

Summer 2023

# Healthy

COMMUNITY

Entertainer

## Donny Osmond

*talks openly about his  
struggles with anxiety*

**FOCUS ON  
MENTAL  
WELLNESS**





# Donny's Mission

## Mental health awareness is a heartfelt, personal cause for Donny Osmond.

Since he was 5 years old, Donny Osmond has been performing in public. Today, after 33 gold records and 100 million albums sold worldwide, Donny is still going strong, releasing his 65th album, *Start Again*, in 2021 and currently headlining his first solo residency at Harrah's Las Vegas, voted Best New Show and Best Performer. However, even with all that success, it has not always been easy. Recently, *Healthy Community* spoke to Donny to discuss the mental and physical challenges he has overcome during his six decades in show business, including an anxiety issue that almost ended his career.

### **Let's talk about your social anxiety disorder first. When did that begin?**

As early as age 11, I remember feeling anxious. As a young performer, I was always under a lot of pressure to be perfect. I felt like I was being judged all the time, and that's hard for any child. Then, in the 1980s, when I was the lead in the Broadway musical *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, my anxiety steadily

increased to the point where it was affecting my performance. It got so bad that I had a panic attack during a performance in Minneapolis.

### **What did you do?**

I got help. Dr. Jerilyn Ross, who worked with Barbra Streisand and other celebrities, taught me how to play with my fear, not run from it. If I had butterflies in my stomach, for example, she would tell me to imagine the butterflies flying in formation. Steven Pimlott, the show's director, changed my whole way of thinking about performing. I had always thought that I had to deliver a great performance because the audience had paid good money to see me. Steven told me I had it all backwards. He said it wasn't my job to make the audience happy. It was my job to have the best time of my life on stage and let the audience peek into my world. If I was having a blast, the audience would, too. That changed everything.

### **What lessons did you learn from that experience?**

I learned that it is not a black and white world. I learned to live in the gray and allow myself to make

mistakes and let go of the idea of trying to be perfect. Here's an example. During a recent performance, I missed a high note. In the past, that one mistake could have turned into a panic attack. But instead, I stopped the show, spoke directly to the audience and told them I didn't hit that note and that we were going to try it again. On the second try, I nailed it!

### **You faced another medical challenge recently when you injured your back. Tell us about that.**

It happened in 2019 during the last performance of a show Marie and I had been performing for 11 years at the Flamingo Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas. Suddenly, I couldn't feel my arms and legs, yet somehow, I finished the performance. I learned that my spine had shifted and I needed surgery. All the dancing I had done over the years finally caught up with me. The surgery was a success, but then I got a secondary infection, which became very serious. At my low point, I could only walk using a walking frame and I was in extreme pain. I thought my career might be over and that I might not walk again. It took almost a year of rehabilitation to recover, but

today, I'm able to keep up with all the 20-year-old dancers I work with.

### **How did you make it through such a difficult time?**

Keeping a positive attitude was the key, as well as a lot of hard work. It would have been easy to fall into depression, but I just kept working hard at the rehab. I would do little exercises so I wouldn't be sedentary, and I could still sing so I kept doing vocal exercises.

### **Any final thoughts?**

For far too long, mental health has been a taboo issue in our culture, and there is still a stigma associated with it. I want people to know that help is available. I want people to know that they have a choice as to how they live. Don't be embarrassed if you have a mental health issue. Get help. I did, and it changed everything! ■

“Even if things are not ideal at times, I have an awareness and a faith that ‘this too shall pass.’”

## How Are You Doing?

The isolation created by the COVID-19 pandemic dramatically increased the number of Americans who needed mental health services. That need continues today, and our community is no exception. Anyone you know could be struggling with a mental health issue, from severe depression and anxiety to a chronic addiction. It is up to all of us to check on each other by asking one simple question: “How are you doing?” If you ever think someone has a mental health issue, do not be afraid to reach out and find help for that person — or yourself. At the hospitals of Community Healthcare System, we are always ready to listen, help and connect you with the right resources and services, including counseling, therapy, medications and clinical support, that can make a dramatic and permanent change in your life.

