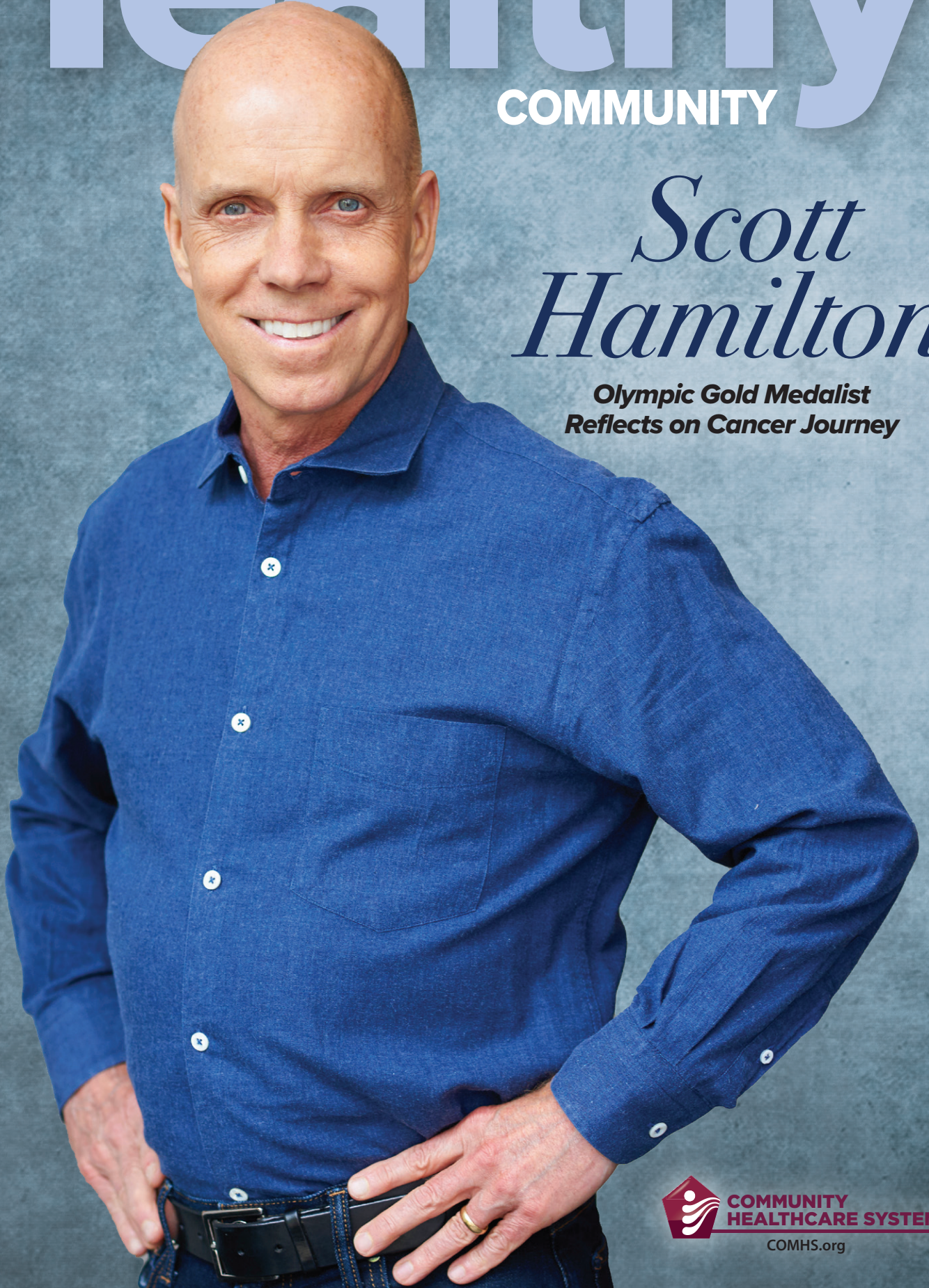


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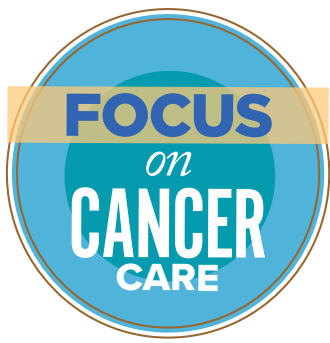
Healthy

COMMUNITY



*Scott
Hamilton*

**Olympic Gold Medalist
Reflects on Cancer Journey**



A Blessing *in* **Disguise**

For Olympic gold medalist Scott Hamilton, overcoming cancer multiple times has brought a new perspective on life

Photo: Courtesy of Scott Hamilton



SCOTT HAMILTON HAS been a fighter his whole life. At the age of two, Scott came down with a mysterious illness that stunted his growth, followed by six years of unsuccessful treatments. Despite that major setback, Scott went on to become the 1984 Olympic gold medalist in figure skating. This year, 2024, marks the 40th anniversary of that life-changing accomplishment.

Then, in 1997, Scott was diagnosed with testicular cancer, which he defeated, followed by three brain tumors — in 2004, 2010 and in 2016. *Healthy Community* recently talked with Scott to discuss his passion to help cancer patients, the ups and downs of his health journey and the life lessons he has learned along the way.

Let's begin with your most recent cancer diagnosis.

In January 2016, I was diagnosed for a third time with brain cancer. It is a benign pituitary tumor but still dangerous because of its location in the brain.

What was your reaction?

