipient of the 2013 Patient Caregiver Excellence Award, and Christine Hicks, registered nurse in Endoscopy, has received the 2013 Nursing Excellence Award.

Phelan has worked at Community Hospital for less than two years, but is already making an impact on patient care and satisfaction. According to his nominations, “Many times he has gone above and beyond to help nurses care for a patient who just needs extra TLC.”

Hicks has been working at Community Hospital for more than 21 years. Her Nursing Excellence Award nominations state, “She doesn’t just take care of the patients, she also takes very good care of their families,” and “She reassures them and listens.”

## ST. CATHERINE HOSPITAL

Nursing Excellence Award recipient is Alanna Hunter-Parks, a nurse with more than 25 years’ experience. Peers nominated Hunter-Parks for this prestigious award based upon attributes that coincide with the hospital’s mission and values—Leadership, Dignity, Compassionate Care, Community, Quality and Stewardship.

According to her nomination, Hunter-Parks “goes above and beyond to see that patients receive the most compassionate care and makes sure family members are comfortable and have every need met while their loved ones are in her care.”



St. Catherine Hospital Nursing Excellence Award recipient for 2013 is Alanna Hunter-Parks (center). Hospital CEO Jo Ann Birdzell (left) and Chief Nursing Officer Paula Swenson (right) congratulate Hunter-Parks at a tea to honor nursing staff.




Community Hospital CEO Don Fesko (right) and Chief Nursing Officer Ronda McKay (left) congratulate Christine Hicks, registered nurse in Endoscopy (second from left), on her Nursing Excellence Award and Intermediate Care Unit patient care technician Jim Phelan (third from left) on his Patient Caregiver Excellence Award.

## ST. MARY MEDICAL CENTER

St. Mary Medical Center’s Pillar Awards highlight nurses who go above and beyond every day for their patients in five categories of Operational Excellence: Service, Quality, Finance, Growth and People, as well as a Super Star award for the nurse who exemplifies excellence across all categories.

“These nurses are a representation of the dedication to quality and compassion that are the hallmark of our hospital,” says Tammie Jones, RN, vice president of Patient Care Services and chief nursing officer at St. Mary Medical Center. “What is truly special is that all have been nominated by their peers and co-workers. They see their outstanding attributes on a daily basis, and the Pillar Awards are a way to recognize their efforts.”

Pillar Award recipients include Dawn Credille, RN, (Service); Gina Martinez, RN, (People); Ashley Hershman, RN, (Quality); Julie Witt, RN, (Growth) and Jennifer Bysiek, RN, (Finance) and Super Star Nurse of the Year, Susan Chandler, RN.  *By Elise Sims*



St. Mary Medical Center honored outstanding nurses at their 2013 Nursing Pillar Awards ceremony. Susan Chandler, RN, received the highest nursing honor with the Super Star award for best representation across all Operational Excellence Pillars.

ONLINE

## Learn More About Our Great Care

Visit [www.comhs.org](http://www.comhs.org) for more information about the top-notch care offered at the hospitals of Community Healthcare System.



# Timely Answers, Quality Treatment

*Rapid results program  
expands for better care*

BY ELISE SIMS

**I**s it cancer or not? Immediately knowing if a test result is positive or negative—cancer or not cancer—can make a world of difference for patients and physicians. A decisive answer to that agonizing question can now be delivered within hours instead of days, thanks to innovative thinking and change in processes by the Central Laboratory of the hospitals of Community Healthcare System.

Community Healthcare System's team of laboratory professionals have reduced the wait time for a majority of the patients who undergo biopsy procedures at Community Hospital in Munster, St. Catherine Hospital in East Chicago and St. Mary Medical Center in Hobart to less than 36 hours—something few places in the country do in response to this need. It means less worry and stress for patients who inevitably fear the worst.

The belief that waiting for results can be harmful to one's health was reinforced earlier this year when a



"With the rapid results reporting project, we set out to reshape healthcare without compromising accuracy," says Brenda Eriksen, MD, medical director of the Central Laboratory that services the hospitals of Community Healthcare System.



Harvard research study found abnormal levels of stress hormone in women waiting for breast biopsy results.

## THE SOONER, THE BETTER

“Three days is an eternity when you’re worried about cancer and you’re wondering what your life is going to look like in the future,” explains Mary Nicholson, MD, a fellowship-trained, dedicated breast radiologist at Community Hospital and the regional director of breast imaging services for Community Healthcare System. “By shortening that time, we can get people on the path to treatment much more quickly. Now when we call a patient with results, we often have many of the next steps ready. We can fast-track them for advanced breast imaging, if needed, and consultation with a surgeon and medical geneticist, if indicated.”

The rapid results program has been expanded beyond the initial delivery of breast biopsy results to include a wider range of tests for some of the most common cancers—bladder, lung, prostate, skin, as well as endoscopic biopsies of the GI tract and colonoscopies. To accomplish this, the team invested in new technology and re-engineered internal processes.

Community Healthcare System’s Central Laboratory accomplished rapid results reporting with teamwork, new microwave tissue processing technology, a voice recognition transcription system, and an extensive and ongoing overhaul of processes, according to Medical Director Brenda Eriksen, MD. This Central Laboratory serves all the hospitals of the Community Healthcare System: Community Hospital, St. Catherine Hospital and St. Mary Medical Center.

Microwave technology enables tissue specimens to be processed continuously and more efficiently. The voice recognition dictation system enables the pathologist to dictate the report directly into a computer, which instantly transcribes findings. The pathologist can now review the report online and make any changes before electronically delivering to the patient’s physician.

ONLINE

## Schedule Your Screenings

Gain some peace of mind when you have your health screenings at the hospitals of Community Healthcare System. Visit [www.comhs.org](http://www.comhs.org) to learn more.



## LEADING THE WAY

The healthcare system’s laboratory, radiology physicians and hospital staff were first recognized in 2008 with the Society of Innovators Chanute Prize for work to deliver same-day mammogram and breast biopsy results. Using the successful breast biopsy program as the building block, the Central Laboratory has developed the rapid result reporting program which allows them to deliver results within 36 hours for many surgical and nonsurgical procedures. Having built on this original innovation, the laboratory continues to expedite its delivery of results for specimens, putting patient safety and the reduction of a patient’s anxiety as its No. 1 priority.

“For our physicians, this rapid results reporting not only supports good clinical decisions, it gives them a competitive advantage,” Eriksen says. “Based upon our experience with the breast care project, patients will choose our physicians and hospitals knowing they can get answers quickly and don’t experience additional anxiety while they wait for results.”

## ON THE PATH TO HEALING

This rapid turnaround has enabled physicians to schedule surgery the same or following day, knowing that the results will be on the chart within about a day after the biopsy was performed, Eriksen says.

“The sooner we can get patients on the path to healing, the better,” she says.

“Same-day results have helped streamline care for our patients,” says Peter Mavrelis, MD, gastroenterologist on staff at St. Mary Medical Center in Hobart. “Improved processes allow us to give patients their biopsy results [quickly], which helps get them proper treatment sooner and provides them quicker answers to their questions.”

“I’m very proud of our team’s desire to support changes that improve patient care,” Eriksen says. “There are other organizations with similar technology and capabilities, but few organizations in the country—none in Northwest Indiana—that can deliver biopsy results within 36 hours of the procedure.” ●

# Breathing for Bonnie

BY ELISE SIMS

Working to prevent COPD

*Bonnie's fight with COPD ended in July while this issue was still in production. She had hoped to make a difference by telling her story.*

**G**riffith resident Bonnie Johnson is running out of time. Only 63 years old, she was diagnosed with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) three years ago. Until then, like many of the other people in her life, she was a smoker. Now she's racing against the clock to get her message out before she can no longer muster up the strength to speak.

"At the end of my life, I'll be sitting in a chair, staring at a wall, and my breathing won't be a function anymore, but a job I have to do," she says. "Breathe in, Bonnie, breathe out ... breathe in, Bonnie, breathe out'. Who wants to end their life like that? If anybody can stop this from happening to them, it would be a blessing that they wouldn't have to go through it."

## UNDERSTANDING THE DISEASE

COPD is a disease that kills slowly as the lung's airways narrow over time. It takes so much of your life



Wassim Shwaiki, MD



Gaurav Kumar, MD

away, Johnson says. "I was a very active person—always busy. That's why it is so difficult to deal with COPD. You literally can't do anything."

"When you look at someone with COPD, you don't see it," Johnson says. "You don't hear it in their voice, so it can be hard to relate to and what they are going through. My three sisters are my best friends in the world, and I can't pick up the phone anymore to say I love you and I want to talk to you ... I don't have the breath to say it."

"If just one person stops smoking because they don't want to go through the same things I have to suffer day in and day out, it would make me happy."

## WHAT TO DO IF YOU'RE DIAGNOSED

According to Johnson's pulmonologist, Wassim Shwaiki, MD, on staff at Community Hospital and St. Catherine Hospital, COPD is a progressive, but preventable disease. There are three contributing factors: genetic predisposition, smoking and environmental exposure to toxins.

"The main treatment for COPD is to quit smoking," he says. "We can also prescribe inhalers, medications and oxygen to improve the quality of life for our patients. These treatments can decrease the shortness of breath for our patients, but cannot reverse the damage to the lungs. It's very important to quit smoking to prevent further impairment of the lung function."

## What Is COPD?

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is caused by harmful particles or gas, most commonly from tobacco smoking which triggers an abnormal inflammatory response in the lungs. Symptoms include shortness of breath and not being able to do everyday tasks without huffing and puffing. It is the third-leading cause of death in the U.S., according to the American Lung Association. In 2007, the economic burden of COPD in the U.S. was \$42.6 billion in healthcare costs and lost productivity. For some, when caught in time, COPD is preventable and treatable.





COPD patient Bonnie Johnson was friends with many of the professionals on her care team, including respiratory therapist Sarah Volk, who helps to spread the word of the importance of quitting smoking.

The hospitals of Community Healthcare System offer advanced treatment pulmonary rehabilitation programs proven to improve the quality of life for patients with COPD.

“We have the diagnostic tools—including the breathing tests, the PFT or lung function testing and CT scans of the chest—and experienced staff with physician specialists who are experts in the management of COPD and its complications to provide the very best care,” says Shwaiki.

## KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

“If there is one bit of advice I can give to others it is to say, ‘Knowledge is power,’” Johnson says. “If I had seen my numbers years ago on my pulmonary function test, how critical they were, it may have changed the course and length of my life.”

Sixty percent of people with COPD remain underdiagnosed. Diagnosis is done by spirometry, a breathing or lung function test. Patients with COPD are usually underdiagnosed because they do not undergo screenings. If they have risk factors including family history and tobacco usage, and do not develop symptoms until later in the disease course when significant damage has already occurred, they are at even higher risk, explains Gaurav Kumar, MD, pulmonologist on staff at St. Mary Medical Center.

Important management strategies are smoking cessation, vaccinations, rehabilitation and drug therapy (often using inhalers). Some patients, like Johnson, go on to require long-term oxygen therapy or for others, a lung transplant.

“The best way to reduce the risk of COPD is to avoid voluntary risk factors,” Kumar says. “This includes avoiding tobacco use, avoiding inhalation of smoke and organic and inorganic particles (this can be done by wearing masks and respirators in certain high risk jobs), watching your weight and preventing obesity, and eating a healthy diet.

“Early diagnosis can allow us to educate and treat patients and their families sooner,” he says. “This can result in preventing disability and death. This will lead to a better quality of life and a longer quality of life. Moreover, by diagnosing and aggressively treating COPD, we can potentially reduce healthcare costs that currently burden the entire healthcare system. One of the primary treatments for COPD is tobacco cessation. We know that if we stop smoking early in the disease course, damage to the lungs slows and resumes natural progression.” ●

CALL

## Sign Up for Smoking Cessation

Ready to take the first step to preventing COPD? Community Healthcare System can help. Our stop-smoking program, held Tuesdays at St. Mary Medical Center, includes instruction, counseling and behavior modification. There is a \$50 class fee with a \$30 refund upon completion of the class. To find out the dates and times of the next session and to register, please call **219-836-3477** or toll-free **866-836-3477**.



# Powered by Patients

*Advisory councils serve as  
vehicle for collaboration*

**W**hen Dianna Fritz of Whiting visited the administrative offices at St. Catherine Hospital last year, it wasn't just to say hello. After a hospital stay for hip replacement surgery, she wanted to share her ideas about how she thought her care experience could have been improved, but wasn't sure anyone would listen.

Not only was St. Catherine Hospital's administrative staff open to what Fritz had to say, they invited her to become a member of the hospital's patient and family advisory council—a group that discusses ideas and provides insight into changes that can improve service to patients and families.

## OPEN EARS

"I love this hospital, the staff and physicians, and I realize they are there for me," Fritz says. "They wanted to hear what I had to say and now I know the administrators by name."

St. Catherine's patient and family advisory council, the first of its kind in Northwest Indiana, was established in January 2013 and has been meeting regularly to promote communication about patient and family experiences and to make improvements when necessary.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 49



St. Catherine Hospital's patient and family advisory council includes former patients and their families, (back, left to right): Cheryl Mikuly, Annie Broaders, Martin Fisher, Larry McClelland, Dianna Fritz; (front seated, left to right) Rose Matalik, Sylvia McClelland, Paula Swenson and Barb Foust, RN.

BY ANGELA MOORE



ONLINE

## Are You a Former Patient? We Want to Hear From You!

We value the input of all patients. Visit  
[www.comhs.org/contact\\_us.asp](http://www.comhs.org/contact_us.asp)  
to learn how to get in touch and provide  
us with your feedback.

## Responsibilities of the Patient and Family Advisory Council

- Encourages greater understanding of the healthcare experience through the eyes of the patient and family
- Actively participates in establishing a strong partnership between hospital staff, patients and families
- Honestly shares perceptions and expectations concerning healthcare
- Evaluates practices, programs and services and provides recommendations that respond to the unique needs of the patient and family
- Channels needs, concerns and recommendations to the hospital leadership team for review and direction
- Contributes to the education of present and future healthcare providers
- Provides a vital link between the hospital and the community
- Actively helps implement changes





open up and  
say anything

want better health care? start asking more questions. to your doctor. to your pharmacist. to your nurse. what are the test results? what about side effects? don't fully understand your prescriptions? don't leave confused. because the most important question is the one you should have asked. go to [www.ahrq.gov/questionsaretheanswer](http://www.ahrq.gov/questionsaretheanswer) or call 1-800-931-AHRQ (2477) for the 10 questions every patient should ask. **questions are the answer.**



# Got Excuses?

*If you're skipping your screenings, you may be putting your health in danger*

**W**e'll let you in on a little secret. No one loves to get a health screening. Are there people who don't fear needles? Sure. But no one actually *enjoys* having a blood test.