### Mental Health Services



Find comfort in sharing thoughts and feelings with others in support groups through Community Healthcare System. To find a group in your area, visit [COMHS.org/programs-and-events-HC](https://www.comhs.org/programs-and-events-HC).



# Shining the Spotlight on Mental Health

COVID-19 wasn't just a threat to America's physical health. The isolation that COVID forced many people to endure also created a mental health crisis. In November 2020, during the height of the pandemic, cases of anxiety and depression increased 600 percent compared to November 2019.

Mental health includes your emotional and social well-being, which influence how you think, feel and act. Having good mental health does not mean you will always be in a good mood or immune from the stresses of everyday life.

However, a positive mental attitude can keep you healthy, reduce the risks of serious illness and lower your risk of a heart attack or stroke. If you, a friend or a loved one experience any of the following symptoms, please seek professional medical help.

## Do you experience fear or dread when around certain people, objects or situations?

You may have an **anxiety disorder**. Other symptoms include a rapid heartbeat and sweating. There are several types of anxiety disorders, including panic attacks and phobias. Entertainer Donny Osmond was diagnosed with social anxiety disorder.

## Are you feeling sad all the time?

This is one of the symptoms of a **mood disorder**. You may also feel overly happy or fluctuate between extreme happiness and sadness. Depression is the most common type of mood disorder.

## Do you have extreme eating habits?

People with **eating disorders** have extreme attitudes about their weight and what they eat. For example, people with anorexia nervosa mistakenly think they

are overweight and severely restrict the amount of food they eat.

## Do you have obsessive thoughts and fears?

People with **obsessive-compulsive disorder** (OCD) have uncontrollable thoughts and/or behaviors they repeat over and over, such as arranging objects in a specific way or an irrational fear of germs that causes them to avoid touching anything.

## Are you experiencing frightening and recurring thoughts about a traumatic event?

**Post-traumatic stress disorder** (PTSD) is a condition that often follows a terrifying event, such as a sexual assault, natural disaster or combat.

**If you or a loved one are having or expressing suicidal thoughts, do not hesitate to call the National Suicide Hotline at 988.**

Sources: [verywellhealth.com](https://www.verywellhealth.com)



# Your Safe Summer Guide to

## Fun in the Sun



**May is** Skin Cancer Awareness Month. With summer just around the corner, here are five quick tips on how to protect your family from the damaging rays of the sun.

- 1) Use sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15.
- 2) For best results, apply sunscreen 30 minutes before going outside.
- 3) Reapply sunscreen after swimming or sweating.
- 4) Wear a wide-brimmed hat and UV-resistant clothing.
- 5) Stay away from tanning beds and lamps.

### Why Sunburn is Serious

According to the National Cancer Institute, almost 30 percent of adults do not protect themselves from the sun and get sunburned each year. Too much sun exposure not only ages the skin prematurely, it also increases the risk of melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer. Fortunately, when melanoma is detected early, the five-year survival rate is 99 percent. Ask your primary care

provider to include a skin exam as part of your yearly health check-up. Once a month, use the ABCDE Rule to check your skin and moles for melanoma.

- **Asymmetry:** One half of the mole has a different shape than the other half.
- **Border:** Edges are uneven, ragged and notched.
- **Color:** The color is not the same all over.
- **Diameter:** The spot is larger than a 1/4 inch (size of a pencil eraser).
- **Evolving:** The mole is changing in size, shape and color.

#### Have a Skin Concern?



To find a dermatologist in your area, visit  
[COMHS.org/dermatology-HC](https://www.comhs.org/dermatology-HC).

Sources: webMD, Banner Health, National Cancer Institute



# Stressbusters:

## 7 Ways to Live Your Life with Less Stress and More Joy

Consider this amazing fact: Up to 90 percent of doctor's office visits are for stress-related ailments and complaints.