Well, let's put it this way. My first brain cancer diagnosis came as a shock. The second felt like a kick in the gut. But the third time, it felt different. It was like, "This is a devil that I know now." I felt a peace and a calm about my diagnosis and the road ahead. I was given both surgical and medical treatment options, but I decided to go home and make myself as strong as possible physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually.

What has been the result?

Well, I have watched the tumor shrink and grow over the years. My plan has been to wait until I developed symptoms before receiving medical treatment, but the symptoms have never appeared, so I have been able to devote more time to my foundation.

Tell us about that.

It is called the Scott Hamilton CARES Foundation. CARES stands for Cancer Alliance for Research Education and Survivorship. We focus on changing the way people are treated for cancer through less invasive means, such as immunotherapy and targeted therapy.

What inspired you to become involved?

My mother was diagnosed with cancer in 1975 when I was only 16. For two years, doctors tried everything to save her, but nothing worked. Cancer treatments back then were not nearly as effective as they are today. After her death, I wanted to find a way to honor her by funding cancer research. That was my inspiration for creating the fourth Angel Mentoring Program. When dealing with cancer, your first two angels are your oncologist and oncology nurse. Your third angel is your friends and family. But what cancer patients also need is a fourth angel, somebody who has been down the same road, a person who knows exactly what you are going through



“Cancer made me take a long look in the mirror.”

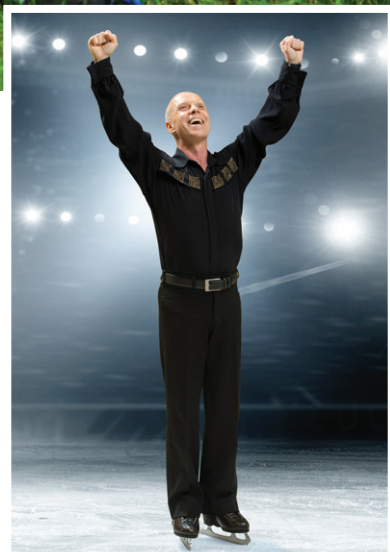
Above: Scott and Tracie Hamilton and their family.

At Right: Scott Hamilton & Friends skate at Bridgestone Arena in Nashville, benefitting the Scott Hamilton CARES Foundation.

because they are a cancer survivor. At the time, we were working with the Cleveland Clinic and pairing 100 patients a month with a mentor who had previously gone through cancer treatment. Another project I am proud of is chemocare.com. It provides information about chemotherapy in easy-to-understand English and Spanish.

What advice do you have for people diagnosed with cancer?

It's so important to gain a full understanding of your treatment options and how they work. Cancer treatment is getting better every day, and new technologies are being developed constantly. Above all, don't let the disease consume you. Instead, focus all of your energy on getting and staying healthy and making yourself as strong as you can. Exercise. Eat healthy foods. Pour yourself into your family and relationships. Keep learning and growing every day. For men especially, don't think of yourself as bulletproof and try to tough it out on your own. Lean on your friends and family to find the medical support you need.



John A. Russell Photography

Any final thoughts?

It may sound strange, but I can truly say that cancer is one of the best things that has ever happened to me. Cancer made me take a long look in the mirror, reflect on my life, strip it down, and ask, "What am I here for?" It made me realize that I was just existing, just coasting through life instead of living with purpose. As a result, I have become more intentional in how I live. I have learned to invest more time in my family and build up my faith. I have more empathy and compassion. Having been given a second, third and fourth chance at life, I have learned that every experience is really a blessing in disguise. ■

FACING CANCER Together

Scott Hamilton is not alone in being diagnosed with cancer. According to the American Cancer Society, almost 42% of men and 40% of women will develop cancer in their lifetime.

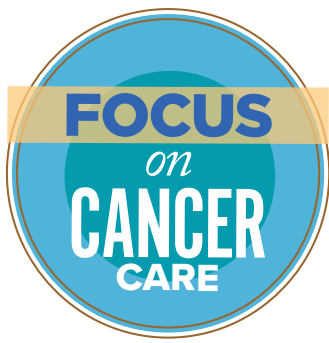
Today, however, thanks to more accurate diagnoses, advances in treatment options and a greater willingness to be screened, survival rates continue to rise. At Community Healthcare System, we are proud to play a role in the fight against cancer. We offer a network of primary care providers on the front lines, a wide range of cancer screening services, and the diagnostic, laboratory and surgical capabilities needed to help diagnose possible cancers and set a course for proper treatment.

We encourage you to talk with your primary care providers, follow the helpful advice in this issue of *Healthy Community*, and take control of your health.

Cancer Care



To learn more about cancer care services offered at Community Healthcare System, visit [COMHS.org/cancer-HC](https://www.comhs.org/cancer-HC).



7 More!

Cancer is the No. 2 health concern for men worldwide. Here's a quick look at the facts and actions associated with several **non-cancer health issues** that affect men.

CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE

Fact: 1 in 4 men will die of heart disease, the leading cause of all death, for both men and women. Stroke is the fifth leading cause of death in American men. Almost half of all U.S. adults have some form of cardiovascular disease.

Action: Get regular exercise, plenty of sleep and maintain a healthy weight. Find ways to reduce stress, lower alcohol intake and stop smoking. Keep tabs on cholesterol, blood sugar and blood pressure. They are all risk factors for cardiovascular disease.

DIABETES

Fact: Nearly 20 million American men have diabetes, a condition that affects 1 in 10 people. Elevated blood sugar levels can lead to heart disease, stroke, kidney failure, limb amputation and damage to the nerves and eyes.