In fact, I know of no woman who looks forward to a Pap test or her regular mammogram. And if I had a nickel for every person who is eager for their next colonoscopy, I'm pretty sure I wouldn't have a single nickel.

But even if there are a hundred things you'd rather do—things that are far more fun than getting poked and prodded—there are few things you can do that are better for your health than getting your regular screenings.

But you have your excuses—er, *reasons*—for skipping them. Right? Well, hear this.

● **BY STEPHANIE R. CONNER**

I DON'T  
HAVE  
TIME.

I'M  
NERVOUS.

I'M TOO  
BUSY.

IT WILL  
HURT.





SCREENINGS ARE UNCOMFORTABLE AND PAINFUL.

I MIGHT HEAR BAD NEWS.

I'M SCARED.

I FEEL FINE.

IT'S OK TO SKIP THE DOCTOR.

EXCUSE

## I DON'T HAVE TIME

Yes, you're busy. Between getting the kids to school, caring for older parents and working, it's easy to overlook your own health.

Plus, what happens if the imaging center or the lab runs behind schedule?

Take a deep breath and remember why you're having these screenings in the first place: to potentially give you *more* time with the people you love.

If the tests reveal a problem, you'll be glad it was found early, when treatment is easier—and yes, less time-consuming.

If you're a multitasker, take heart. A blood test takes care of many of your important screenings, including blood sugar and cholesterol, with just one draw. Plus, for men, the prostate-specific antigen (PSA) measurement, a screening for prostate cancer, is a blood test that can be done at the same time, too.

EXCUSE

## I FEEL FINE, SO IT'S OK TO SKIP THE DOCTOR

"Wellness is not the absence of illness," says Steven Lamm, MD, a spokesman for Drive for Five, a men's health awareness campaign. "People feel well and assume they are well."

The truth, he says, is that a lot of conditions take years to develop.

"You don't wake up at 48 with heart disease," he adds. The earliest signs of heart problems stealthily appear much sooner. People who get regular screenings starting in their 20s are at an advantage.

If you learn that your blood sugar or cholesterol levels are in a potentially dangerous range, you can take steps early to bring those numbers down. Not to mention that when people adopt healthy habits at a younger age, they're likely to stick with them. >

# Getting Him to the Doctor

Men are less likely than women to visit the doctor and use medical services, even if they're experiencing symptoms of something as serious as a heart attack. In fact, a recent U.S. Census Bureau report showed that almost one-third of men said they had not seen a doctor in the previous 12 months.

But men need to look after their health the same way women do—especially when you consider that one in five American men has heart disease and three in four are overweight, according to the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.

Basic care for men of all ages includes blood pressure and cholesterol screenings, an influenza vaccination and immunizations such as tetanus and pneumonia. Men older than age 45 should discuss the benefits of prostate and colon cancer screening options with their physicians, and overweight men should be tested for diabetes.

The hospitals of Community Healthcare System offer free or low-cost screenings designed to decrease your risk for heart disease and diabetes. These include coronary heart appraisals, nutrition counseling, blood pressure and cholesterol screenings.

CALL

## Take Charge of Your Health

For more information on decreasing your risk for heart disease and to register for free or reduced-cost screenings at a location near you, call **219-836-3477** or **866-836-3477**. To find a physician on staff at the hospitals of Community Healthcare System, visit [www.comhs.org](http://www.comhs.org)



Waiting for symptoms of disease to develop is a dangerous risk. In some cases, it might be too late to do anything about it.

## EXCUSE SCREENINGS ARE PAINFUL AND UNCOMFORTABLE

Only about two-thirds of people who should be tested (that's adults age 50 and older) are getting their colon cancer screenings, says Andrew Spiegel, CEO of the Colon Cancer Alliance.

"There are well-documented barriers; the most prevalent one we hear about is the prep," he explains. Preparing for a colonoscopy involves purging the bowel, which calls for drinking large doses of a liquid laxative and eating a limited diet in the days leading up to the test.

Spiegel says that the volume of solution patients think they have to consume is often exaggerated and that advances are helping to reduce the amount of laxative needed. Additionally, people can request prescription pills that allow for lower-volume liquid prep.

Another common challenge to colon cancer screening is the test itself. Although the gold standard for colon cancer screening is a colonoscopy, there are other options, Spiegel notes.

"We say that the best test you can get is the one you'll actually do," he says. That's because some tests, such as stool tests, might be less effective, but they are still better than no screening at all.

Ultimately, the numbers are the most compelling argument for screening, Spiegel says.

"One out of 20 people will get colon cancer if they don't screen," he explains. "That's a lot of people. That's 5 percent of the population."

For women, the perception of pain might lead them to avoid mammograms. In fact, only half of women whose insurance covers annual mammograms get the screening, according to a 2010 study, and researchers speculated that fear of discomfort was one possible factor.

And it's no wonder when you consider the description of a mammogram—having your



breasts compressed between two plates. But a group of researchers at Wake Forest University found that mammogram pain is mild—similar to the discomfort caused by a pair of tight-fitting shoes or a mild headache.

And we all know how often we women choose to wear tight-fitting shoes—certainly more than once a year! So, just remember: A mammogram could save your life.

## EXCUSE

### I MIGHT HEAR BAD NEWS

“The overwhelming likelihood is that it’s *not* going to be bad news,” Lamm says. But if something is wrong, the sooner it’s diagnosed, the better.

“It’s clear that whether you hear about the bad news or not, if you have something bad, it’s going to rear its ugly head,” he adds. “Whether you see the doctor or not won’t change that fact.”

And here’s the bottom line: Screenings identify diseases in their earliest stages, which is when they are most treatable.

Women whose breast cancer is detected early have a 98 percent chance of survival five years later, compared with 23 percent for women whose disease is found late.

When polyps (precancerous growths) are discovered during a colonoscopy, they can be removed before they develop into cancer. Should colorectal cancer be found during an early screening, patients have a 90 percent chance of survival five years later. Only four out of 10 colorectal cancers are detected early, and once they spread to nearby and distant organs, the survival rate drops to 70 and 12 percent, respectively.

## NO MORE EXCUSES

Sure, there are plenty of “reasons” to skip seeing the doctor. But the truth is, there are few things you can do for your health that offer a greater return on your time investment. And who knows, maybe with a new appreciation for the benefits of tests, you’ll start to look forward to these regular screenings. (Hey, there’s nothing wrong with a little positive thinking!) ●

I’M TAKING  
CONTROL  
OF MY  
HEALTH!

LET’S  
DO THIS  
THING!

## Your Recommended Screenings

Now that you’re on board with getting your screenings, let’s talk specifics. Below is a list of general recommendations for adults. If you have increased risk due to family history or other factors, your doctor will likely recommend a different screening schedule for you.

- **Blood pressure.**

At least every two years, starting at age 20.

- **Cholesterol.**

Every five years, starting at age 20.

- **Blood glucose (sugar).**

Every three years, starting at age 45.

- **Colonoscopy.**

Every 10 years, starting at age 50. (Other screening tests are available and have varying frequency recommendations.)

- **Mammograms (for women).**

Annually, starting at age 40. Starting in their 20s, women also should have a clinical breast exam as part of their regular well-woman exam, at least every three years.

- **Pap test (for women).**

Every three years, or every five years when combined with the human papillomavirus test.

- **Prostate cancer screening (for men).**

Starting at age 50, men should have a conversation with their doctors about prostate cancer screening.

Sources: American Heart Association, American Cancer Society



BY ALLISON  
THOMAS

MANAGING  
YOUR HEALTH WITH A

DIY

Tool Kit

*Diabetes and heart disease have a lot in common—including your ability to control them. We've packed these pages with apps and gizmos that can help*



Often, we're on the hunt for a two-for-one deal. But here's one package we'd rather avoid: diabetes and heart disease. ■ The two conditions typically come as a set because of shared risks, such as being overweight or obese, a sedentary lifestyle, smoking, and high blood pressure and high cholesterol levels. ■ But the upside is this: With those shared risks come shared ways to reduce or eliminate them. ■ We'll show you some of the best strategies for reducing your chance for developing complications from diabetes and heart disease, and give you the tools to make it all easier to manage.

### GOAL Lose a few pounds

Of all the risk factors for both diabetes and heart disease, weight may play the biggest role.

“For type 2 diabetes, the central cause is a chronic calorie surplus. We eat too much and don't expend enough, and it's causing the epidemic,” says Janet Bond Brill, PhD, RD, a dietitian and the author of *Prevent a Second Heart Attack: 8 Foods, 8 Weeks to Reverse Heart Disease*. “But the research shows that losing even a small amount—just 10 percent of your body weight—can help reverse the damage.”

Here's the catch: The key to keeping those benefits is committing to the notion that weight loss is an ongoing battle, says Marc-Andre Cornier, MD, a spokesman for the American Heart Association and a clinical researcher and endocrinologist.

“Blood pressure, lipids, diabetes—they can all improve with minor weight loss,” Cornier says. “But obviously it's got to be sustained weight loss, and that's the biggest issue.”

**TOOL:** Withings Smart Body Analyzer (\$150). It might look like an ordinary bathroom scale, but this wizard will help you stay on top of your weight while also analyzing your body composition, checking your heart rate, and automatically logging and tracking your data over time.

### GOAL Embrace a smart diet

Finding the right eating plan to manage diabetes and heart disease can be frustrating, because while experts easily agree on recommendations

like plenty of vegetables, they part ways on other guidelines. Should you go low-fat? Should you aim for low-carb?

The choice may not be as difficult as you think.

“If you look at the American Diabetes Association's diet recommendations, the number-one consideration is actually a diet that helps you lose weight, whether it's low-fat or low-carb,” Cornier says. “At the end of the day, it's the weight loss that trumps the nutrients' effects. As long as you take in less calories, that's going to make the big difference.”

**TOOL:** DASH Diet app (\$1.99). Originally designed to help lower blood pressure levels, the DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) eating plan is a favorite among health experts for its rock-solid nutritional principles and simplicity. This app gives you more than 100 DASH-approved recipes that help you stick with the plan.

## Evil Sisters?

Why are heart disease and diabetes so similar? It could be because they're an extension of the same disease, says Aruni Bhatnagar, PhD, a professor, researcher and fellow of the American Heart Association.

Bhatnagar and other researchers are studying both diseases as one continuum known as cardiometabolic disease, and the connection between the conditions is already being addressed in caring for patients.

“Clinicians are now being asked to assume that if you have diabetes, you already have heart disease, so that's how serious it is,” Bhatnagar says.

**GOAL**  
**Manage**  
**your glucose**  
**level**

As people with diabetes know, a high blood sugar level isn't the only problem they need to watch out for. Hypoglycemia is another.

"You don't want your blood sugar to dip very low. If your blood glucose goes too low, you'll get an allergic response, your heart rate would go up and you would have an increase in cardiac output, so we have to be particularly vigilant," says Aruni Bhatnagar, PhD, a cardiovascular researcher and a fellow of the American Heart Association. He points to studies that show intensive control of blood sugar can decrease the microvascular complications associated with diabetes, such as kidney and eye disease and neuropathy (diabetic foot disease).

Generally, according to the American Diabetes Association, adults with diabetes should strive for daily fasting glucose levels of 70 to 130 mg/dl

and less than 180 mg/dl after eating.

**TOOL:** Telcare Wireless Glucose Meter (less than \$100 for a yearlong contract; covered under many insurance plans). This device resembles a smartphone and uses built-in wireless connectivity to upload your test readings immediately throughout the day so you or your physician can access them by a smartphone or a computer.

**GOAL**  
**Keep your**  
**blood**  
**pressure**  
**down**

While diet and exercise go a long way toward management of blood pressure many people also need medication.

"The reality is, most of our patients need two or three drugs to treat their blood pressure, so you're likely going to need multiple different kinds of medication to get good control," Cornier says. "Most guidelines recommend specific types of blood pressure medications like ACE inhibitors or ARBs as first-line treatment."

These drugs work to prevent blood vessels from narrowing, keeping them relaxed so that blood flows freely. The goal for healthy blood pressure is less than 120/80 mm Hg.

## A Team Approach

It takes a team to manage serious conditions like diabetes and heart disease. Here are some of the key members you should consider adding to your roster.

FOR:	SEE YOUR:
Regular health checkups and basic diabetes and heart disease care, including glucose, cholesterol and blood pressure monitoring	Primary care physician
Specialized treatment for cardiovascular disease, the No. 1 cause of death in patients with diabetes	Cardiologist
Specialized help with diabetes complications or managing advanced disease	Endocrinologist
An annual eye exam to detect and prevent diabetic eye disease	Ophthalmologist/Optomtrist
Problems with kidney function that can lead to kidney disease and dialysis	Nephrologist
Diabetic nerve pain and advanced treatment	Neurologist
Problems related to neuropathy or general "foot physicals" to keep feet healthy	Podiatrist
Depression and anxiety related to diabetes and heart disease	Psychologist/Psychiatrist



CALL

## Call for Care

To find diabetes education that is close and convenient and fits your needs, call the Diabetes Center at Community Hospital, Munster, **219-836-7714**; St. Catherine Hospital, East Chicago, **219-392-7786** or St. Mary Medical Center, Hobart, **219-947-6234**.

**TOOL:** Withings Blood Pressure Monitor (\$130). You should have your blood pressure level checked at regular physician visits, but this device can keep track of it daily at home or on the go. Just plug it into your smartphone or computer and strap on the cuff. From here you can record and track your readings over time, and even email data to your doctor.

### GOAL

Lower your cholesterol level

Reducing blood cholesterol levels is an important goal for many people, but it is especially so for those with diabetes—even if their results aren't

that high, Cornier says.

“There’s pretty good evidence that lowering cholesterol with a statin medication in individuals with diabetes who have *normal* cholesterol is still potentially beneficial. That’s why the guidelines recommend an LDL of less than 100 if not less than 70,” he says.

**TOOL:** MediSafe Virtual Pillbox app (free). This app helps you remember to take your pills, and it means business. In fact, if you don’t confirm that you’ve taken your meds, the app can be set to notify a relative or a caregiver as needed.

### GOAL

Make fitness a priority

A combination of aerobic exercise and strength training for at least 30 minutes per day, five days or more each week, is recommended as part

of any diabetes management plan. But those on insulin should seek expert guidance in developing their workout regimen.