**STRESS IS THE BODY'S RESPONSE** to physical, mental or emotional pressure. It usually occurs in situations that feel out of control or unmanageable. When under stress, your body releases chemicals, such as adrenaline, to help you face the situation. This increases your heart rate, elevates your blood pressure and makes your muscles tense.

We all experience short periods of stress at different times in our lives, whether sitting in traffic or being late for an appointment. However, long-term stress can overwhelm a person's ability to function and lead to a host of medical concerns.

**Heart Disease:** Stress increases your blood pressure and heart rate. It can also release more cholesterol and triglycerides into your blood stream, which can increase your risk of heart disease. One study of heart attack survivors found that stress management classes reduced their risk of a second heart attack by 74 percent. When under stress, you are also more likely to smoke and eat unhealthy foods, which increases your risk for heart disease.

**Diabetes:** Stress tends to raise the glucose levels of people with type 2 diabetes. It can also lead to excessive drinking and bad eating habits, which makes the diabetes worse.

**Obesity:** Stress releases the hormone cortisol. This increases the amount of fat stored around the belly,

which causes greater health risks than fat stored elsewhere in the body.

**Headaches:** Stress is one of the most common triggers for both tension headaches and migraines.

**Depression and Anxiety:** People in high-stress jobs have an 80 percent higher risk of developing depression than people in low-stress jobs.

**Asthma:** One of the symptoms of stress is faster breathing. As a result, stress can induce and worsen flare-ups in people with asthma. It can also contribute to the onset of asthma.

**Arthritis:** Being under stress triggers the body's inflammatory response, which causes joint damage and makes arthritis worse.

**Skin Conditions:** Stress releases hormones that can cause hives, eczema and psoriasis.

**Common Cold:** Because stress can weaken your immune system, you are more at risk for infectious diseases such as colds and the flu.

**GI Problems:** Stress can lead to chronic heartburn, GERD (reflux disease), and irritable bowel syndrome. Even though stress does not cause ulcers, it can make them worse.

### Find a Doctor



Free physician referral is available online at [COMHS.org/find-a-doctor-HC](https://www.comhs.org/find-a-doctor-HC) or by phone at 219-703-2032, 8:30 am to 5 pm Monday-Friday.

# How to Reduce Your Stress Level

Stress can have a dramatic impact on your health. Fortunately, stress relievers can help restore calm and serenity to your life. If your stress is getting out of control and you need relief, follow these tips.

**1 Stay Active:** Virtually any form of physical activity is a good stress reliever: walking, jogging, gardening, housecleaning, biking, swimming, weightlifting or anything else that gets you active. In fact, just 10 minutes of walking can improve your energy level and mood. That's because, when you are active, your body releases endorphins, a natural chemical that improves your sense of well-being.

**2 Get Plenty of ZZZZs:** A good night's sleep is seven to nine hours for most adults. Sleep allows your body to recharge. If you don't get enough sleep, your mood and energy level will suffer. Try to go to sleep at the same time every night and stay away from electronic devices during the 30 minutes prior to bedtime.

**3 Laugh More:** Laughter stimulates blood circulation and helps your muscles relax. Just like exercise, laughter also increases the endorphins released in your brain.

**4 Try Relaxation Techniques:** Scientific studies have shown that meditation and deep breathing exercises can lower your stress level and create a sense of calm, peace and balance.

**5 Slow Down:** Because many of our lives are so busy, sometimes the best thing you can do for your health is to slow down and chill out. Downtime helps you relax and helps your mind stop thinking about the triggers that are producing stress. Spending time in nature, listening to your favorite music or addressing your thoughts and concerns to God through prayer are all effective in reducing stress.