Action: Lifestyle changes can lower blood sugar. These include exercise, a diet rich in fiber and whole grains, and a healthy body weight. Beginning at 45, have your blood sugar levels routinely checked.

VIRUSES

Fact: Viral infections come in many forms and can lead to health issues as simple as a common cold or as widespread as COVID-19. As many as 50,000 deaths occur each year in the U.S. due to the flu alone.

Action: Consult your primary care provider and consider vaccines for influenza (flu), respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), shingles and COVID-19.

RESPIRATORY ILLNESS

Fact: Lung cancer, COPD, emphysema and bronchitis are all forms of respiratory illness, which affects 34 million Americans. A chronic cough, shortness of breath or frequent respiratory infections may be warning signs.

Action: A simple lung function test or chest X-ray can provide a diagnosis. The most important preventive step for respiratory health is to break the smoking habit.

INJURIES

Fact: Unintentional and accidental injuries are the No. 3 cause of death for all men in the U.S. Each year, 1 in 4 older adults fall, making falls the leading cause of fatal injuries among that group.

Action: Wear your seat belt, wear a bike helmet or other protective gear as appropriate for any activity, and take more precautions as you live life, especially as you age.

OBESITY

Fact: According to the CDC, 75% of American men are considered overweight or obese, which increases the risk for heart disease, Type 2 diabetes, digestive problems and certain cancers.

Action: Losing just 5-10% of your total body weight can significantly improve certain health conditions.

DEPRESSION

Fact: Six million men suffer from depression every year, and suicide rates are almost four times higher for men than for women. Men are also more likely to ignore symptoms or refuse treatment.

Action: Stay active in mind, body and spirit. Look for signs such as fatigue, changes in appetite or sleeping habits, anxiety, hopelessness or a loss of interest in pleasurable activities. Reach out to a spouse or friend or make an appointment with a primary care provider.

Page 4 and 5 Sources: American Heart Association; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); American Lung Association; Cleveland Clinic; National Council on Aging; Harvard Medical School; census.gov

It's Almost Summer ... Be Smart in the Sun!

Sunburn and excessive exposure to sunlight is the primary cause of skin cancer, the most common form of all cancers. In 2024, it is estimated that nearly 5.5 million new cases of skin cancer will be diagnosed in the U.S., more than all other cancers combined. However, there are a number of common-sense ways to reduce your risk for over-exposure to the summer sun and still enjoy your favorite outdoor activities.

Dress smartly. Wear protective clothing and cover as much skin as possible.

Be generous with sunscreen. Cover all exposed skin and use sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher, even on overcast days. Reapply after swimming, sweating or toweling dry.



Wear a hat and sunglasses.

A wide-brimmed hat is recommended to cover your face, ears and neck. Choose sunglasses that absorb ultraviolet rays and wear them at all times.

Pick your times. Stay indoors during the

middle of the day when the sun is high in the sky and the ultraviolet rays are most intense.

Avoid tanning beds and sun lamps. The UVA light used in tanning beds is strongly linked to melanoma, the most serious form of skin cancer. Just one visit to a tanning salon significantly increases your risk.

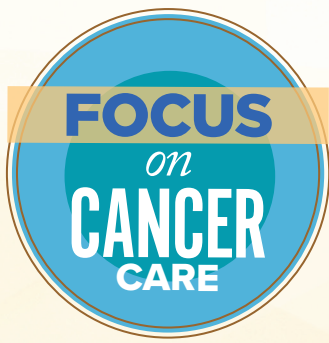
Sources: American Cancer Society, Skin Cancer Foundation, American Academy of Dermatology

The Gender Health Gap

According to a recent study, **60% of men do not see a healthcare provider on a regular basis for preventive care. Men are more likely than women to suffer from heart disease, stroke, diabetes and cancer. Overall, men have shorter life spans and more serious medical conditions.**

Women, on the other hand, are 33% more likely to visit a healthcare provider and 100% better at having recommended screenings. On average, they outlive men by more than five years.





When it comes to cancer, **knowledge is power**

In the ongoing fight against cancer, early detection and an accurate diagnosis are critical to proper treatment and successful outcomes. **Community Healthcare System** can help detect and diagnose cancer and provide the information you need to guide and determine the best course of treatment. This essential knowledge can come from several key sources.

Source One: An Annual Wellness Exam

Seeing your primary care provider is perhaps the most important step you can take in detecting early signs of possible cancer. An annual wellness exam increases the likelihood of detecting cancer early, when lifesaving treatments are much more successful. Cancer of the skin, breast, thyroid, lymph nodes, testes and ovaries are just some of the cancers that can be detected by your primary care provider, who is also in the best position to recommend additional tests or screenings.

What can I do? Schedule and keep those annual wellness appointments and be sure to talk openly and honestly with your provider. Don't hold back. Ask questions about your health concerns, no matter how small they may seem.

Source Two: Regular Cancer Screenings

Regular cancer screenings are proven to be the best way to detect cancer early. Here are seven of the most common cancers, and how to screen for them.

► For Breast Cancer

Today, there are nearly 4 million breast cancer survivors in the United States. When breast cancer is diagnosed at an early, localized stage, the five-year survival rate is 99%. That's why the American Cancer Society recommends a yearly mammogram for all women starting at age 45, then every two years starting at age 55. For women 40 to 44, a mammogram is optional. Women who have a higher risk for breast cancer should have both an MRI and a mammogram.