# Dealing with Diabetes

Do you have diabetes? If so, it is important to take control. A key component of managing diabetes is to understand how the right lifestyle changes can positively affect you and your health. The hospitals of Community Healthcare System—Community Hospital, Munster, St. Catherine Hospital, East Chicago and St. Mary Medical Center, Hobart—offer diabetes education through the Diabetes Centers. Classes focus on self-care behaviors including healthy eating, being active, blood glucose monitoring, taking medications, problem-solving, healthy coping and reducing risks. They are conducted by nurses and dietitians who specialize in diabetes management and are certified diabetes educators. These sessions are designed to help you take control of your diabetes, increase your understanding of your blood glucose numbers and the importance of maintaining control, and assist you in setting your diabetes management goals.

“Exercise has an insulin-like effect, so your blood sugar can drop dramatically,” Brill says. “Those who are insulin-dependent need to work with a health professional to prevent situations where their blood sugar drops too low.”

**TOOL:** Nike+ FuelBand (\$149). This activity bracelet lets you easily track how active you are throughout the day and engage in friendly competition with your friends.

“I’ve given these to several people, and it’s actually very useful,” Bhatnagar says. “You set your targets and if you don’t have enough steps or activity, you can do extra things to meet the goal.” ●



# IS IT THE Stress TALKING?

**WHAT ANXIETY COULD BE DOING TO YOU—AND WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT | BY BART BUTLER**

**H**eartburn. Acne. Headaches. Insomnia. You know the signs of stress.

And the American Psychological Association has a few to add to the list: high blood pressure, anxiety, depression and obesity.

Here's the frustrating part: Though you probably know what's causing your stress, you may not be able to eliminate the sources of it—after all, you can't just up and quit your job, leave your spouse and ignore your kids.

But here's what you *can* do: You can recognize that prolonged exposure to stress wreaks havoc on your health. You can understand its effects. And you can create a plan to cope.

Here are a few things to know about the impact of stress on your body, from head to toe.

Men and women with **type-A personalities have double the risk of stroke** than less-stressed people, according to a study in the *Journal of Neurology, Neurosurgery & Psychiatry*.

**45 MILLION** Americans have chronic headaches, many caused by vascular changes and muscle tension related to stress, the National Headache Foundation reports.

**Crave sugar and fat when you're stressed?**

While stress can shut down your short-term appetite, over the long term, your body's stress hormone, cortisol, increases appetite—and your motivation to eat. The American Psychological Association says that

**25%** of Americans surveyed reported eating as a way to manage stress.

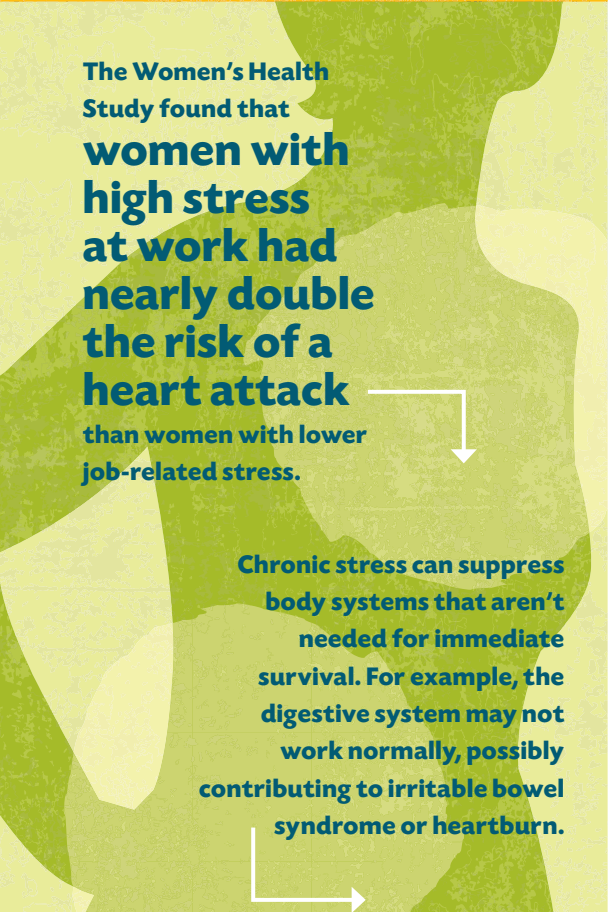




For people with arthritis, stress may worsen the pain. Some research shows that

**rheumatoid arthritis is more prevalent in people who experienced a stressful life event**

in the previous six months (job loss, divorce) than in the general population.



The Women's Health Study found that **women with high stress at work had nearly double the risk of a heart attack** than women with lower job-related stress.

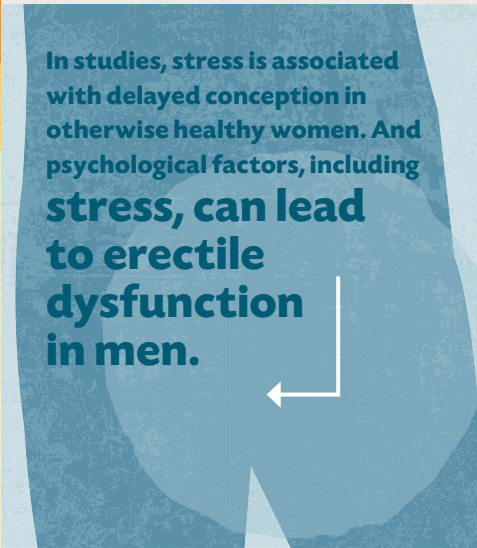
**Chronic stress can suppress body systems that aren't needed for immediate survival. For example, the digestive system may not work normally, possibly contributing to irritable bowel syndrome or heartburn.**

**20%** of Americans report suffering from **extreme stress.**

**64%** believe managing stress is very important. But only **37%** say they manage it well.

**70%** experience symptoms like irritability or fatigue, or feel overwhelmed.

Source: 2012 annual American Psychological Association survey



In studies, stress is associated with delayed conception in otherwise healthy women. And psychological factors, including stress, can lead to **erectile dysfunction in men.**

CALL

### Path to Better Health

Find us at two convenient locations:  
**Schererville:** 6625 W. Lincoln Highway, Southwest corner of US 30 and Harvest Drive  
**East Chicago:** St. Catherine Hospital—third floor, 4321 Fir St.

To make an appointment call **219-392-7025.**



# Working Toward Wellness

Feeling out of control? Community Healthcare System's Centers for Mental Wellness have outpatient counseling and support to help. At St. Catherine Hospital in East Chicago, state-of-the-art care is offered on two inpatient treatment units with 24-hour care. In addition, St. Catherine Hospital's Centers for Mental Wellness have expanded outpatient services to the Schererville community. The Schererville facility offers individual, group and family psychotherapy. Services are available in English and Spanish. Our programs help treat:

- Anxiety disorders
- Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder
- Autism and developmental disabilities
- Eating disorders
- Cognitive (thinking and problem-solving) assessment
- Memory and attention examinations
- Postpartum neurobehavioral disorders/parenting issues
- Posttraumatic stress disorder
- Mood disorders
- Substance abuse and other addictions
- Treatment-resistant psychiatric disorders



# The Wonderful World of



# G

BY COLLEEN RINGER



PHOTOGRAPHY BY THINKSTOCK





Gobble up these **6** good-for-you veggies

# reens





**W**hat if you could fill your plate to overflowing—even go back for seconds—and be healthier? Well, you can! Grab the nearest green vegetable and start noshing.

“Vegetables in general are good for you, no matter what color they are,” says Bethany Thayer, a registered dietitian and a spokeswoman for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. “But green vegetables in particular are good sources of vitamins A, C and K as well as potassium.”

That means that when it comes to your greens, there’s no such thing as too much. These six superstars can do everything from reduce your risk of cancer to boost your bone health. And, to misquote Lucy Ricardo’s immortal Vitameatavegamin commercial, “They’re so tasty, too!”



1

## Kale

**Why it’s good for you:** Kale is the king of superfoods. “One serving will give you all the vitamin A and K you need for the day,” Thayer says. In fact, one serving of raw kale gives you 525 percent of your daily dose of vitamin K, which is great for bone health. It’s also a good source of calcium, folate and potassium.

**What it tastes like:** Expect it to be deep, earthy and slightly bitter, although the smaller leaves can be milder.

**How to eat it:** Remove ribs and use it in place of your usual go-to leafy green (such as romaine or spinach). Put it in salads, on burgers or in an omelet. Feeling adventurous? Roast the leaves to make kale chips.

## Brussels Sprouts

**Why they’re good for you:** The long maligned martyr of the produce aisle, Brussels sprouts offer all the benefits a good cruciferous veggie should: antioxidants, vitamin C, folate and more. They will last up to one week when stored in the refrigerator.

**What they taste like:** Think of them as mini cabbages. “They have a negative connotation, but they’re really, really good,” Thayer says.

**How to eat them:** If you think you know Brussels sprouts, think again: Drizzle them with olive oil and rice vinegar, then sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Roast in the oven at 400 degrees for 30 minutes. You’ll discover a whole new delicious side of these small green globes.



2

# Swiss Chard

3



**Why it's good for you:** Swiss chard gives you a lot of bang for your calorie buck—just 15 calories in two cups. Plus, it provides a boost of fiber, magnesium and vitamins A and K. Like all greens, it is a heart-healthy addition to your diet.

**What it tastes like:** Do you like beets? Then you'll like Swiss chard. "Darker greens like Swiss chard do have a stronger taste profile than iceberg or romaine," Thayer says. "It's a good flavor, just different."

**How to eat it:** After sautéing it, add apples or dried cherries for a sweet and sour mixture, Thayer suggests. And, as with other leafy greens, you can add it to salads or sandwiches, or even mix it into a smoothie or a soup.

## Helping Kids Grow Green

Digging in—literally—to the benefits of fresh fruits and vegetables, hundreds of elementary school students in Hobart and Valparaiso planted the seeds to a healthier future, thanks to teaching gardens made possible by St. Mary Medical Center and the American Heart Association. The hospital recently provided funding for the gardens at an elementary school level as part of the American Heart Association's, "My Heart. My Life." healthy behavior campaign.

"Teaching gardens provide a real-life laboratory where students learn how to nurture growing plants, harvest food and ultimately understand the value of good eating habits," says Janice Ryba, CEO, St. Mary Medical Center. "These projects provide an opportunity for our hospital staff to set standards for creating easily accessible and enjoyable ways to build a culture of wellness among our children and families."

ONLINE

### Find Fresh Ideas

For ideas on how to start living a healthier lifestyle, visit [www.comhs.org](http://www.comhs.org) or call toll-free **866-836-3477** to learn about free classes and demonstrations.







# Collards

4

**Why they're good for you:** A staple in Southern cooking, collards offer similar vitamins and nutrients as kale, making them good for your bones (calcium) and your skin and eyes (vitamin A).

**What they taste like:** Think about biting into a strong cabbage leaf.

**How to eat them:** Trim the ribs and use the wide, sturdy leaves in place of tortillas or bread for a healthy wrap. If the taste is too biting for you, cook them to mellow the flavor. Add smoked turkey for a healthier take on the traditional Southern collards-and-ham combo.



# Asparagus

**Why it's good for you:** Is your diet high in sodium? The potassium in asparagus can counteract sodium's negative effect on your blood pressure. Hoping to get pregnant? Asparagus's folic acid can prevent birth defects.

**What it tastes like:** "Fresh asparagus has a mellow flavor, but it really is a taste all its own," Thayer says.

**How to eat it:** Serve steamed, sautéed, roasted or grilled as a side dish. "I like to steam them partway and serve them cold with dips," Thayer says. To keep asparagus fresh for as long as possible, store standing up in the fridge in a small dish of water.

6



5



# Broccoli

**Why it's good for you:** A cousin to cabbage, broccoli is a cruciferous vegetable that is packed with vitamin C, calcium, fiber and phytochemicals, which may reduce the risk of cancer.

**What it tastes like:** You may pick up on a hint of cabbage, but it's fairly mild and there are many ways to prepare it.

**How to eat it:** Raw is best since cooking damages some of its cancer-fighting compounds. Not a fan of raw broccoli? Toss it into stir-fries and omelets, or top your pizza or baked potato with it. ●



*Your overall mobility hinges on this joint. Here's how to keep it well oiled*

# Knee-

# to-Know

# BASICS

We run. We jump. We climb stairs. Sometimes we (well, some of us) compete in marathons or climb mountains. Throughout our lives, our knees take a beating. So it's no wonder that a good bit of pain is associated with this important joint. But just how important is it?

BY ELLEN OLSON



“The knee is a hinge joint that essentially allows us to move. Without it, we would be immobile,” says Kevin J. Coupe, MD, an orthopedic surgeon in sports medicine and a fellow of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons.

Makes you want to sit down for a minute, doesn't it? Here's how to prevent or treat knee pain and injury, and keep this marvel of design healthy and hinged for years to come.

### WHAT LIES BENEATH

Understanding the construction of the knee can be tricky. Most of us are only aware of the visible kneecap, but there's much more to this joint, says Nicholas DiNubile, MD, an orthopedic surgeon and the author of *FrameWork for the Knee: A 6-Step Plan for Preventing Injury and Ending Pain*.

“The main structural elements are bones, tendons and ligaments. Think of those like the walls, floor and roof of your house,” he says.

Here's how it's laid out: The knee joins the thighbone (femur) to the shinbone (tibia). The smaller bone (fibula) that runs alongside the tibia and the kneecap (patella) round out the bone structure of the knee. Tendons connect the knee bones to the leg muscles that move the joint, and ligaments join the knee bones and provide stability to the knee. All these elements work together to help you twist, turn, run and jump.

### CRACKS IN THE FOUNDATION

Even the best feats of engineering are susceptible to a few structural weaknesses, and the knee is no exception. The three main structural weaknesses that eventually may call for repair:

**Overuse and inflammatory injuries.** “These are the types of problems we see in runners, gardeners and other people who simply use their knees a lot,” Coupe says. “Overuse can result in tendinitis or swollen ligaments, which is painful, but not overly detrimental.”

Coupe recommends following the RICE steps to ease the pain: rest, ice, compression, elevation.

“People are often tempted to put heat on pain, but that could actually make it worse. Ice will reduce the swelling and numb the pain,” Coupe says. “And most importantly, rest! Get off your feet for a bit.”

**Arthritis.** Most common in older people, arthritis of the knee is a result of damaged cartilage. “The cartilage is there to protect the knee—like a cushiony layer of insulation,” DiNubile says. “When it's healthy, the bone can slide across the cushion like ice on ice.”