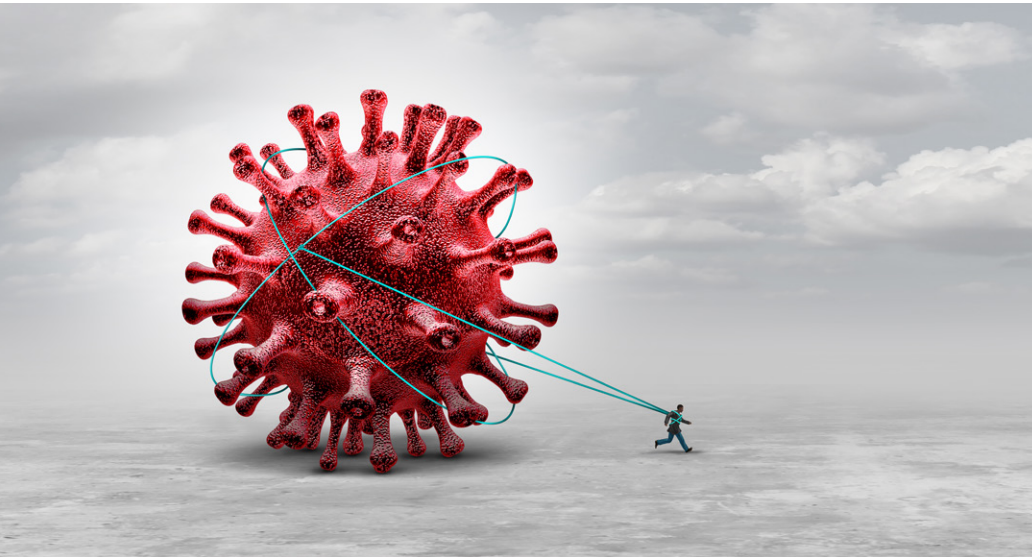
**6 Seek Help From Others:** When you are stressed and irritable, your instinct may be to isolate yourself. However, that can only make your situation worse. Talking with friends or family members about how you feel can reduce your stress. Making social connections can help, too. When you volunteer to do charitable work, for example, you are helping yourself while helping others.

**7 Find Professional Help:** If you try several of these tips and still find yourself feeling stressed, consider reaching out for professional counseling. Therapy may also be a good idea if you are feeling overwhelmed or trapped, if you worry excessively, or if you are having trouble carrying out daily routines or meeting responsibilities at work, home or school.

Sources: Mayo Clinic, webmd



# In it for the Long Haul



Hobart fire chief thanks  
St. Mary Medical Center  
team for COVID care

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by Vanessa Negrete

**T**HE CURSOR ON Randy Smith's computer screen blinked among the sentences in an open Word document.

"I'm working on a document today, and if I don't keep that up in front of me, I'll forget," he explained.

The brain fog and memory loss are remnants of his COVID-19 battle. Smith, chief of the Hobart Fire Department, is a "long hauler," the name for people who experience long-lasting symptoms of the virus.

Jan. 15, 2023, marked two years since Smith was released from St. Mary Medical Center after COVID-19 treatment. His two-month hospital stay included 16 days on a ventilator to give his scarred lungs a chance to rest. The 60-year-old Hobart resident now focuses on his life's newfound purpose.

"I think God kept me here to do good things for people and to give back because I've been given a second chance," he said.

During recuperation, Smith read about a fire department on the West Coast that set up a program to

connect people with new or gently used medical equipment. Smith had some equipment he no longer needed and figured someone in Hobart could use it.

"So we started the Hobart Fire Department Health Equipment Loan Program (HELP)," Smith said.

On its Facebook page, the department posted a request for medical equipment donations. The department now has a room filled with equipment to loan to Northwest Indiana residents.

The fire department also started working with the care coordination team at St. Mary Medical Center to aid patients in need, whether it is loaning a piece of medical equipment or driving someone to a doctor's appointment.

"They have come up with a lot of out-of-the-box, creative ways to help our patients," said Amber Williams, administrative director of patient care services.

Smith also volunteers to give emotional support to patients at St. Mary Medical Center.

"When they have somebody who is down in the



dumps, I go in, and I tell them a little about my story and a little about the things that I did to make it through, kind of a one-day-at-a-time thing,” Smith said.

A goal setter his whole life, he told the rehabilitation therapists he would walk out of the hospital. Therapists would set a goal, and Smith, an Air Force veteran, would set it higher.