Sources: American Cancer Society; National Breast Cancer Foundation; fightcolorectalcaner.org; Lung Cancer Foundation; Johns Hopkins Medicine; Mayo Clinic; WebMD



► For Cervical Cancer

Cervical cancer is most often diagnosed in women between age 35 and 44. A primary HPV (human papillomavirus) test is recommended every five years beginning at age 25 and continuing to age 65. If a primary HPV test is not available, screening may be done with either a co-test that combines an HPV test with a Papanicolaou (Pap) smear every five years or a Pap smear alone every three years. For women older than 65, testing should stop if your previous tests have been normal.

► For Colorectal Cancer

Colorectal cancer will claim the most lives of people younger than 50. For every person with average risk, colorectal screening should begin at age 45 and continue every 10 years. For those with above average risk, testing should begin earlier and take place more often. A colonoscopy is the primary screening for colorectal cancer. The entire colon can be closely inspected during the procedure, and polyps can be removed before they become cancerous.

► For Lung Cancer

The number of new lung cancer cases and lung cancer deaths has been declining in recent years. Still, 1 in 16 people will be diagnosed with lung cancer in their lifetime. A lung cancer screening called low-dose computerized tomography (CT) is sometimes used to scan the lungs of older adults who are lifetime smokers but may not have any symptoms. Other tests might include an X-ray or a biopsy.

► For Prostate Cancer

Other than skin cancer, prostate cancer is the most common type of cancer in American men, affecting 1 in 8 men. However, when detected early, the relative five-year survival rate is nearly 100%. Starting at age 40, talk to your provider about the risks and benefits of screening. Men who decide to get screened should be tested with a prostate-specific antigen (PSA) blood test, perhaps along with a digital rectal exam.

► For Skin Cancer

Skin cancer is by far the most common of all cancers in the U.S. However, the most serious of skin cancers, melanoma, accounts for only 1% of cases. Report suspicious moles or unusual changes in your skin to your provider. An annual body scan by a dermatologist is recommended.

► For Testicular Cancer

One in 250 men will develop testicular cancer in their lifetime, and the risk of death is very low, about 1 in 5,000. However, incidence rates have been increasing, and there is no standard screening test for testicular cancer. Men may discover a lump during a self-exam or during a physical exam with a provider. If a lump is found, an ultrasound test is often performed to check for cancer.

What can I do? Talk to your provider about which cancer screenings you need and how often they need to be performed. Consider self-exams and pay attention to your body. Be on the lookout for changes that might be signs of cancer.

Source Three: Diagnostics & Lab Testing

► **Diagnostic Imaging:** If signs of possible cancer are discovered during a wellness exam or a screening, your provider will likely recommend additional testing to clarify or confirm whether cancer exists. Our hospitals have the diagnostic technology to provide that clarity. Ultrasound, MRI and CT scan are all non-invasive procedures that physicians can utilize to look more closely for cancer, determine how far it has spread, or see if a treatment is working.

► **Lab:** As part of an annual wellness exam, samples of blood, urine, tissue and other fluids may be taken and sent to one of our hospital laboratories to determine if there are any signs of cancer.

What can I do? Trust your provider to know what steps should be taken in order to gain a clear and accurate diagnosis. Advocate for yourself. Ask good questions and understand the pros and cons of further testing. The more you know, the more effective a treatment plan will be.

Source Four: Biopsies and Surgery

In certain situations, a biopsy or minor surgical procedure will be recommended when a screening or imaging test does not yield a definitive diagnosis. During a biopsy, body tissue or a sample of cells is removed and then analyzed in a lab. In addition to determining if the cells are cancerous, a biopsy can provide valuable information about where the cancer originated and how aggressive it is.

What can I do? Remain positive! Studies show that an optimistic outlook reduces stress and may decrease the risk of early death by as much as 50%.

The Ultimate Source: YOU!

You know your body better than anyone else. Trust your instincts. Stay informed and don't hesitate to contact your primary care provider at Community Healthcare System with any health concern you may have.

Community Cancer Research Foundation



Community Cancer Research Foundation's Cancer Resource Centre brings together in one place the resources and support to help put patients with cancer on the path to healing. To learn more, visit myccrf.com.

Powers Health Lights the Way

Name change reflects
legacy and vision of
bringing exceptional healthcare
to Northwest Indiana

by Donald P. Fesko

AFTER TWO DECADES OF dedicated service under the name Community Healthcare System, a new chapter begins July 1, 2024, with the introduction of Powers Health.

This exciting new change reflects both the legacy of Community Healthcare System and its hospitals and providers, as well as the future of healthcare in our area. Under the name Powers Health, our healthcare system will be unified to provide easier recognition and resources for our patients, stronger integration of automation and a more seamless transition of patient care for routine health exams and advanced specialties. The same compassion and expertise that you have come to expect from our health professionals will be ever present in Powers Health.



Powers
HEALTHSM

Powers Health is an evolution of Community Healthcare System, not a merger or acquisition.

As a healthcare system, providing care, improving quality of life and being a steward in our community are in our DNA – ingrained in our founding.

We would not be where we are today without my grandfather, Donald S. Powers. He was a visionary and was instrumental in the development of Community Hospital in Munster. A philanthropist and prominent civic leader, he made it one of his life's missions to ensure premier healthcare would be available within the growing communities of Northwest Indiana.

Opening the doors of Community Hospital in 1973 was an undertaking of extraordinary determination. It took years of work, negotiations and fundraising to bring the hospital to fruition. Our flagship hospital now serves as an anchor for Northwest Indiana.

“The same compassion and expertise that you have come to expect from our health professionals will be ever present in Powers Health.”

In 2001, our mission grew when St. Catherine Hospital in East Chicago and St. Mary Medical Center in Hobart joined Community Hospital to form Community Healthcare System.