But when that cartilage becomes damaged, problems ensue—namely, arthritis. In the early stages, arthritis is treated with nonsurgical methods, like lifestyle changes, medication and supportive devices. If the arthritis progresses, your doctor may recommend a bit of excavating through arthroscopic surgery or a partial or total knee replacement.

**Ligament tears.** If you're a sports fan, you've probably heard the term “torn ACL.” It's a common injury in athletes, especially among women. ACL stands for anterior cruciate ligament, and actions like twisting your knee with the foot planted, getting hit on the knee and stopping suddenly when running can tear it. The ACL is the best-known ligament, but it isn't alone in being at risk. Your knee is made up of four ligaments, all of which can be torn. Depending on the severity of the tear, surgery may be needed.



CALL

## Let's Get Physical

Community Healthcare System physical therapists practice at our hospitals and outpatient centers, offering convenient locations and times to accommodate patients. Call **219-934-2840** (Munster), **219-392-7400** (East Chicago) or **219-947-6580** (Hobart, Portage, Valparaiso or Winfield).



### FIXER-UPPERS

Much like your house, your body will hold up a bit better if you perform basic upkeep.

"It's always better to prevent injury than treat it," DiNubile says. He offers these tips:

#### 1 Keep a healthy weight.

Have you ever loaded your car with heavy objects or multiple people and noticed that the ride wasn't quite as smooth? The same holds true for your knees. When you are overweight, you're putting an extra burden on the knees' cartilage, which can cause it to wear down more quickly.

#### 2 Perform a balanced, regular exercise routine.

If you only work out the first week of January, you're not doing yourself—or your knees—any favors.

"The knees are meant to be moved," DiNubile says. "Plus, strong leg muscles help take the strain off of the knee."

#### 3 Experiencing knee pain? Get it checked.

By ignoring it, you're almost asking for it to worsen. If you notice persistent pain, don't brush it off—talk to your doctor.

"With all the treatment options available today, there's no reason why you should have to suffer," DiNubile says. ●

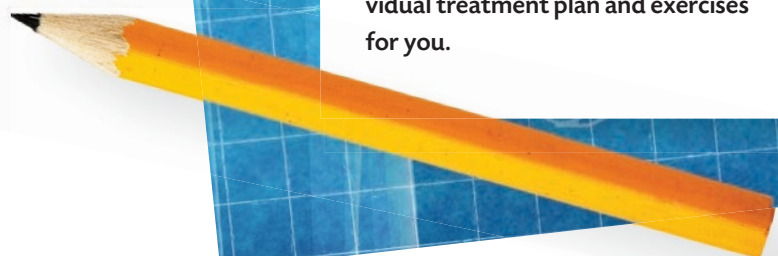
### GOAL:

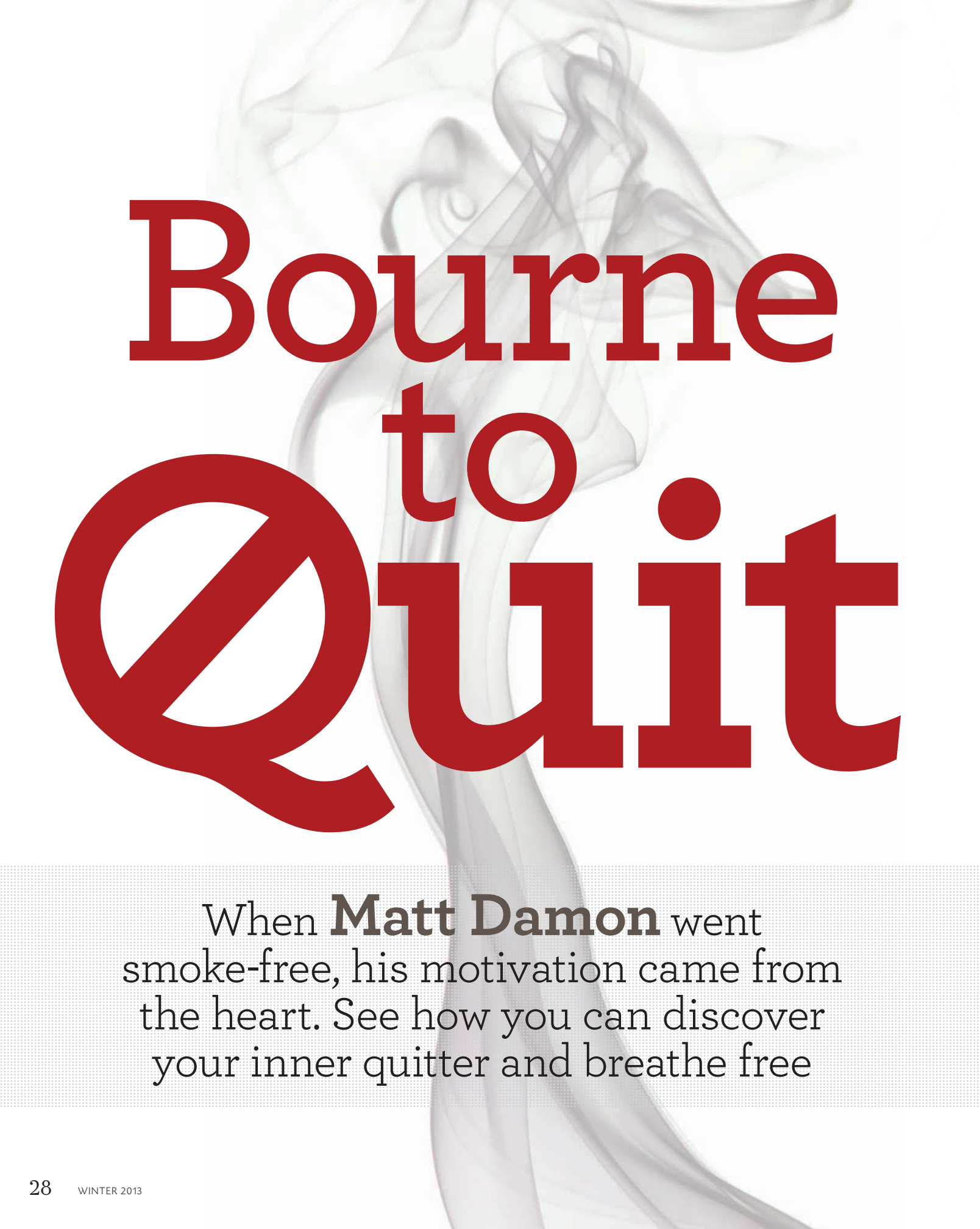
#### NO KNEE PAIN

One of the best ways to avoid an injury is to strengthen the muscles around the knee. Physical therapists at Community Healthcare System hospitals—Community Hospital Fitness Pointe®, Munster; St. John Outpatient Centre, St. John; St. Catherine Hospital, East Chicago and St. Mary Medical Center, Hobart—have advanced training in the diagnosis and treatment of knee injuries.

Jan Duncker, supervisor of physical therapy at Community Hospital's Fitness Pointe and St. John Outpatient Centre, says, "With knee pain, you must also look at the muscles around the hip. It is very common to see people with weak hips complaining of knee pain."

Therapists will perform a lower-extremity evaluation, looking at all areas. Once the cause of pain is determined, we can tailor an individual treatment plan and exercises for you.

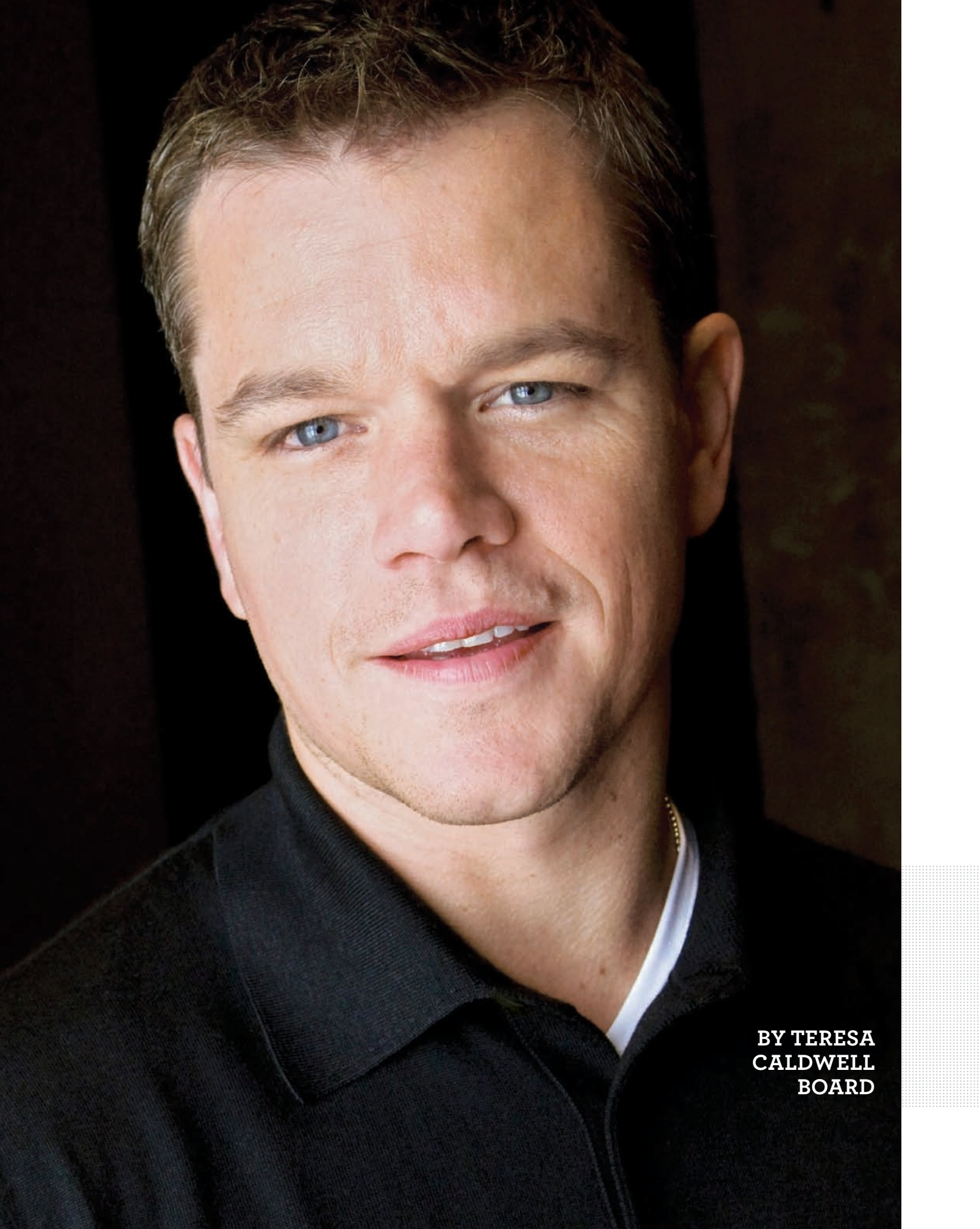




# Bourne to Quit

When **Matt Damon** went smoke-free, his motivation came from the heart. See how you can discover your inner quitter and breathe free





BY TERESA  
CALDWELL  
BOARD





There's a down-to-earth charm about Matt Damon.

Maybe it's his earnest gaze when he talks about clean water or the flash of dimples as he blazes forth with that dazzling grin. He just comes off as a likable guy.

Whether playing things bald and bionic in *Elysium*, bad to the bone in the *Bourne* trilogy or scrappy and brilliant in his breakout role in *Good Will Hunting*, the actor himself seems like someone you'd enjoy hanging out with over a beer.

But not a cigarette. Those days are behind him.

## Blame It on Love

Aug. 5, 2004, was a life-changing day for Damon—the day he became a nonsmoker and put 17 years of pack-and-a-half days behind him.

Rewind a year or so: This story begins, as many good stories do, with a boy-meets-girl epiphany. When Damon met his wife, Luciana Barroso, in Miami in 2003, “there was a halo of light around her, and I absolutely knew that moment had changed my life before I even spoke to her,” he told *Maclean's* in a 2011 interview.

The desire to have children with Barroso became part of his motivation to quit smoking.

“I remember my brother gave up [smoking] before he had kids,” Damon told *The Observer* in April 2013. “He said, ‘I’m going to give myself six months or a year to clear out my system.’ I remember thinking, ‘Yeah, I’ll do that, too.’”

Damon's motivation was sound: In addition to the better-known health risks of smoking, men who smoke cigarettes have a lower sperm count and increased abnormalities in sperm shape and function, according to the American Society for Reproductive Medicine.

In a July 2004 interview with the *Washington Post*, just a month before he quit, Damon was already reflecting on the toxins in cigarettes. He had switched to a more “natural” brand, he said. “It’s amazing. You know, it’s about 350 additives your average cigarette has, from arsenic, from cyanide to ammonia.”

## Quitting: a Team Sport

No question, cigarettes are poison. But even when you know how deadly they are, it takes practical strategies and support to turn the desire to quit into a smoke-free life.

“Cigarettes are exquisitely designed nicotine-delivery devices that were developed and marketed to addict people to them,” says Tim McAfee, MD, MPH, director of the Office on Smoking and Health for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The majority of smokers are both physically and psychologically addicted to cigarettes, McAfee says. So the best chance of success comes through a combination of medication and counseling to address both physical cravings and psychological urges to smoke.

Smoking cessation counseling can prepare you with a personalized strategy. You can talk to your doctor, attend a hospital support group, or get online or phone support.

To help with physical cravings, nicotine replacement is available in patches, gum, lozenges, inhalers or nasal sprays. Prescription medication to ease withdrawal symptoms can be used instead of or in addition to nicotine replacement.

## Positive Clues

Rather than calling the insomnia, irritability and anxiety that can strike as nicotine dependence wanes “withdrawal symptoms,” think of them as “recovery



## UP IN SMOKE: What's Really in a Burning Cigarette?

A lit cigarette produces more than 4,000 chemicals. Many are poisonous, and at least 50 are known to cause cancer. Here are some of the chemicals in cigarette smoke, and where else you'll find them:

- **Acetone**—found in nail polish remover
- **Acetic Acid**—hair dye ingredient
- **Ammonia**—common household cleaner
- **Arsenic**—used in rat poison
- **Benzene**—found in rubber cement
- **Butane**—used in lighter fluid
- **Cadmium**—active component in battery acid
- **Carbon monoxide**—released in car exhaust fumes
- **Formaldehyde**—main ingredient in embalming fluid
- **Hexamine**—found in barbecue lighter fluid
- **Lead**—used in batteries
- **Naphthalene**—mothball ingredient
- **Methanol**—main component in rocket fuel
- **Nicotine**—used as insecticide
- **Tar**—road-paving material
- **Toluene**—used to manufacture paint



# Lung Screenings Offer Early Detection

Adults with a past of heavy smoking may benefit from a low-dose CT scan screening of the lungs for early detection of lung cancer, according to the National Lung Screening Trial of the National Cancer Institute. Their studies have shown that screening with low-dose CT versus traditional chest X-rays among older heavy smokers, reduced lung cancer deaths by 20 percent. CT scans detect lung cancer in its earlier stages when it is more easily treated, a key to increased survival.