Seeing Smith motivated to recover reassured his fellow firefighters.

“We were all very relieved to learn that Randy was recovering from his life-threatening bout with COVID,” Assistant Fire Chief John Reitz said. “Not only did the Hobart Fire Department need him at the helm, but the city in general needs his care and compassion.”

Smith thinks he caught the virus at a downstate meeting in November 2020. He returned home on a Friday, felt sick the next day, was swabbed at the Community Hospital testing site and received a call the next morning confirming a positive COVID-19 test result. In the throes of COVID, Smith had no sense of time.

**Just as he predicted at his first rehabilitation session, Smith walked out of the hospital on his own. It was two months to the day he arrived.**

“Things went downhill quickly,” he said. “I’m a medic, and I didn’t even recognize it. I thought I was downstairs for two or three days. I was downstairs for seven days. I stayed there and just slept.”

Once at the hospital, he had difficult conversations with family about end-of-life decisions, finances and other loose ends.

“I got done with those conversations and said, ‘Let’s do it,’ and then they put me on a ventilator,” he said.



Hobart Fire Department Chief Randy Smith is thankful for surviving COVID-19. “I think God kept me here to do good things for people and to give back because I’ve been given a second chance,” he said.

Smith plunged into 16 days of deep sleep and dark dreams.

“The next thing I remember is my wife standing in the doorway of my room,” he said.

Just as he predicted at his first rehabilitation session, Smith walked out of the hospital on his own. It was two months to the day he arrived. The halls were flanked by healthcare workers, many of whom had a hand in his recovery. They cheered and applauded as he made his way out the door. Smith said words cannot express the amount of gratitude he has for the team at St. Mary Medical Center.

“They saved my life,” he said. ■

#### COVID Care



For information about the COVID Clinic for “long hauler” patients at Community Healthcare System, visit [COMHS.org/coronavirus](https://COMHS.org/coronavirus).

# Less Invasive, Better Results

TCAR procedure debuts at  
Community Healthcare System

by Vanessa Negrete

**A** less-invasive approach for treating carotid artery disease is lowering patients' risk of stroke while reducing recovery times and their postoperative hospital stay.

The procedure – called Transcarotid Artery Revascularization (TCAR) – is a hybrid. It combines traditional surgical treatment, which has been around since the 1950s, and carotid stenting, which emerged about 20 years ago, said Interventional Cardiologist Anas Safadi, MD, who is affiliated with Community Healthcare System.

“With surgery, the surgeon makes a 3- to 4-inch incision down the patient’s neck, enters the carotid artery, cleans out the plaque and closes the incision,” Safadi explained. “With carotid stenting, a puncture is made at the groin, and catheters and wires are run up to the carotid artery, and a stent is put in place.



Hobart resident David Tripp, seen with his wife, Patty, was among the first to benefit from TCAR after suffering a minor stroke in July 2021 and a second stroke in June 2022.

“With TCAR, we place a stent, but we do not have to traverse all that anatomy to get to the carotid artery,” he said. “With the help of a surgeon, we directly puncture the carotid artery and deliver the stent using a technology called flow reversal, where this stops the blood flow into the carotid while we deliver the stent.”

Safadi was part of the team that performed the first TCAR procedure at

St. Mary Medical Center, which was in October 2022.

Among the first to benefit from TCAR was 79-year-old Hobart resident David Tripp. He suffered a minor stroke in July 2021 and a second stroke in June 2022. Safadi determined Tripp would be a good candidate for TCAR.

“They told me all the risks, and I chose to go forward with it,” Tripp said. “I was a little hesitant about TCAR because the procedure was so new, but I trust Dr. Safadi.”

In October 2022, he underwent the TCAR procedure on

a carotid artery that was significantly blocked. Just before Christmas, he underwent the more traditional surgical procedure to repair the carotid artery on the other side, which was also significantly blocked.

His wife, Patty Tripp, said that two days after TCAR, David had a burst of energy.