Our system expanded to Crown Point in 2019, with the opening of Community Stroke & Rehabilitation Center. In just five years, the center twice has been recognized among the country's best for acute rehabilitation care from Newsweek and Statista, earning the distinction as No. 2 in Indiana.

Today, we are Northwest Indiana's largest healthcare system with more than 800 beds. Our clinical teams and hospitals are leaders in their disciplines – providing advanced care for cancer, heart, neuroscience, rehabilitation, stroke and orthopedics. We constantly strive to bring innovative opportunities to our corner of the state.

Expansion on the Horizon

As Northwest Indiana continues to expand, so does the need for comprehensive medical services. Our healthcare system stands ready to meet that demand.



Donald P. Fesko

President and CEO of
Community Foundation
of Northwest Indiana, Inc.

These projects reflect our promise to the communities we serve.

In Porter County, services are expanding for patients seeking emergency care. A new Emergency Department (ED) will be built at the Valparaiso Health Center of St. Mary Medical Center. This full-service ED will offer around-the-clock emergency care in a new 7,000-square-foot space. Patients requiring hospital admission will be transported to nearby St. Mary Medical Center in Hobart for inpatient care. The ED in Valparaiso is expected to open later this year.

In southeast Lake County, construction is underway for our Cancer Care Center in Crown Point. Patients will find this facility to be an extension of the same high-quality care they have come to expect from our hospitals.

Expected to open in spring 2025, the state-of-the-art comprehensive cancer center will provide streamlined patient care, clinical trials, genetics counseling and nurse navigation under one roof. Services will include cancer-focused physical therapy; cancer-related testing and diagnostic services, including PET CT imaging; and radiation therapy, including a linear accelerator to treat tumors with pinpoint accuracy.

While our name changes, the system's commitment to exceptional, compassionate care remains steadfast. Our drive to bring the latest and most advanced medical care to the area we call home will never waver. ■

Powers Health



For more information about Powers Health, visit
COMHS.org/PowersHealth.

Making strides with Mako

New approach revolutionizes
hip replacement surgery

by Vanessa Negrete

BEND. LIFT. STAND. CARRY.
For Burke Matyas, the labor that goes along with being a restaurateur took a toll on his body. Standing up to 15 hours a day, at times, for 18 years made him feel three decades older. “Every morning, I bend down, I light the steam table, light the fryer,” Matyas said. “With my job, I’m standing all day. I started feeling pain when I moved. Even putting on socks and shoes was tough. I was 56 years old and walking like I was 85.”

The Lockport, Ill., resident was the first patient of Community Healthcare System to undergo the Mako Total Hip procedure.

Jonathan Edgington, MD, fellowship-trained orthopedic surgeon and medical director of joint replacements at Community Healthcare System, replaced Matyas’ right hip Nov. 29, 2023, and his left hip Feb. 7, 2024, at St. Mary Medical Center in Hobart.

With surgery in the morning, Matyas was climbing stairs that night with the help of a physical therapist.

“They encourage you to walk and get exercise,” he said.

Although it can take up to a year to experience the full benefit of a hip replacement, Matyas said he immediately noticed a difference after surgery.

“I was amazed at how good I felt,” he said.

He went home the same day of his surgeries and started physical therapy soon after.

“People say I look taller because I’m standing more upright,” Matyas said.

He is glad he chose the surgical route.

“You don’t want to take pain pills all your life,” he said. “Technology is so great nowadays. I thought, ‘Why not try it?’ ”

The Mako System uses a virtual 3D model to allow surgeons to personalize each patient’s surgical plan so that there is a clear course of action for the implant.

“You don’t want to take pain pills all your life. Technology is so great nowadays. I thought, ‘Why not try it?’ ”



“With traditional hip replacements, we plan the surgery in two dimensions,” Edgington said. “This three-dimensional model allows us to digitally template the procedure ahead of time. These advances in the technology allow us to plan in great detail before the day of surgery. We are able to simulate the surgery before the patient comes to the operating room. This helps us avoid any unforeseen circumstances for the actual day of surgery.”

The robotic-arm allows the surgeon to reliably execute the plan with a high level of accuracy and predictability.

“We are able to accurately place the components in an efficient manner,” Edgington said. “This allows for less swelling and less pain, leading to a quicker recovery. These accurately placed parts allow for better long-term performance of the hip replacement.”

As an orthopedic surgeon, Edgington’s main objective is to restore quality of life for his patients.

“What I offer in Northwest Indiana is a place where a patient can have an anterior robotic total hip replacement by a fellowship-trained total joint replacement surgeon,” he said. “People do not have to suffer with hip pain and the loss of mobility that often accompanies it.”

Matyas was an ideal patient for the Mako Total Hip procedure, an option for adults who suffer from degenerative joint disease.

Growing up, he was active in sports. As an adult, the stress on his body compounded – both from golfing and spending hours on his feet owning and operating Pop’s Italian Beef and Sausage in Tinley Park, Ill. Matyas managed the pain for a while, but the bone-on-bone friction became unbearable.

Edgington said patients like Matyas who have failed to find relief from nonsurgical treatment options are excellent candidates for a robotic total hip. Seeing his patients’ lives improve after surgery is rewarding.

“It’s the best part of the job,” he said. “We form lifelong bonds with our patients, especially during follow-up visits when they share how much better their lives are.”

Matyas is grateful for Edgington’s attentiveness.

“He is great and totally down to earth,” Matyas said. “He followed up with me the night of the surgery, shot me a text the next day and was available to answer my questions.”