Low-dose CT scan screenings are recommended for those who meet the following criteria:

- Between 55 and 74 years old
- Currently a smoker or has quit within the past 15 years
- Has smoked at least a pack of cigarettes a day for 30-plus years

"Patients who meet the criteria should discuss this option with their primary care provider," says Gaurav Kumar, MD, pulmonologist on staff at St. Mary Medical Center.



CALL

## Lung Cancer Screenings for \$98

The hospitals of Community Healthcare System offer low-dose CT lung cancer screenings to individuals who meet the established high-risk criteria. The \$98 screenings are available at our hospital and outpatient locations. For more information call **800-809-9828**.



For a successful “START” to your new smoke-free life, the CDC suggests:

**S** Set a quit date.

**T** Tell family, friends and colleagues you’re quitting.

**A** Anticipate and plan for the challenges you’ll face.

**R** Remove cigarettes from your home, car and work.

**T** Talk to your doctor about getting help to quit.

symptoms,” suggests Mary Ella Douglas, facilitator for the Freedom From Smoking online program (ffsonline.org) for the American Lung Association.

“The most intense symptoms start to resolve in an average of 10 days to two weeks,” Douglas says. “We want people to understand that they’re recovering from an addiction, so these signs are very positive because they mean great changes are taking place physically. Quitting smoking is about the best thing anyone can do to protect their health.”

## Claim a **New Identity**

The majority of smokers want to quit, McAfee says, and many have already tried before.

“If you don’t try, your chances of success are zero. The most important thing is to keep on trying.” He compares trying to quit smoking to learning to ride a bicycle. “You have to learn to be an ex-smoker,” McAfee says. Just like falling off a bike teaches you how to stay on, so-called “failed” attempts to quit teach you how to set yourself up for success the next time.

When asked by *The Observer* earlier this year how his life had changed since *Good Will Hunting* made him famous 15 years ago, Damon came up with one big difference: He doesn’t smoke anymore. “It’s an incredible personal accomplishment,” McAfee agrees. “People should pat themselves on the back if they’re former smokers.”

In transforming from eager aspiring actor to satisfied family man, his priorities and identity changed. “Ben [Affleck] and I started [smoking] when we were in high school,” Damon said. “We’d see the great actors—Brando, James Dean, Mickey Rourke, who we loved back then—smoking, and we just thought it was ... cool.”

A healthy lifestyle became a priority for Damon as he got older, got married and became a father. (He and Barroso now have four daughters.) When asked in 2011 how turning 40 had felt, Damon said, “Actually, it felt

really good. I felt lucky to have the family that I have and the wife that I have, and the job that I have, and I just kind of found myself wanting health and more of the same.”

## Finding Your **Motivation**

“One of the most important ingredients to success is getting motivated and staying motivated,” McAfee says.

Protecting family members from secondhand smoke can motivate people to quit. “Secondhand smoke is full of carcinogens,” Douglas says. “Quitting smoking is not only good for the individual but for everyone around them.”

Another source of motivation can be the money you save by not buying cigarettes. You can put the money toward a weekly massage, add it to your college or retirement savings, or donate it to a cause you care about. In fact, while saving your own life you could contribute to saving another person’s.

Damon became passionate about public health issues while traveling in Africa. “I cofounded water.org, which focuses on water and sanitation. I was in Ethiopia, and I watched children taking filthy water out of a hand-dug well and putting it in bottles to take to school. The water was so dirty, it looked like chocolate milk,” he told *Parade* magazine in 2009. “Parents in these impoverished areas lose children every year to diseases that could be completely prevented if they had access to clean water.

“Just \$25 will give someone clean water for life,” Damon said. In many states, that’s the cost of about three packs of cigarettes.

In the 2011 movie *We Bought a Zoo*, Damon’s character is giving his son advice on talking to a girl. He tells him, “Sometimes all you need is 20 seconds of insane courage. ... And I promise you, something great will come of it.”

To quit smoking, all you have to do is get through the next 20 seconds without a cigarette. Then do it again. ●





**Run**

*for Your*

**Life**

BY STEPHANIE PATERIK

PHOTOGRAPHY BY THINKSTOCK

*It may be the last thing on your mind after a cancer diagnosis, but exercise can ease treatment side effects, boost strength and even help fight the disease itself*

**W**hen 34-year-old Monika Carlson got the news that an inoperable tumor was growing in her brain, she asked her doctor an unusual question.

“Can I run a marathon?”

She had successfully run 18 marathons, including two that year, even as her cancer grew, and she was training for another.

“He looked at me like I was crazy,” she says with a laugh.

Carlson had surgery and wasn’t allowed to run for 30 days. Six months later, 11 days after a potent dose of chemotherapy, she crossed the finish line at the LA Marathon in a Wonder Woman costume and T-shirt that read “Powered by Chemo.” A friend ran beside her in a Supergirl costume with the message “Impossible Things Happen Every Day.”

Studies show exercise is safe for most cancer patients. It also fights fatigue, nausea, depression and possibly the disease itself.

“The best news of all is that time and time again, studies have shown exercise is safe, and it’s feasible during treatment,” says Colleen Doyle, director of nutrition and physical activity at the American Cancer Society. “And after treatment, it helps reduce the risk of recurrence and increase survival rates for some of the most common cancer types.”

Even better news is that you don’t have to be Wonder Woman or run marathons. Just 150 minutes of moderate exercise—or 75 minutes of vigorous activity—and two days of strength training per week will do. If you or someone you love has cancer, consider these five powerful reasons to get moving. >





## Fight That Bad Boy

The No. 1 goal for anyone with cancer is to beat it. In the battle for your life, exercise is your ally.

First, physical activity keeps off unnecessary weight, builds muscle, improves bone density, boosts cardio health and acts as an anti-inflammatory. This creates the ideal environment for cells to fight disease.

Second, mounting research suggests that exercise helps fight breast, prostate, colorectal and ovarian cancers. Some studies have found that people who exercise are more likely to complete treatment and survive and less likely to see their cancer return, Doyle says.

This marks a major shift in conventional cancer wisdom. Doctors

once sent patients to bed to preserve their strength, but now they are urging people to throw off the covers and work out.

“We used to tell them to do it on a wing and a prayer hoping it would make a difference,” Doyle says. “Now we have the studies to show the evidence on this.”

Your type of cancer, treatment and level of activity before diagnosis will determine what you can do, so talk with your oncologist about a safe plan. It might range from stretching in bed and walking around the block to practicing yoga and competing in a race.

## Show 'em Who's Boss

Cancer has a way of taking over your life. That's what happened to

Carlson when she learned her headaches weren't the result of work stress or a neck injury, as doctors initially thought.

They were signs that cancer had grown like a tangled weed in her brainstem.

Carlson is a passionate marketing professional, runner and board member of the Girls on the Run charity in San Diego. After her diagnosis in September 2012, life became a funnel cloud of surgery, radiation and chemotherapy.

Carlson took her dog for long walks after surgery, and when she felt well enough a month later, she started running again. “It makes me feel that I'm taking charge.

“Running was part of my routine, and being able to get back to that routine helps me feel more normal,” she adds. “I ran marathons every year, my friends are all runners, and being able to maintain that helped me feel like myself.”

Exercise is a powerful way to gain control over your body, self-image and daily routine, says Nancy S. Brennan, a survivor and the author of *Active Against Cancer: A Guide to Improving Your Cancer Recovery with Exercise*. The cross-country skier took 20-minute walks and swims during treatment for ovarian cancer in 2007.

“All my best memories from treatment are when I was exercising, taking a walk or a short swim. It felt like the most normal thing I did compared to putting chemicals in my chest and [experiencing] the ridiculous side effects,” says Brennan, who has been in good health since treatment. “Having your identity taken away as a healthy person is rugged, and for a few minutes you can feel like a healthy person again.”

## Working Out Safely

If you have cancer, chances are your health has risen to the top of your priority list. In some ways, it's the perfect time to start a workout regimen.

But first, consider these five precautions, says Colleen Doyle, director of nutrition and physical activity at the American Cancer Society.

**1. Don't push it.** If you weren't active in the past, start slowly. And if you were very active, scale back. Even marathon runner Monika Carlson, who is battling a brain tumor, takes a walk break every mile.

**2. Listen to your body.** “Listen to how you're feeling,” Doyle says. “If there are days you don't feel like going even for a walk down the block, don't beat yourself up over it.”

**3. Prevent injuries.** Some treatments cause numbness in the hands and feet, or alter your sense of balance. Holding the rails of a treadmill or using a stationary bike might be safer than running on uneven streets.

**4. Avoid risks.** “Some people going through treatment become severely anemic,” Doyle says, referring to low red blood cell count. “We encourage them to delay any activity.” Also, people with compromised immune systems should wear masks outdoors, and those with catheters should avoid pools and lakes. Radiation patients should stay away from chlorine, and those with ports should avoid upper-arm strength training.

**5. Talk to your doctor.** No one knows your health status better than your oncologist. Be sure to discuss any exercise plan before you begin.

## Beat the Blahs

Fatigue is a major problem for people going through radiation and chemotherapy. The solution is counterintuitive but true.

"This is surprising, but we've seen activity can help with fatigue," Doyle says. "It can give you a sense of more energy."

Staying active was Carlson's secret weapon against radiation fatigue. She says it gave her the energy to keep up her daily activities.

"Some people feel fine, some sleep for 18 hours a day, some people end up going on disability," Carlson says of radiation effects. "I started walking three times a week, and never got tired enough to miss work."

Her experience isn't unique. A study of breast cancer patients found that women who stayed active during treatment not only had more energy to fight the disease, but they also had more energy one and two years later, Brennan says.

The author experienced the "bounce back" effect firsthand.

"I bounced back after chemo pretty fast. I personally think a daily menu of light exercise has a lot to do with helping the body heal," she says. "A little bit goes a long way."

## Tame Your Tummy

Another unpleasant side effect of treatment is nausea, and managing it will help keep your strength—and spirits—up. Exercise can help with this, too.

Brennan suffered a queasy stomach after every round of chemotherapy. The only thing that helped was taking a walk.

"That alone can be an enormous benefit for people in treatment," she adds.

While researching her book, she found that exercise also aids in digestion and helps you make better choices about what to eat. That adds up to a more settled stomach.

## Seize the Day

Carlson is the most positive person with an incurable brain tumor you will meet. Her hope is to keep the tumor from growing so that she can live as long as possible—marry her fiancé, enjoy friends and family, and yes, run another marathon or ... 20.

"I kind of feel like it's a choice you have to make," she explains. "You can choose to think about the 'what ifs,' or you can focus on today. Focusing on today is what has helped me. I feel mostly fine. I'm more fit than the average person. I'm not in a hospital bed yet. Why worry about that happening?"

Thanks to endorphins—those brain chemicals that trigger pleasant feelings—exercise is a natural mood booster and stress reliever. When you're fighting for your health, you need both.

"You're ruining today by worrying about tomorrow. I feel like I'm living the reverse of that," Carlson says. "I think continuing to run has been a huge help emotionally for me as I've gone through all of this." ■



Monika Carlson (right) and her glam-runner.com partner Taramae Baize finishing the LA Marathon.

## Positive Vibes

Researchers are learning more about positive benefits of mind-body programs for helping cancer survivors overcome physical and emotional challenges, as well as reduce certain side effects of treatment.

Exercises like yoga, qi gong and tai chi have been found to help patients restore physical function and strength and reduce the negative effects of stress, stimulating a healthy immune system.

At the Cancer Resource Centre in Munster, these programs and others are helping patients become more energized survivors as they focus on healing physically and emotionally, according to Director Anthony Andello. All of the classes are offered free of charge to patients with cancer and their loved ones, thanks to the support of the Community Healthcare System and the Community Cancer Research Foundation, he says.

"Lack of energy, fatigue and stress are common challenges for patients with cancer," Andello says. "Through these mind-body programs, patients learn to relax the mind and the body together, and increase their overall well-being."

**ONLINE**

### Re-energize with a Class

The Cancer Resource Centre offers free mind-body programs, support groups, educational programs and a lending library. Call **219-836-3349** for more information or view a class listing online at [www.cancerresourcecentre.com](http://www.cancerresourcecentre.com).





# 14

## GOOD-FOR-YOU

# Gifts

*A fruitcake-free gift guide that wraps up healthy living in a pretty package*

BY AMANDA KIPPERT

**T**hey say the best gifts come from the heart, which is half true. The best gifts are also kind to the heart, not to mention the lungs, the brain—you get the idea. » This holiday season, instead of giving cat-embroidered sweaters to your giftees, why not look for presents that encourage health and wellness? That doesn't have to be mean bricks of green tea and gym memberships (in fact, the latter might send a not-so-kind message). » Instead, take a look at these creative, health-related gift finds for every person on your list.