“He was more lively,” she said. “He felt good, and he was walking around the house. It was as though somebody opened a door and let David come out.”

David Tripp said that every patient is different and needs to decide what is right for their own situation, but he would encourage other patients considering TCAR to have it done.

“It is going to change your life,” his wife added.

To determine whether a patient is a good candidate for TCAR, a team of doctors reviews each case.



**Photo:** Interventional Cardiologist Anas Safadi, MD, who is affiliated with Community Healthcare System, was part of the team that performed the first TCAR procedure at St. Mary Medical Center in October 2022.

## “It was as though somebody opened a door and let David come out.”

“We consider risk factors and their anatomy when deciding whether TCAR is a good option,” Safadi said.

Compared to traditional surgery, TCAR offers a smaller incision, lower risk of in-procedure heart attack, less risk of nerve damage, shorter surgery and shorter hospital stay.

“TCAR involves a 1- to 2-inch incision at the base of the neck, at the clavicle,” Safadi said. “It is very different than recovering from a 3- or 4-inch incision down the neckline. TCAR has a faster and easier recovery.”

The majority of patients go home the next morning.

“They take it easy for a few days, but in about a week’s time, they’re back to normal with minimal long-term side effects or problems,” Safadi said.

Without any medical intervention, carotid stenosis – which is the narrowing of the arteries in the neck that supply the vast majority of blood supply to the brain – increases the risk of stroke.

For David Tripp, TCAR gave him one fewer health issue to worry about. Tripp is a retired fire captain who spent 34 years

on the Gary Fire Department and has a complex medical history that includes elbow surgeries, knee replacement, hip replacement and various injuries. On one call, he even had a brick wall collapse on him.

“I don’t do anything easy,” he joked.

Tripp’s recovery from TCAR has been relatively smooth.

“The doctors said to go home and relax and keep an eye on the incisions,” Patty Tripp said. “He healed up with no problem at all. We were very fortunate.” ■

### Learn more about TCAR



**TCAR is a minimally invasive procedure that can benefit the majority of patients with significant carotid disease to reduce their risk of developing a stroke or mini-stroke in the future. For information about cardiovascular care available through Community Healthcare System, visit [COMHS.org/heart-HC](https://www.comhs.org/heart-HC).**

# 330 Pounds Gone

Couple reach weight-loss, health goals through Community Healthcare System's Healthy 4 Life



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by Kerry Erickson

**F**OR CHRIS AND STACY DISNEY, dropping more than 330 pounds was more about what they gained than what they lost.

The couple light up when they talk about their journey together through Community Healthcare System's Healthy 4 Life program.

"I still giggle when certain things happen now. Like when I used to drop something on the ground when I was around 300 pounds, I would just get another one of whatever it was. Now I can bend down and get it no problem," Stacy said. "Life is not a struggle. Chris can get his arms all the way around me to hug me. For me, it's those little things that are bigger things that a lot of people take for granted."

The Park Forest couple underwent gastric sleeve surgery, with Chris having his procedure done first in November 2018. His current weight is around 250 pounds, down from his

pre-surgery weight of 486.

"You still always nitpick yourself: I wish I could do this or change a little here," Chris said. "But then you look back at where you started, and you say, 'Well, damn! OK!'"

Chris' main motivation to get healthy was for his 10-year-old daughter, Grace.

"I started to think about what it would be like for her if I wasn't here," said Chris, 47. "I figured if there was ever a good reason to change, it would be that. That made me start looking into weight-loss surgery. I checked around in the area at all the different programs. Fortunately, I found Community Healthcare System's Healthy 4 Life."

Before losing the weight, Chris was facing a slew of health problems. Those problems melted away after the surgery and inspired the Ford electrician to make another life-changing decision — go back to school.

“I was type 2 diabetic before, and I’m not now. I had severe obstructive sleep apnea. I don’t have that anymore,” he said. “I sleep so much better. I have so much more energy. All of that together inspired me to go back to school for exercise science. It worked out as a bonus!”