Matyas experienced that high standard of care, compassion and professionalism throughout his experience at St. Mary Medical Center. As a restaurant owner, he knows the value of customer service, he said. ■



Above: Burke Matyas, of Lockport, Ill., was the first patient of Community Healthcare System to undergo the Mako Total Hip procedure.

Joint Replacement Surgery

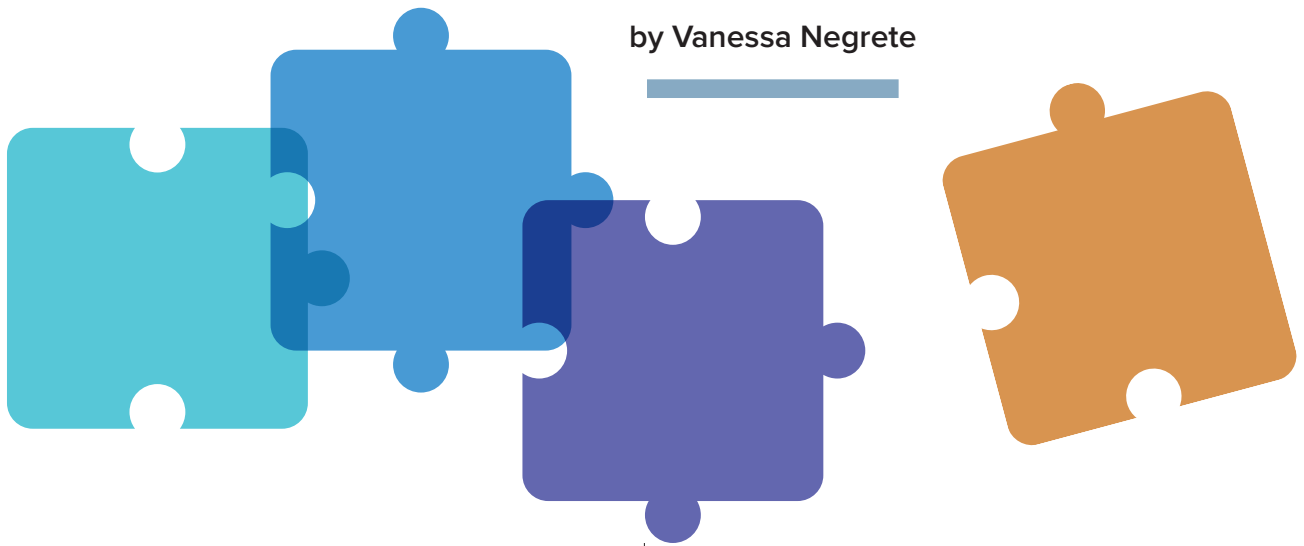


For more information about robotic-assisted joint surgery at Community Healthcare System, visit COMHS.org/Mako.

Innovative approach to common problem

Robotic-assisted surgery is option in hernia treatment

by Vanessa Negrete



A MINIMALLY INVASIVE ROBOTIC-ASSISTED procedure brought relief to a 31-year-old Gary man who sought hernia pain treatment at Community Healthcare System.

Ezequiel Morales, a married father of two, does mechanical work. He was hurt on the job in late November while lifting heavy equipment.

“The pain was sharp and hard to work with,” he said.

A physician examined Morales and referred him to a surgeon for hernia treatment.

A hernia occurs when part of an organ pushes through the muscle wall, typically in a person’s groin or abdomen. In the United States, more than 1 million hernia repairs are performed each year, according to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Morales met with General Surgeon Carlos Gonzalez, MD, in December 2023 and underwent outpatient surgery. Gonzalez performed a robotic ventral hernia repair, umbilical hernia repair and right inguinal hernia repair.

He uses the da Vinci Surgical System, a minimally invasive robotic-assisted option, to repair hernias. The procedure results in a quicker and safer recovery.

“As a healthcare system, we provide high-quality care with this technology,” Gonzalez said.

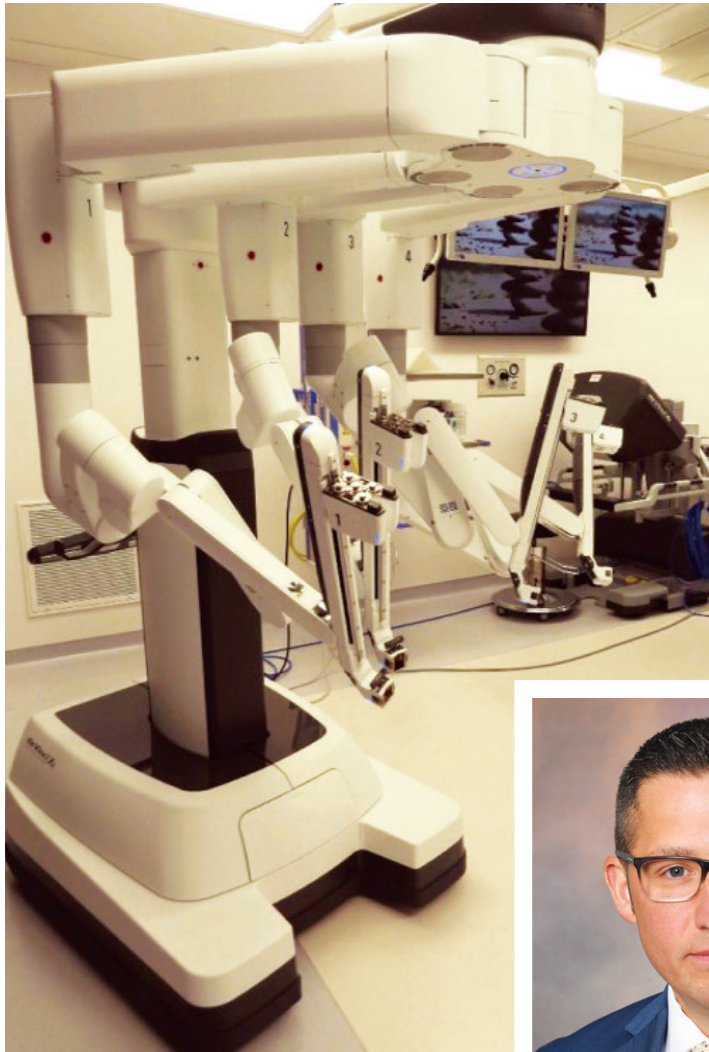
Its magnified 3D, high-definition camera allows Gonzalez to see 10 times better than the naked eye, leading to a precise approach. Articulated instruments allow greater access to the body than typical surgical instruments.