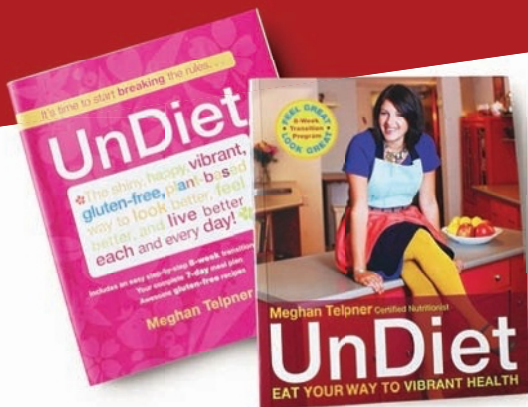
### 1 FOR THE RUNNER WHO NEEDS MOTIVATION

Athletic geeks (wait, is that even possible?) will love Sportiiiiis, a little gadget that clips to their sunglasses and, using color LED lights and voice prompts, keeps them on track. It relays heart rate, speed and cadence goals so they can keep their eyes on the prize. \$149.99, [4iiii.com](http://4iiii.com)



### 2 FOR THE SOIL-CHALLENGED GARDENER

A battery-powered garden? Believe it. No watering, no fertilizer needed to grow mini tomatoes, chili peppers or fresh herbs—perfect additions to a pal's meal plan. All she needs is this starter kit and two AA batteries. \$79, [clickandgrow.com](http://clickandgrow.com)



### 3 FOR YOUR ALWAYS DIETING LUNCHMATE

For anyone who's had it with fad diets, this book has one lengthy, but alluring, title: *UnDiet: The Shiny, Happy, Vibrant, Gluten-Free, Plant-Based Way to Look Better, Feel Better, and Live Better Each and Every Day!* Written by Meghan Telpner, a certified nutritionist who was diagnosed with Crohn's disease at 28, the book nixes the word *diet* in favor of healthy, positive nutritional advice. \$22.95, [amazon.com](http://amazon.com)

### 4 FOR THE FIERCE FOODIE

Instead of a bacon-of-the-month club, challenge a serious foodie to morph veggies into beads, and turn chocolate into spaghetti-like strands with a molecular gastronomy kit. He'll learn about science while cooking up cutting-edge dishes that will wow his next dinner party. The kit includes tools, ingredients and a DVD to help him become the Bill Nye of the kitchen. \$60, [uncommongoods.com](http://uncommongoods.com)



### 5 FOR THE FIT FRIEND IN FARGO

When winter's chill hits its peak and that athlete in your life still wants to get out for a jog, he or she will appreciate these gloves specially made for runners. The Pulse Lite Glove is lightweight, breathable, wicks away sweat ... and comes in some very hot colors. \$20, [brooksrunning.com](http://brooksrunning.com)



### 7 FOR YOUR YOGA BUDDY

Every yogi loves a fresh, pretty mat on which to practice her downward dog. Aspen Yoga Mats lets you personalize mats by color (pink equals nurturing while plum stimulates and inspires) with an emblem to match (Laughing Buddha, Lotus Blossom, etc.). Made from PVC foam, the mats are thick, spongy and latex-free. \$49.95, [aspenyogamats.com](http://aspenyogamats.com)

### 6 FOR A DEAR GRANDPA

A study by psychologists at the University of Miami found that people who are grateful—specifically those who write down what they're grateful for—are more optimistic and feel better about their lives. This translates to exercising more and being overall healthier than those who focus on life's aggravations. A Year of Gratitude, a set of 52 thank-you cards, is perfect for the grandpa who's just received his fourth macaroni-decorated pencil cup. \$30, [uncommongoods.com](http://uncommongoods.com)





## 9 FOR THE HUNGRY TEEN

Send a yummy gift to a young friend's mailbox every month with a subscription to Healthy Surprise, a snack delivery service. Each shipment is stuffed with full-sized, gluten-free, vegan snack options, from Kale Krunch to O.N.E. Coconut Water to Cocomojoe Joebars.

*\$33-\$99 a month, depending on box size, [healthysurprise.com](http://healthysurprise.com)*



## 8 FOR A SHARP GRANDMOTHER

Keeping your mind sharp through challenges, such as games, has been shown to increase the brain's vitality and even grow new brain cells, helping to lower the risk of Alzheimer's disease. Battle your grandparents in a game of Array, a cross between dominoes and rummy that involves lining up colorful cards more skillfully than your opponent. *\$15, [uncommongoods.com](http://uncommongoods.com)*



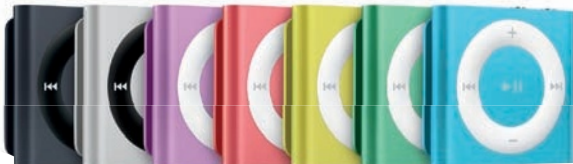
## 11 FOR YOUR TYPE-A BOSS

Know someone who has a little aggression to burn off? Why not give her the gift of virtually training with professional boxer Jaime Clappitt? The Empower Boxing Boot Camp package comes with weighted gloves, toning ball, jump rope and DVD. *\$40, [various retailers](http://variousretailers)*



## 10 FOR YOUR OLDER NEIGHBORS

Encourage the older folks on your gift list to keep moving by preloading an iPod Shuffle with their favorite music, so walking becomes entertainment. Regular exercise helps improve strength, flexibility, balance and coordination, reducing the risk of falls. *\$49, [apple.com](http://apple.com)*



## 12 FOR YOUR INSOMNIAC SPOUSE

Who couldn't use a better night's sleep? A 2012 study found that people who slept six or fewer hours a night were four times more likely to suffer a stroke than those who got more shut-eye. Help your loved one sleep soundly with the Sleep Therapy Mask from Sharper Image that lets you control how much light to block out to get the best sleep possible. \$39.99, [sharperimage.com](http://sharperimage.com)



## 14 FOR EVERYONE

Instead of adding to a stockpile of gifts, consider giving the present of helping others. Choose a hospital in your giftees' area and donate in their name. Then, let them know that they are part of helping improve the health and well-being of the entire community. ●



## 13 FOR THE SELF-IMPROVING RUNNER

Released this year, *Runner's World Running on Air: The Revolutionary Way to Run Better by Breathing Smarter*, was written by Budd Coates, a four-time qualifier for the U.S. Marathon Olympic Trials. \$16.99, [amazon.com](http://amazon.com)

# The Greatest Gift of All

Instead of buying material goods this year, consider giving a gift of hope. More than 1,500 people in the state of Indiana are waiting for lifesaving organ transplants, and one in every 20 Americans will need some sort of tissue transplant in their lifetime. Just one organ donor can save the lives of as many as nine people, and one tissue donor can enhance the lives of as many as 25 people. The hospitals of Community Healthcare System work to help coordinate donations, enable lifesaving transplants, support the families of donors, educate other healthcare professionals and promote awareness of the critical need for donation.

Under Indiana's Donor Choice Law, individuals 18 and older may declare their decision to donate, and family members are not able to override that decision at the time of death. Individuals under age 18 may declare their donation decisions with the permission of a parent or legal guardian, who must also provide consent for donation at the time of a minor's death.

## Donate Life

Through the Bureau of Motor Vehicles, Indiana residents can register their decision to be organ and tissue donors while obtaining or renewing their driver's license. Registration also is accepted at [www.donatelifeindiana.org](http://www.donatelifeindiana.org).

ONLINE





*These important decisions can help you create a personalized birth plan to make the most of this unforgettable day*

# SPECIAL DELIVERY

**W**hy is it that discovering you're pregnant makes every decision you struggle with over the next nine months seem as if your life depended on it? Do we want to find out the gender? ... Should the name be traditional or unique? ... What color should we paint the nursery? ... Cloth or disposable?

While those are details worth considering, don't let them overshadow one of the most important decisions you'll need to make about having a baby: the birth plan. In 2014, you have more choices than ever.

"Women need to be the masters of their

birthing experience," says Carol Sakala, PhD, director of programs for Childbirth Connection, an organization that promotes safe and satisfying maternity care. "You need to read voraciously, talk to people, and figure out your goals and how to achieve them." >

BY DONNA SHRYER



## Where to Deliver

First, you'll want to choose the hospital where you will deliver your baby. This decision is a major factor in your birth experience and recovery. Choose an obstetrician who delivers at the hospital of your choice. Or, if you already have an obstetrician, find out with what hospital he or she is affiliated.

Remember that each hospital's services and approach to birth are unique. For example, a woman with a high-risk pregnancy may require a hospital with a neonatal intensive care unit in case the baby needs specialized care. For another woman, a comfortable recovery room that offers a place for her husband to sleep may be a priority. And for another, the ability to have a doula in attendance is important.

The hospital you choose will be more than just the place you head when going into labor. You're likely to attend childbirth-preparation, newborn-care and breastfeeding classes there as well. To be sure you're making the right choice, take a tour to learn about policies, view the birthing rooms and get a sense for how things will go when you walk through the door, overnight bag in hand.



## Who's on Your Team

The nonprofit healthcare research group The Cochrane Collaboration found in a review of more than 13,000 births that women with early and continuous labor support were more likely to have a slightly shorter labor, less likely to use pain medication and generally reported a positive childbirth experience. It's evidence that choosing your support team is an important decision and should be one of your top priorities. In addition to your spouse or partner, this team usually includes an obstetrician but also might include a doula, a midwife, a friend or a relative.

Doulas provide emotional and physical support throughout labor and delivery but no clinical duties. A certified nurse-midwife is a registered nurse with a degree from a university-affiliated nurse-midwife program (most have master's degrees) and has the credentials to perform most duties of an obstetrician except certain procedures such as a cesarean section.

Whomever you choose for your birth team, choose someone whose first goal is to be there for you and help you make informed decisions.

## How to Manage Pain

Using epidurals or other pain-suppressing drugs remains the norm in the U.S.

"Sometimes people look at me like I have 10 heads when I say, 'You know, you don't need anesthesia. Natural childbirth is great!'" says Laura Riley, MD, an obstetrician and the author of *You & Your Baby: Pregnancy*.

In recent years, alternative, natural childbirth methods have been accepted and encouraged by a growing number of hospitals. Some methods to consider:

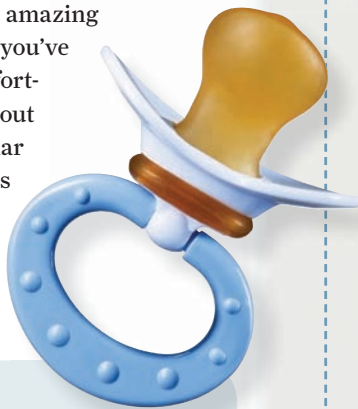
- A water birth allows you to go through labor and even deliver in a deep tub (though many women choose to leave the water for the delivery). "This is the most highly rated nonpharmacologic option," Sakala says. "The buoyancy is relaxing."

- Movement and positioning techniques to manage pain can be suggested by a doula or a midwife. Strategies include hot/cold applications, counterpressure, hip squeezes, lunges and use of a birthing ball.
- Hypnobirthing uses self-induced hypnosis to help manage labor pain, although the mother never enters a sleeplike state. She is guided toward a deep focus that promotes the release of endorphins, known as the “feel good” hormones in the brain.
- Acupuncture and acupressure are two other techniques that may relieve pain, regulate contractions and strengthen labor.

## Make Your Opinions Known

Once you know what kind of a birth you want, write down your preferences and make copies for each member of your team. With a detailed plan, the hospital staff can do its best to accommodate you—even if things don’t go exactly as expected.

Which isn’t to suggest that this amazing day will be anything less than what you’ve been anticipating. You’ll be in a comfortable place with a team you trust, about to star in one of life’s more spectacular experiences. Now all you have to do is figure out that car seat. ●



CALL

### Family First

To learn more about our Family Birthing Centers or find a physician at one of our hospitals, please call **219-836-3477** or **866-836-3477**. Take a virtual tour, sign up for a class or access our physician directory at [www.comhs.org](http://www.comhs.org).

## Care Package

The hospitals of Community Healthcare System—Community Hospital in Munster, St. Catherine Hospital in East Chicago and St. Mary Medical Center in Hobart—support the choices of women by offering a variety of child-birth options and resources across its three hospitals. We have everything you need to make one of the most important days in your family’s story a beautiful beginning.

Services range from midwives to doula support to water births and in-room accommodations for babies. Each hospital features beautifully decorated private birthing suites providing a comforting, homelike environment for this special time in the lives of families.

For women needing the services for the advanced care of infants, Community Hospital operates a Level IIIB Nursery. It is the only hospital in Northwest Indiana with board-certified neonatologists in-house 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Physicians from the University of Chicago Medicine Comer Children’s Hospital head this team of highly skilled and experienced neonatal nurses and respiratory, occupational, physical and speech therapists who provide intensive intervention for infants with special medical needs.

Education and preparation are important parts of parenting; if you need help before, during or after your pregnancy, be sure to take advantage of Community Healthcare System classes and special programs.



# VIRTUAL HEALTH



## Hysterectomy? There's an App for That

One in three women will have a hysterectomy by age 60. One in three cellphone users seeks health information through mobile devices. It only stands to reason there would be overlap between the two groups.

Enter, the HysterSisters app.

Women seeking hysterectomy support can download the free HysterSisters Hysterectomy Support app for iPhone and Android mobile devices. The app opens up a virtual world of woman-to-woman hysterectomy support, including an online support community, a symptom tracker diary and weekly reminders for preparing and recovering from surgery. Visit [hystersisters.com](http://hystersisters.com).

## Workout Rewards

**N**ew Healthy Me (NHM) is a points-based incentive program that has been helping Community Healthcare System employees maintain healthier lifestyles. The Web-based program provides a platform that is available to anyone at any time. As employees participate in wellness activities throughout the year, such as exercising, losing weight, having an annual physical or joining a team walking challenge, they accumulate points that translate into rewards. Every 5,000 points accumulated means prizes such as gift cards and drawings and, at the discretion of the employer, money in their paycheck to offset healthcare premiums. For employers,

NHM provides a tool to positively impact the rising costs associated with unhealthy lifestyle habits.

"Although we created this program for Community Healthcare System employees initially, ultimately we wanted to be able to build on this success and share it with other companies," says Roger Vogie, director of NHM. "What we have now is a program that can be customized to fit any company's specific needs."

Employers can see real results, which may include a reduction in the number of reported days off work due to illness and a decrease in the number of healthcare claims filed annually, he says.

### CALL

#### Wellness at Work

If you are serious about your health, sign up today! Businesses interested in creating a healthier workforce can call the New Healthy Me department at **219-934-2861** to schedule a program presentation.

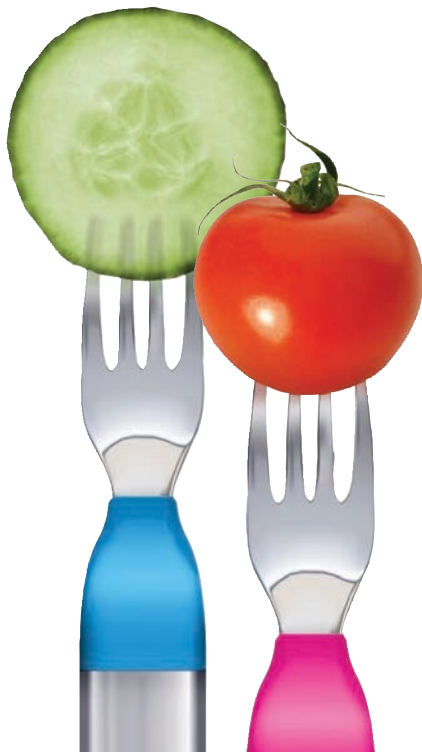


# CRAFTY CUTLERY

If you're like many Americans, you struggle with when to say "when" at the dinner table. Smarter flatware may be the answer.