Among the couple’s healthcare team is bariatric surgeon Paul Stanish, MD, who performed Stacy’s and Chris’ procedures.

“Some people think bariatric surgery is a quick fix for weight loss. It’s not. Patients still have to put in the hard work,” he said. “Stacy and Chris are perfect examples. A combined 330-pound loss is not something that comes easily. Surgery is just a tool; you still have to put in the work. To see success stories like the Disneys’ makes what we do at Healthy 4 Life worth it.”

Stacy’s resolve to have the surgery was “one of the hardest but easiest decisions I’ve ever made.” COVID and the restrictions it brought pushed her surgery to March 2022. The Healthy 4 Life team was supportive of her decision to postpone the surgery until she was ready and could have her loved ones by her side.

“There was no way I could be in the hospital for this life-changing surgery without my husband, my mom and my people there. When I told (the Healthy 4 Life team) this was my decision, they absolutely praised me,” Stacy recalled. “They said, ‘We are here to support you in any way we can. When you are ready, you say the word.’”

Two years later, Stacy gave the green light for the surgery. Nearly a year after that, she stepped on the scale to see she had lost 100 pounds! To commemorate the milestone, she got a tattoo of a mountain range and the words, “It’s not always a straight climb to the top.”

That inked adage reflects the struggles she – and Chris – had faced before finding success with Healthy 4 Life.

“I had tried Weight Watchers; I did the low-carb thing; I limited my calories. All of those things were making me miserable. If I lost 20 pounds, I would then gain 30 back,” she said.

Chris also tried “pretty much every commercially available diet plan.”

“You felt like you were starving because you weren’t eating right when you are on these diets. It was a never-



ending battle,” he said.

The couple credit Healthy 4 Life’s team of doctors, nurses and nutritionists with ending the battle and becoming what felt like a supportive family rooting you on.

“They are always a phone call or an



**Top Left:** Chris and Stacy Disney pose for a photo in November 2018, before either underwent weight-loss surgery.

**Above Right:** Stacy and Chris Disney share a special moment in November 2022. The couple lost more than a combined 330 pounds through Community Healthcare System’s Healthy 4 Life program.

email away,” Stacy said. “It is very much an extended family. They know you by name; you’re not just a patient.”

“If you have a question about your diet or some effect that you’re experiencing, everyone is right there,” Chris added. “It’s like a library. Everything you need to know is in the Healthy 4 Life office.” ■

**Learn more about Healthy 4 Life**



**For more information about the surgical and non-surgical options available through Community Healthcare System’s Healthy 4 Life, visit [COMHS.org/services/bariatric-medicine](https://www.comhs.org/services/bariatric-medicine).**

# Community Healthcare System

Northwest Indiana's  
Trusted Healthcare  
Leader

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by Karin Saltanovitz



**W**ITH THE SUPPORT OF SOME of the area's most talented medical professionals, the hospitals of Community Healthcare System – Community Hospital in Munster; St. Catherine Hospital in East Chicago; St. Mary Medical Center in Hobart; and Community Stroke & Rehabilitation Center in Crown Point – have earned numerous national accreditations and distinguished recognitions for high-quality care and innovative technology.

## Community Healthcare System

Community Healthcare System offers the largest and most advanced cardiovascular network in Northwest Indiana. Patients with complex heart conditions are evaluated, diagnosed and treated at our hospitals, experiencing outcomes equal to or better than those available in a university medical center setting. Our acute care hospitals are fully accredited as Chest Pain Centers by either the Joint Commission or the Society of Cardiovascular Patient Care.

Community Healthcare System's Structural Heart and Vascular team, the first to offer transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR) in Northwest Indiana, continues to be a leader in this groundbreaking cardiovascular treatment. They have performed nearly 750 procedures to date and exceed national benchmarks in quality and patient outcomes.