“I had a very good experience at St. Catherine Hospital. The care there was absolutely phenomenal.”

“That translates into a better technique with less risk of operative complications,” Gonzalez said.

Along with a lower risk of operative and postoperative complications, patients who undergo hernia surgery via the da Vinci Surgical System experience less pain and have a faster recovery. Most go home the same day they have their procedure, and they do not need narcotics for pain control.

Common hernia symptoms include a bulge or pain in the



Community Care Network, Inc. Surgeon Carlos Gonzalez, MD, right, uses the da Vinci Surgical System, a minimally invasive robotic-assisted option, to repair hernias. The procedure results in a quicker and safer recovery.



abdomen or groin area, or tenderness on a scar from a previous surgery, such as gallbladder removal.

“Hernias can become a problem if they are not treated in a timely manner,” Gonzalez said. “Years ago, people would put off hernia repair out of worry over the pain and recovery time. With the advanced technology we have today, that is no longer an issue. Most of our hernia patients return home the same day as their surgery.”

Morales underwent hernia surgery at a Seattle hospital several years ago and, in comparison, was impressed by the level of care at Community Healthcare System.

“I really like that Dr. Gonzalez actually listened to me,” Morales said. “My past experience with a hernia repair in my

groin was excruciating, and the care I received from both situations are like night and day. I had a very good experience at St. Catherine Hospital. The care there was absolutely phenomenal.”

Along with non-narcotic pain medication and compression garments, Morales was sent home with a “get well soon” card signed by his care team.

Although each patient situation is different, Morales recommends undergoing hernia surgery to others dealing with similar pain.

“I would do it,” he said. “It’s worth it. I have peace of mind now.”

He urges other patients to take it easy during recovery so the hernia does not reoccur.

“Give your body some time to heal,” he said.

The use of robot-assisted technology extends beyond hernia repair, including colon surgery, gallbladder removal, gynecologic laparoscopic procedures, kidney removal, prostate cancer surgery, and thoracic and urologic procedures.

During a da Vinci procedure, the surgeon sits at a console and views 3D, high-definition images. The surgeon uses controls to manipulate robotic arms that are equipped with surgical tools. The system converts the surgeon’s hand, wrist and finger motions into precise, real-time movements of the surgical instruments.

Community Healthcare System also offers partial and total knee replacement surgery with the Mako Robotic Arm-Assisted Surgery System. St. Mary Medical Center was the first hospital in Northwest Indiana to adopt this technology, which enables surgeons to use CT-based 3D modeling to personalize the

surgery based on the patient’s anatomy.

Robotic technology also has a role in diagnostic testing of lung tissue and pulmonary nodules.

For robotic bronchoscopies, the Intuitive Ion allows precise, minimally invasive navigation deep into the lungs for biopsies. This technology has been credited with detecting lung cancer in the earliest stages. ■

da Vinci Surgical System



For more information about robotic-assisted surgery, visit COMHS.org/robotic-HC.

Community Hospital *among* 'America's Best' for Stroke Care

Transcarotid artery
revascularization offers
clinically proven treatment
for cardiovascular ailment

by Kerry Erickson

COMMUNITY HOSPITAL IS one of America's 100 Best Hospitals for stroke care, according to research released by Healthgrades, a leading resource consumers use to find a hospital or doctor.

From 2020-22, patients treated at hospitals among America's 100 Best for stroke care have, on average, a 63.5% lower risk of experiencing a complication than if treated in hospitals that did not receive the award, according to Healthgrades' analysis in 2024. This designation reflects Community Hospital's outstanding clinical performance and identifies it as one of the nation's top 2% of hospitals for stroke care.

"This recognition is a testament to the advanced stroke care we provide for our patients," said Jill Conner, executive director of Neuroscience Services for Community Healthcare System. "As Northwest Indiana's only Comprehensive Stroke Center, Community Hospital stands ready 24/7 to give our patients the chance to have the best possible outcome after suffering a stroke. We are honored to receive Healthgrades' recognition of our work and dedication to the people and communities we serve."

Healthgrades evaluates hospitals on clinical outcomes: risk-adjusted mortality and complications. By focusing on what matters most – patient outcomes – the Healthgrades ratings provide critical feedback for patients and hospitals. The 2024 hospital assessment evaluated patient mortality and complication rates for 35 common conditions and procedures at approximately



Above: Neuroscience staff members pose for a photo at Community Hospital in Munster. The hospital was named one of America's 100 Best Hospitals for stroke care by Healthgrades.

4,500 hospitals nationwide to identify the top performers.