The HAPIfork may help you stick a fork in overeating. Here's how: Research shows that it takes 20 minutes for your brain to realize your stomach is no longer hungry. That means if you wolf down your food, you're probably overeating.

The HAPIfork is an electronic fork that helps monitor eating habits, measuring the amount of "fork servings" you consume per minute—and even flashing indicator lights if you're eating too fast. After each meal, the dishwasher-safe "smartfork" uploads data to your smartphone wirelessly or to your computer through a USB port in the handle. Feel free to bring it with you to Olive Garden. Visit [hapilabs.com](http://hapilabs.com).



PHOTOGRAPHY BY HAPIFORK



## No-Hassle Heart Chart

Anyone serious about a healthy heart knows that keeping track of blood pressure, cholesterol and weight data is part of regular maintenance. But it's a hassle tracking these numbers over time, even when they warn that you're approaching a heart danger zone.

Heart360 can help. An "online cardiovascular wellness center" brought to you by the American Heart Association, [heart360.org](http://heart360.org) keeps tabs on your heart-related data, even enabling you to download blood pressure monitor or blood glucose monitor readings. If you're the color-coding, bar-chart-building type, this site is for you. Visit the website to get started today.

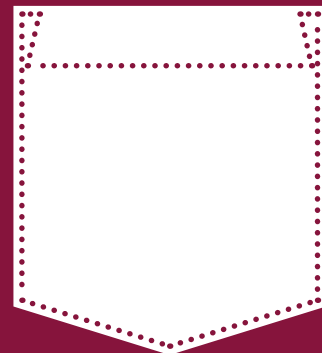
## Pocket Detox

An app called DTOX offers hand-held hope to those detoxing from binge eating, smoking, drugs, gambling or other addictive behaviors.

Built on the foundation that support is key to overcoming dependency, DTOX connects users with their own progress *and* with a support group that's rooting for them.

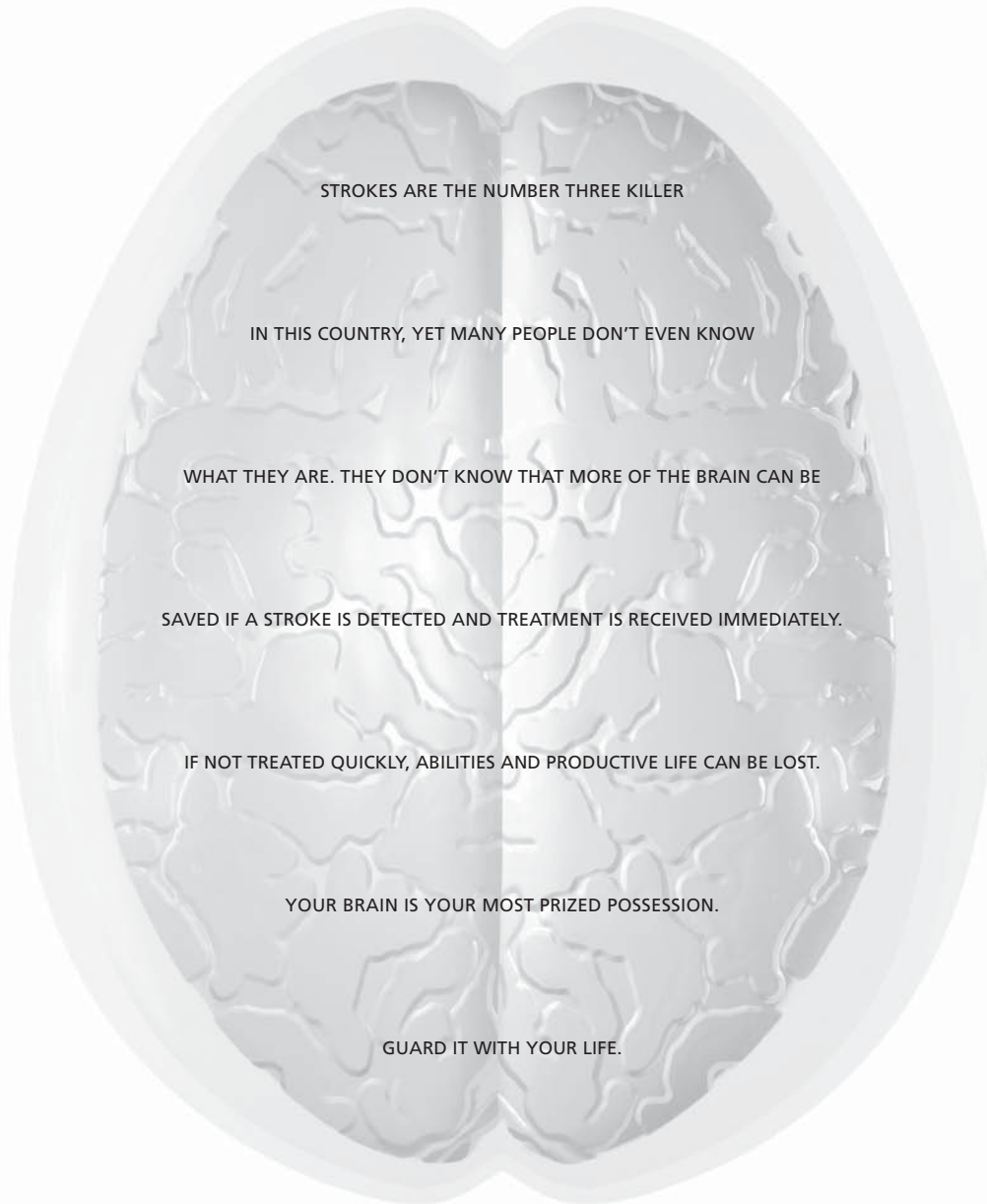
**HERE'S HOW IT WORKS:** DTOX features a real-time day counter (e.g., "You have been detoxing for \_\_ days"), daily alerts and emails to encourage progress and a tracker that monitors cravings and mood. The app also connects users to virtual support communities, called Fan Clubs, whose members receive periodic email updates on your progress.

Visit [dtoxapp.com](http://dtoxapp.com).





# WITH A STROKE, TIME LOST IS BRAIN LOST.



STROKES ARE THE NUMBER THREE KILLER

IN THIS COUNTRY, YET MANY PEOPLE DON'T EVEN KNOW

WHAT THEY ARE. THEY DON'T KNOW THAT MORE OF THE BRAIN CAN BE

SAVED IF A STROKE IS DETECTED AND TREATMENT IS RECEIVED IMMEDIATELY.

IF NOT TREATED QUICKLY, ABILITIES AND PRODUCTIVE LIFE CAN BE LOST.

YOUR BRAIN IS YOUR MOST PRIZED POSSESSION.

GUARD IT WITH YOUR LIFE.

Call 9-1-1 immediately if you suddenly experience:

- Numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body
- Trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
- Confusion, trouble speaking or understanding
- Severe headache with no known cause
- Difficulty seeing in one or both eyes

Call 9-1-1. Learn more at [StrokeAssociation.org/kc](http://StrokeAssociation.org/kc)



National Stroke Association is a collaborator in the American Stroke Association's Warning Signs Campaign.

**Genentech** Genentech is a supporter of the American Stroke Association's Warning Signs Campaign.  
*A Member of the Roche Group*



American Heart Association | American Stroke Association

*Learn and Live*

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

Topics covered include improving communication with physicians, keeping noise levels down at the inpatient side and other initiatives to improve care.

“We consider Dianna and all of our patients as extensions of our own family, and we strive to bring quality care to those we serve on a daily basis,” says St. Catherine Hospital Chief Operating Officer Craig Bolda. “We used Dianna’s input and made changes to improve the overall patient experience.”

Barb Foust, RN, with more than 30 years’ experience, is the patient advocate at St. Catherine Hospital and oversees the patient and family advisory council.

“We are encouraged on so many levels by the patient and family advisory council,” says Foust. “All have been patients or families of patients of our hospital and are very loyal yet upfront and honest and want to see St. Catherine continue to give the same quality care it has for the past 85 years. We are truly blessed with the council and its members—many are my former cardiac rehab patients, and we have all formed a special bond that includes making our hospital safer and healthier.”

## WISE WORDS

St. Mary Medical Center in Hobart also has a formal patient and family advisory council made up of community residents who have experienced patient care provided by the hospital as either a patient or family member.

“Our team of professionals is committed to listening to the patient and their families to tailor care on an individual basis for a safe healing environment,” says Janice Ryba, chief executive officer. “Often the most informed voices on the care team are those of the patient and family.”

“Ultimately it is the patient and their families who confirm whether a plan of care was explained thoroughly; the clinical information provided was fully understood; their questions



Barb Foust, RN, (right) with more than 30 years of nursing experience, is the patient advocate at St. Catherine Hospital and oversees the patient and family advisory council. “We are truly blessed with the council and its members—we have all formed a special bond that includes making our hospital safer and healthier and want to see St. Catherine Hospital continue to give the same quality care it has for the past 85 years,” she says.

# Benefits of a Patient and Family Advisory Council

The council may discuss any aspect of hospital or support operations—including admission/discharge practices, facility design, patient safety or communications. The goals of the council are to:

- Strengthen decision-making by drawing upon the diverse experiences and viewpoints of the people who look to Community Healthcare System hospitals for care.
- Offer insight and recommendations for improving quality, service, safety, access, education and patient/family satisfaction and loyalty.
- Increase understanding and compliance between patients and providers.
- Offer a safe forum for developing creative, cost-effective solutions to challenges.
- Reflect the culture of each Community Healthcare System hospital and reflect the socio-demographics of the hospital’s patient service area.

As Community Healthcare System incorporates the patient and family care experience into its planning and day-to-day hospital operations through a variety of mechanisms, the patient and family advisory councils serve as one important vehicle for that collaboration.

“Taking the time to really listen to our patients’ experiences helps us to better understand how we can meet their needs,” says Paula Swenson, chief nursing officer and vice president of Patient Care Services for St. Catherine Hospital. “We strive to consistently deliver the very best healthcare in a safe, compassionate environment; to advance that care through innovative research and education; and to improve the health and well-being of the diverse communities we serve.”

and fears were appropriately addressed; care was tailored to their specific needs; they felt safe; systems worked efficiently and effectively and each was treated as a person—a whole person—not simply as a chart or a medical record,” Ryba says.

Hospital councils are made up of a diverse group of patients, family members and community members who represent the collective voice of our patients and families, says Tammie Jones, chief nursing officer and vice president of Patient Services at St. Mary Medical Center.

“The patient [and] family advisory council aims to ensure the delivery of high-quality, safe, and positive, memorable healthcare experiences for patients and their families,” Jones says. ●



BY ELISE SIMS

# The Inside Story

*New technology is providing women more treatment options*

**E**arly last May after Maria Lopez had a routine mammogram, her results came up suspicious and she was asked to have more follow-up tests and a breast MRI.

“I was scared when the technician said I needed to have a biopsy and they would leave a marker in my left breast; I really got upset. I felt I didn’t need more tests. I needed answers,” she says.

Instead, Lopez decided to go back to M. Nabil Shabeeb, MD, a general surgeon on staff at Community Hospital in Munster that she had seen 10 years earlier for another procedure. “I felt he could help me; I trusted in his care; he would know what to do. He performed a core needle biopsy in his office, which confirmed a cancer diagnosis. Then he referred me to Dr. Nicholson at the Women’s Diagnostic Center for a PEM test.”

Women like Lopez with a diagnosis of breast cancer are getting answers sooner, thanks to groundbreaking technology being used by the Community Hospital Women’s Diagnostic Center in Munster. Positron emission mammography (PEM)

is an advanced imaging system that is being used to further define a breast cancer diagnosis.

## ● HIGH-TECH CARE

“We are excited to introduce this revolutionary technology to better care for our patients,” says Mary Nicholson, MD, fellowship-trained, dedicated breast radiologist at Community Hospital and regional director of breast imaging services for Community Healthcare System. “Identifying new or recurrent breast cancer at the earliest stage possible gives each patient the best chance of a superior outcome. PEM answers a lot of questions, such as ‘Is it cancer or not cancer?’ ‘How much cancer do I have?’ ‘Is it in both breasts?’ ‘Can I still have a lumpectomy?’ and ‘Do I need to be concerned that it has spread to the lymph nodes?’”

While PEM, which is a type of molecular imaging, does not replace regular screening mammograms, it is an important supplemental tool used to locate and determine the best treatment. It offers the highest possible specificity, allowing radiologists, breast surgeons and oncologists to study molecular abnormalities located inside tumor cells. Data gathered this way reveals accurate information regarding stages of cancer and determines the most appropriate treatment and finds cancer recurrence earlier.

A smaller version of the high-resolution positron emission tomography (PET) scanner, PEM’s metabolic imaging allows the physician to make the optimal cancer care decision for masses as small as 1.6 mm, the size of a grain of rice, by providing an unprecedented ability to distinguish between benign (noncancerous) and malignant (cancerous) masses.

## ● A CLOSER LOOK

PEM’s 3-D high-resolution images reveal what’s happening deep inside the tissues. First, the patient is injected with fluoro-deoxyglucose (FDG), a glucose



PEM technology is providing patients like Maria Lopez with answers and getting them to treatment faster. Here, Lopez consults with her plastic surgeon, David Robinson, MD.



Mary Nicholson, MD, (right), and Suzanne Ruiz explain that while PEM technology does not replace regular screening mammograms, it is an important supplemental tool used to confirm a diagnosis and determine the best treatment for breast cancer.

tracer that accumulates in all cells that metabolize glucose. Cancer tissues have higher-than-usual metabolic rates, so with the FDG it's easier to discern and visualize abnormal cancerous growths. About an hour after injection, patients undergo breast imaging with PEM. The scan reveals active lesions and, if necessary, the radiologist may perform a biopsy immediately to confirm whether the cells are cancerous.

"Not only did PEM confirm that I did have cancer in my left breast, it found cancer in three areas," Lopez says. "Then PEM found precancerous tissue in my right breast, so I was faced with another decision—whether or not to have a double mastectomy."

"There are plenty of women who will benefit from this new technology," says Suzanne Ruiz, RN, NP-C. "It's easier to tolerate than mammography as there is minimal compression of the breast, mostly immobilization. Another benefit is that the patient is seated upright and face to face with the technologist. So for this exam, the technologist is better able to attend to the patient's needs and provide comfort and reassurance."

## ● INCREASING OPTIONS

With the PEM scanner, physicians are able to determine how extensive the cancer is and if a patient is a candidate for breast-conserving surgery such as lumpectomy. PEM can also be used to monitor cancer treatment regimens—it can indicate a response to chemotherapy after just one chemotherapy treatment—or check for a recurrence of the disease. Doctors can refer patients receiving breast cancer

treatment for PEM instead of asking them to wait three or six months or longer, for repeat imaging to see if any significant changes appear.

"It was a hard decision, but I decided to go through with the double mastectomy," Lopez says about the surgery which she had about two weeks after the PEM exam. "I'm recuperating slowly every day. My family is happy about the way everything has turned out. My daughters are very helpful and cheer me on. My doctors [Shabeeb, Nicholson and David Robinson, MD, plastic surgeon] are optimistic and encouraging."

"Breast cancer is very treatable if it is found early enough," says Nicholson. "If we are able to detect cancer before it has spread outside of the breast [metastatic], we will help people survive. Early detection truly does save lives."

"We really do want to make a difference for our patients," says Ruiz. "And this new technology seems like the biggest difference we can make right now at this time. We're helping women, once they have a diagnosis, to take the next best step." ●

ONLINE

## Ladies, Get the Care You Need

Visit [www.comhs.org/community](http://www.comhs.org/community) to learn more about the breast cancer screening and care options available at Community Hospital.





BY ANGELA MOORE

# Testing, Testing, 123

*A new and improved MRI eases the experience for patients*

**F**or Maria Nunez of Dyer, the initial thought of having an MRI test brought back some unnerving feelings. From previous tests, the idea of being uncomfortable for a long period of time caused concern, but pain in her right knee had become unbearable.

Her physician immediately ordered the test using St. Catherine Hospital's new open MRI. The Hitachi Oasis High Field Open MRI system features the widest bore available in the industry.

Nunez said her experience with the new machine was surprisingly pleasant and less stressful.

"I've had MRI tests in the past, and I felt like I was closed in a tube," she says. "It was uncomfortable. With the new equipment, I felt much more at ease and the test didn't seem as long. The music was pleasant as was the staff. I was very pleased with the experience."

"Our goal of providing our patients with advanced technology and the most up-to-date treatment



St. Catherine Hospital's new Hitachi Oasis High Field Open MRI system features the widest bore available.

techniques is achieved through the investment in equipment like the Oasis Oval MR system,” says Craig Bolda, chief operating officer. “Patients are able to choose St. Catherine Hospital with the confidence that they are receiving testing and treatments in a comfortable environment.”

## ● HOW IT WORKS

The Oasis MRI scanner is a revolutionary advancement in MRI technology, combining the high resolution, extended capabilities and fast-scan times of a high-field, closed magnet with the comfort of the open MRI magnet. Because of the open design, the magnet speed and the video system, patients rarely require sedation. The high-field open design allows high quality images to be obtained on all patients, large and small.

“This new, leading-edge, high-field magnet greatly expands our imaging capabilities in all areas, including neurologic imaging, orthopedic applications, vascular work and imaging of the abdomen and pelvis. At the same time, we continue to provide a comfortable, patient-friendly, truly open magnet experience,” says Thomas Hoess, MD, medical director of Radiology at St. Catherine Hospital.

For many patients, having an MRI can be terrifying—especially if a patient has special considerations such as claustrophobia, if the patient is a pediatric patient or an elderly patient suffering from dementia or an obese patient worrying about weight restrictions.

## ● ADVANTAGES OF OPEN MRI

Open MRI machines are far less constricting, as they are open on the sides, and the machine does not enclose the patient’s entire body.

“Patients overwhelmingly prefer the open MRI to the traditional machine,” says Roberto Gonzalez, director of Diagnostic Imaging and Cardiology Services.

“Patients consistently tell me they feel much more comfortable and at ease in our open machine. We are fortunate at St. Catherine Hospital to be able to offer that service to our patients; it makes their experience just that much better.”

MRI testing is part of the diagnostic imaging services at St. Catherine Hospital, where staff strive to make the entire patient experience easy from start to finish. Offering same-day appointments and flexible

# So What Is an MRI, Anyway?

Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) uses a powerful magnet and radio waves to obtain detailed images of the soft tissues—organs, muscles, veins and nerves—in the body. It provides some of the most advanced imaging available and is considered a safe diagnostic tool. There are no known side effects, because unlike X-rays, there is no radiation.

MRI is used to diagnose tumors, infection, neurological conditions and orthopedic injuries, and can be used to image virtually any part of the body. MRI can also be used for dynamic imaging to monitor blood flow to the brain and liver, as well as evaluate the contractions of the small bowel and the muscles of the pelvic floor.

hours for outpatient services, the department works to accommodate nearly any patient, including those up to 650 pounds.

The MRI room at St. Catherine Hospital has been newly redesigned with patient comfort in mind with soft music to listen to and blankets to keep patients feeling relaxed.

According to Gonzalez, every accommodation is made to ensure that every patient has the most comfortable experience possible.

St. Catherine Hospital offers a wide range of tests and radiological procedures in an atmosphere where patient ease is paramount. The hospital is equipped with advanced technology and caring medical specialists, technologists and support staff. ●

CALL

## Need an MRI? Call St. Catherine Hospital

The new MRI is the latest addition to the hospital’s other state-of-the-art imaging equipment, including a new ultrafast CT scanner. For more information about the new open MRI at St. Catherine Hospital, call

**219-392-7321.**





# Major *New surgery center is patient-focused, family-friendly* Operation

BY MARY FETSCH

**F**rom robotics to minimally invasive technologies, much has changed in surgery as St. Mary Medical Center has grown throughout the years. Today a new \$40 million surgical pavilion is being built not only to accommodate current advancements, but also future technology. The 62,000-square-foot, two-story building will replace and house the hospital's existing surgical department and intensive care unit with expanded, innovative features. The project may also include the "shelling-in" of two additional floors with 40,000 square feet of space for future patient services growth.

"Our surgical pavilion is the most complex project we've undertaken to date," says hospital CEO Janice Ryba. "Our focus is to maintain and grow a solid surgical department by creating space to accommodate future technologies and developments. We also will be providing a comfortable, healing environment for patients and families in our new intensive care unit."

During construction, the hospital will continue to utilize its current surgical and intensive care facilities without disruption. The initial phase of the project

will be to complete the new 20-bed ICU, which will be located on the second floor of the new building. Once complete, patients from the current ICU will be transferred to the new unit and construction of the new operating suites, recovery rooms and family lounge will begin on the first floor. Other services including same-day surgery, endoscopy and sterile processing also will be located in the new building.

## ● SURGICAL SUITES FOR THE FUTURE

The new surgical department will feature 12 large surgical suites and four minor procedure rooms that will be nearly double the size of the previous operating rooms. The space will accommodate the latest technology, including the robot-assisted daVinci® SI surgical system, complex imaging display systems, laparoscopic equipment, surgical lasers and navigation systems.

"Many of our surgeons were involved in the planning process, providing critical feedback to make certain the layout, design and technology will meet



St. Mary Medical Center's expanded surgical department will feature 12 large surgical suites and four minor procedure rooms designed to allow for flexibility of equipment placement, ease of use and accessibility for surgeons and staff.

# Surgical Pavilion Features:

## First Floor:

- 12 large surgical suites
- 4 minor procedure rooms
- Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU)
- Same day surgery
- Phase II Recovery Unit
- New Central Sterilization department
- Surgical family lounge
- More than 32,000 square feet plus 6,000 square feet of mechanical space

## Second Floor:

- 20 private ICU beds
- Nearly 21,000 square feet

their needs,” says Karen Gerke, RN, director of surgical services. “The rooms are designed to allow for flexibility of equipment placement, ease of use and accessibility for surgeons and staff. These design elements allow us to adapt our ORs to a variety of procedures and future technologies as well. Ceiling-mounted booms elevate equipment, and multiple high-definition displays allow surgeons the ability to reposition equipment and patients to accommodate a broader range of surgical procedures.”

Adjacent mechanical space will also house completely new heating/cooling air-handling systems to ensure the most efficient temperature control within the ORs and to maintain a comfortable environment. Additional details include LED lighting that offers brighter conditions with less heat generation. Color bulb options are also available to enhance visualization of certain tissues and organs during surgery.

“Our hospital has experienced steady growth in our surgical services these past few years, and we expect that to continue,” adds Ryba. “Our award-winning Joint Academy, our bariatric center of excellence distinction, minimally invasive laparoscopic designation (MILD), and the increased volume and complexity of spine and cardiothoracic surgery programs, are the force behind this new facility. We expect our new operating rooms to work seamlessly with surgeons across a multitude of specialties.”

## ● A HEALING ENVIRONMENT

Located immediately above the surgery department will be a 20-bed bright, modern, intensive care unit, which will be served by one public and one private elevator that will bring patients directly from surgery if necessary. The space is designed to be family-friendly, workflow efficient and technologically advanced for patients requiring the highest level of care.

“This new space will allow us to more efficiently and effectively manage our critical care patients to ensure they receive optimal care for the seriousness of their conditions,” says Tammie Jones, RN, chief nursing officer and vice president of Patient Care Services. “The new ICU will not only offer leading-edge technologies, it is designed to be family-friendly with space in each room to accommodate those who wish to spend time with recovering patients.”

Nursing workstations will be positioned outside of each room, allowing caregivers to carry out their tasks while always in close proximity to their patients. Also, the look and feel of each room will feature a more homelike environment with cabinetry,

flat screen televisions, private bathrooms, and large windows with plenty of natural lighting.

“Our overall goal is to seamlessly integrate technology and expertise with a comfortable, healing environment for patients and families,” says Rebecca Little, interim nurse manager of the ICU. “Patients recover better when they are calm and comfortable. We anticipate that this new ICU will accomplish that and enhance patient experience to produce the best possible outcomes.”

## ● ROOM TO GROW

Included in construction is the “shelling-in” of two additional floors for another 40,000 square feet of space for future growth.

“We’ve met with staff, physicians, patients and families to ensure we’ve met their expectations for comfort, efficiency and outcomes in this new pavilion,” says Ryba. “We also wanted to have the flexibility to grow and modify spaces as the changing healthcare needs of our patients dictate.”

Construction of the new pavilion is expected to be complete by mid-2015. ●

ONLINE

## Keep Up With Our Progress

Visit [www.comhs.org/stmary](http://www.comhs.org/stmary) to learn more about what the new surgery pavilion will offer you and your family.





# Getting Babies 'Back' to SLEEP

*Nurses unite to spread message  
of safer sleep practices*

**B**abies in cribs are sleeping safer and their parents have greater peace of mind, thanks to vigilant efforts of the nursing staff at Community Healthcare System hospitals. Nurse educators have been spreading the message of safe sleeping methods for babies in an effort to move Lake County from last position as the Indiana county with the highest number of sudden unexpected infant deaths (SUIDs).

“Safe sleep practices are taught from the get-go,” says Mary Puntillo, RNC-NIC, RNC-LRN, neonatal clinician at Community Hospital. “We are committed to spreading the message of baby ‘Back to Sleep; By Myself; in a Naked Crib.’ We use HALO® SleepSacks™ for babies born at our hospitals. The sleeper sack is a soft wearable blanket with a swaddle feature that replaces loose blankets in a crib. New moms are seeing it, hearing it from the moment baby is born, and we’re teaching it in our communities with Taking Care of Baby and Grandparent classes so that hopefully, they will do the same at home.”

For her efforts, Puntillo has been named a “Safe to Sleep” Champion by the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. The Safe to Sleep campaign (previously known as the Back to Sleep campaign) strives to educate parents, caregivers and healthcare



BY ELISE SIMS

providers about ways to reduce risk for SUIDs and other sleep-related causes of infant death.

## KEEPING BABIES SAFE

SUIDs are, for the most part, preventable and are a result of unsafe sleep practices. According to First Candle, one of the nation’s leading nonprofit organizations dedicated to the survival of babies through the first years of life and a Safe to Sleep campaign collaborator, there are 4,500 SUIDs per year in the U.S. Eighty to 90 percent of those deaths are from babies sleeping in an unsafe environment.

With Community Healthcare System hospitals—Community Hospital in Munster, St. Catherine Hospital in East Chicago and St. Mary Medical Center in Hobart—leading Lake County in infant deliveries, the hospitals’ nursery staff has taken a leadership stance in keeping babies safe. By taking education and awareness to another level, one by one, families—and other area hospitals—are beginning to follow the new recommended guidelines.

Besides teaching in the Taking Care of Baby and Grandparents classes, Puntillo and co-NICU staff nurses Teresa DeYoung, RN; Hope Robinson, RN-C; and Pam Krasowski, RN, have reached out to the community spreading the word through Baby Fairs at Babies R Us. This past June, Puntillo brought the Safe to Sleep message before the Northwest Indiana Patient Safety Coalition. The coalition is made up of healthcare leaders from Northwest Indiana facilities who work toward health and safety issues across the age span. Numerous hospitals and clinics are represented, along with two university nursing programs.

“We’re proud that our nurses have made the decision to spread the word about proper sleep environments and take a leading role in preventing the tragic deaths of babies,” says John Gorski, chief operating officer of Community Healthcare System. ●



Community Healthcare System nurses spread the message of safer sleep practices at Babies R Us (from left to right): Hope Robinson, RN-C; Pam Krasowski, RN; and Teresa DeYoung, RN.

ONLINE

## Are You a New Mom?

Talk to your doctor about other ways to keep your baby safe.

Need a physician? Log on to [www.comhs.org](http://www.comhs.org) and click “find a physician” to search our directory.



# Bad to the Bone?



**Osteoporosis affects 55 percent of Americans older than 50.**

Are you one of them? Talk to your doctor today about a bone mineral density test.

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**Cancer Resource Centre  
Community Cancer Research Foundation  
926 Ridge Road, Munster, IN 46321**



The Community Cancer Research Foundation brings to patients the latest research advances in diagnosis, treatment and prevention of cancer. Through trials sponsored by the Foundation, local patients have been among the first to benefit from new, groundbreaking treatments that have helped to improve survival, and are less invasive.

In its quest to improve cancer care, the Foundation also established the Cancer Resource Centre. The Centre helps to educate, inform, support, and uplift individuals and their family members in their fight against cancer. It offers all of its services free-of-charge.

Together, the Community Cancer Research Foundation and Cancer Resource Centre are working to improve the quality of care available to local patients and the loved ones who support them.

**Cancer Resource Centre:  
219-836-3349**

**[www.cancerresourcecentre.com](http://www.cancerresourcecentre.com)**

**Community Cancer Research Foundation:  
219-836-6875**

**[www.MyCCRF.com](http://www.MyCCRF.com)**