## Community Hospital

Northwest Indiana's largest hospital with 454 beds, Community Hospital specializes in advanced cancer care, cardiology, neurosciences, mother-baby care and orthopedic treatments. The hospital treats complex stroke with the elite designation as a Comprehensive Stroke Center serving all of northern Indiana. Numerous cancer, cardiovascular and neuroscience clinical trials and research are being conducted for groundbreaking new treatment options. Community Hospital also offers Lake County's only dedicated obstetric emergency care for expectant and postpartum women, staffed 24/7 by specialty nurses and board-certified OB/GYNs. Most recently, Community Hospital earned The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval® for Advanced Certification in Spine Surgery by demonstrating continuous compliance with its performance standards. This selection makes Community Hospital the 14th center in the United States and the first hospital in the Midwest to receive this designation.

## St. Catherine Hospital

A steward of East Chicago and neighboring communities for nearly a century, St. Catherine Hospital continues to forge new ground with advanced technology, such as CyberKnife S7 for precise robotic radiation therapy, and the SOZO Lymphedema Prevention Program for reduction of secondary lymphedema in cancer survivors.



**Left:** Shown are the four hospitals of Community Healthcare System: Community Hospital in Munster; St. Catherine Hospital in East Chicago; St. Mary Medical Center in Hobart; and Community Stroke & Rehabilitation Center in Crown Point.

and Statista, most recently earning the distinction as No. 2 in the state.

## Expansion on the horizon

Community Healthcare System continues to invest resources throughout Northwest Indiana by building new facilities and expanding services. To meet the growing

In 2022, St. Catherine Hospital again achieved a five-star rating, the highest ranking possible for overall quality of care from the Centers of Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), a feat only a dozen other Indiana hospitals earned for the year.

## St. Mary Medical Center

Since opening, St. Mary Medical Center has evolved to become a nationally recognized healthcare institution. It is a Center of Excellence for Minimally Invasive Gynecologic Surgery, one of only a handful in the state. The hospital's Joint Academy has earned recognition from the Joint Commission for advanced certification for total hip and knee replacement; and orthopedic surgeons at the hospital use the advanced Mako<sup>®</sup> Robotic Arm-Assisted Surgery System for partial and total knee replacements. In 2022, cardiologists at the hospital became the first in the area to treat carotid artery disease and prevent future stroke using an innovative procedure called transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR). The hospital offers the latest technology for robotic-assisted bronchoscopy bringing to residents of Northwest Indiana the minimally invasive Intuitive Ion for lung care and cancer detection.

## Community Stroke & Rehabilitation Center

After opening in 2019, Community Stroke & Rehabilitation Center already has grown to be recognized among the country's best for rehabilitation care from Newsweek

healthcare needs of our residents, construction is underway for Community Immediate Care Center Munster, a 32,000-square-foot facility a few blocks south of Community Hospital's Fitness Pointe at 10240 Calumet Ave. The center is expected to open later this year.

These achievements underscore Community Healthcare System's dedication to excellence and demonstrate the results of our investment in bringing advanced treatment to Northwest Indiana. ■



**Above:** A rendering of Community Immediate Care Center Munster, a 32,000-square-foot facility being built to meet the growing healthcare needs in Northwest Indiana. The center is expected to open later this year.

To learn more



For more information about the hospitals of Community Healthcare System, visit [COMHS.org](https://www.comhs.org).

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE



Donny Osmond



Mental Health Spotlight



Summer Skin Safety



Living With Less Stress

# Mental Health Quiz

Test your knowledge about mental health by answering these six true-or-false questions. Answers are provided at right.

**1** Depression is just a bad mood.

**2** Mental health has a major impact on a person's overall health.

**3** Mental health issues are very common.

**4** Suicide is the second leading cause of death for Americans age 15-34.

**5** People with mental illness are violent.

**6** Mental health is caused by personal weakness.

**1) False.** Depression is a real medical illness.

**2) True.** Read the *Stressbusters* article on pages 6-7.

**3) True.** About 20 percent of American adults will experience some form of mental illness.

**4) True.** The highest cause of death is unintentional injury.

**5) False.** The vast majority are not violent.

**6) False.** Mental illness is caused by a combination of factors, including biology, stress and traumatic events.

Source: CDC