"Healthgrades congratulates Community Hospital for being a national leader and demonstrating a deep commitment to providing high-quality care to all patients," said Brad Bowman, MD, chief medical officer and leader of Data Science at Healthgrades. "As health systems nationwide elevate the quality of care, these elite facilities provide a roadmap for success. We commend Community Hospital for its dedication to excellence in patient care."

Community Healthcare System's higher level of care and management also allows Community Hospital to serve as the destination center for complex stroke patients, including those arriving from northern Indiana's Primary Stroke Centers. Community Hospital is supported by the certified Primary Stroke Centers at St. Catherine Hospital in East Chicago and St. Mary Medical Center in Hobart. ■

Award-winning Stroke Care



For more information about stroke care at the hospitals of Community Healthcare System, visit COMHS.org/stroke.

Master your swing

New clinic at Fitness Pointe offers insight on biomechanics of golf

by Mary Fetsch

IN THOSE FEW SECONDS before raising their club, every golfer envisions the precise swing that will send their ball into the perfect trajectory. Then reality hits.

When reality doesn't match the vision, most golfers try to self-analyze what went wrong and correct it for next time. Now, thanks to the new Golf Swing Clinic offered at Fitness Pointe, golfers can get answers through advanced analytics and professional expertise of a certified golf swing analyst.



Robert Watson, DC, MS, *right*, uses a custom-designed virtual golf studio and performance simulator at Fitness Pointe to help patients and clients perfect their swing.



Matt Maloney is one of the first to go through the clinic.

"I began experiencing really bad back pain while golfing, and it was getting more difficult to play," Maloney said. "I went to see an orthopedic surgeon. It turns out, it wasn't my back, but my left hip. He said I would eventually need a hip replacement, but to help alleviate my current back pain, he referred me to a chiropractor."

Maloney was referred to Robert Watson, DC, MS, a chiropractor with Community Care Network, Inc. In addition to being a chiropractor, Watson also is certified by the Titleist Performance Institute (TPI), an organization dedicated to the study of how the human body functions in relation to golf swings. As an avid golfer, Watson recognized he could help Maloney find relief with his back pain by modifying the biomechanics of his golf swing. Watson suggested Maloney try the Golf Swing Clinic at Fitness Pointe.

The Golf Swing Clinic combines Watson's expertise as a TPI-certified analyst with cutting-edge biofeedback technology to evaluate a golfer's swing and power.

Each golfer's form is unique, and the screening process completed through the clinic allows Watson to study a golfer's swing mechanics and biomechanics, physical fitness and health history. From that, each golfer receives a customized treatment plan to help achieve a more efficient swing to reduce the likelihood of injury.

Biofeedback technology at the Golf Swing Clinic uses 3D body tracking hardware known as a K-VEST to digitize and track a golfer's torso, pelvis and lead arm throughout the golf swing.

"The K-VEST system, through the use of wireless sensors and a computer, tells us details about your golf swing motion that cannot be seen on video or by the naked eye," Watson said. "We look at the sequence of motion (kinematic sequence) and explain how this, and the other data we receive, can help golfers pinpoint what to work on to improve their swing."

The Golf Swing Clinic also uses a custom-designed virtual golf studio and performance simulators powered by GC launch monitor technology.

The GCHawk™ launch monitor creates hyper-realistic gameplay that delivers rich textures, 3D grass and foliage, enhanced lighting and more to provide a superior simulation experience.

This full spectrum of information helps Watson navigate the complex world of golf-specific injuries and rehabilitation. It also helps identify any physical restrictions that limit a golfer's potential.

After using the Golf Swing Clinic over the winter, Maloney now has exercises and information to accommodate the physical changes in his hip and improve his swing. "I was just hoping to be able to keep playing golf," he said. "Now, not only can I continue playing the game I love, but with the things I learned from the clinic, I might even improve my score!" ■

Golf Swing Clinic



For more information on the Golf Swing Clinic at Fitness Pointe, call 219-703-2447 or visit COMHS.org/GolfSwingHC.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE



Scott Hamilton



7 More for Men



Be Smart in the Sun



Knowledge is Power

Men's Cancer Quiz

For the first time, the U.S. expects more than 2 million new cancer cases in 2024. Test your cancer knowledge by answering these true or false questions.

1. Cancer is the leading cause of death for men in the U.S. (T/F)

2. People who have NEVER smoked account for 20% of lung cancer deaths. (T/F)

3. Colorectal cancer is responsible for 10% of cancer deaths worldwide. (T/F)

4. More men die from prostate cancer than any other type of cancer. (T/F)

5. 1 in 5 Americans will have skin cancer by the age of 70. (T/F)

6. The risk of testicular cancer is higher for younger men. (T/F)

Answers:

- 1. FALSE.** Cancer is the second leading cause of death for men. The same is true for women. Heart disease is No. 1 for both groups.
- 2. TRUE.** Smokers account for the other 80%. After smoking, radon gas is the second leading risk factor for lung cancer.
- 3. TRUE.** Colorectal cancer is the third most common cancer, and the second leading cause of cancer death.
- 4. FALSE.** Prostate cancer is No. 2 for men. Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death, for both men and women.
- 5. TRUE.** It is estimated that 9,500 people a day are diagnosed with some form of skin cancer.
- 6. TRUE.** In fact, the average age for diagnosis is 33. Men in their late 20s and early 30s are at greater risk, while adult men older than 55 have the lowest risk.

Sources: American Cancer Society; Johns Hopkins Medicine; World Health Organization; Lung Cancer Research Foundation; skincancer.org; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention