DOWN 60 POUNDS AFTER HEART ATTACK

JOIN US for the Mercy Red Dress Breakfast

Pictured: Shirley Johnson, Galena, Illinois, at Creslanes Bowling
A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Russell M. Knight, President and CEO

The end of 2014 brought with it two pieces of very good news regarding the performance of the U.S. health care system. First, the Department of Health and Human Services reported that hospital-acquired conditions (such as infections, complications, and medication errors) dropped by 17 percent over the three-year period from 2010 to 2013. Because of improvements in these areas it is estimated that 50,000 fewer people died in hospitals and approximately $12 billion in costs were saved.

Announced that Mercy has been designated as one of “America’s Best Hospitals for Obstetrics.”

The second bit of good news to come out toward the end of the year is that U.S. spending on health care increased by only 3.6 percent in 2013, still higher than the consumer price index, but the lowest rate of increase in 53 years. Again, the picture at Mercy has been even better than the nation at large. The total amount we spent providing care and service at our hospitals in Dubuque and Dyersville, at our outpatient clinics, and through our chain of pharmacies increased just 1.8 percent during our last fiscal year. Because we treated a higher number of people during the year, our average cost per case actually declined slightly.

As further objective evidence of our outstanding performance, consider the results we’ve achieved under Medicare’s “value-based purchasing program,” a component of the Affordable Care Act. Because of our high levels of clinical quality and patient satisfaction, our favorable outcomes of care, and the efficiency of our operations, Mercy has earned Medicare incentive payments each of the last several years. At Mercy, our 1,300 employees and 300 members of the active medical staff are working hard every day, not just to mirror the positive national trends reported recently, but to lead them.

Results across Iowa and at Mercy were consistent with the national findings. For example, Iowa hospitals have achieved a 95 percent reduction in early elective deliveries – those occurring before 39 weeks of gestation. Here at Mercy, such unsafe deliveries have been eliminated altogether. Similarly, pressure ulcers (bed sores) have been reduced by 89 percent in Iowa hospitals and by 100 percent at Mercy.

In recognition of these types of accomplishments, Mercy was recently named by the Joint Commission— the nation’s leading hospital accreditor—as one of only ten “Top Performer” hospitals in Iowa. We received special acknowledgment for excellence in the care of heart attack patients, pneumonia patients, and patients having a surgical procedure. Separately, another national organization just announced that Mercy has been designated as one of “America’s Best Hospitals for Obstetrics.”

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TRIM WAISTLINE, HEALTHY HEART

Too much belly fat can increase your risk of heart disease and diabetes.

How much belly fat is too much?
Keep your waistline less than:

35 inches for women
40 inches for men

A cardio workout is needed to blast belly fat
Try high-intensity interval training for the best benefits. If you’re on the treadmill, alternate between two or three minutes at a challenging pace and one minute at a moderate pace.

Make protein a priority
Protein helps prevent muscle loss. As you age, you should increase your protein intake.

Belly-tightening moves
Strengthen and tighten your core with these moves. Do three sets of each move two or three times a week.

Mountain Climber
Start in a push-up position. While contracting your abdominals, bring your right knee toward your chest, then repeat on the left side to complete one rep. Do 10 reps.

Reverse Crunch
Lie on your back with your legs extended over your hips. While contracting your abs, lift your hips a few inches off the floor. Slowly lower your hips toward the floor. Do 10 reps.

Hundred
Lie on your back with your knees over your hips and arms by your sides. Lift your shoulders off the floor. Take five breaths in through your nose and five out through your mouth while pumping your arms. Do 10 reps.
“Do you think I'm having a heart attack?”
Shirley Johnson, of Galena, Illinois, was enjoying a quiet evening at home last February with her husband, Dale. She was sitting in the recliner, crocheting. When she got up, she felt a strange sensation in her left arm. She commented on it, but she and Dale figured her arm just fell asleep while crocheting. She wasn’t concerned.

Shirley started experiencing other symptoms and was becoming more uncomfortable. “I just didn’t feel good,” she recalls. Trying to relax, she sat back down in the recliner and picked up the February issue of Health Watch.

“I was reading about the woman from Guttenberg who had a heart attack, and I thought to myself, I’m having symptoms like that. I said to Dale, ‘Do you think I’m having a heart attack?’”

Some symptoms of a heart attack can mimic flu-like symptoms, especially in women, like nausea or vomiting. Shirley and Dale were hopeful that she was just experiencing a touch of the flu.

But when Shirley developed an intense pressure in her chest and broke out in a cold sweat, she knew it was more than the flu. “All of a sudden, I was just drenched.”

Dale called 911.

Shirley arrived by ambulance at Mercy and was rushed to the cath lab. She was having a heart attack. “Everything was happening so fast, and I was in a fog. I remember Dr. Ram introducing himself and telling me that I’d feel less pressure very soon.” Shirley recalls feeling the immediate release of pressure with the placement of the stents.

“She arrived with a 100 percent closed artery and we opened it up,” said Dr. Ram, Medical Associates Clinic cardiologist. “She did really well. What’s so important is that she came in right away when she experienced symptoms. She didn’t wait.”

When she was released, Shirley was determined to improve her health. “I needed to do it. I had weight on me that I needed to take off for a long, long time.”

“Shirley’s heart attack completely surprised her, and it scared her,” said Mercy cardiac rehab coordinator Elaine Thier. “She wanted to lose weight, and she wanted to do everything right to get better. And she did. We went full steam ahead. She got her confidence back and the weight was dropping. When she graduated from cardiac rehab, she was down 25 pounds or so. She’d stop in every six weeks or so to let us know how she was doing. This last time she stopped in she was down 60 pounds. She took the bull by the horns and did what she had to do.”

“Part of what we do is treat the acute situation,” Dr. Ram explained. “But in the long term, what’s going to keep you going is being proactive in one’s own health. Shirley is doing that.”

Shirley walks every morning for an hour, bowls every Tuesday and Wednesday, limits sodium, and watches her portion sizes. She’s lost 60 pounds and has gone from a size 22 to a 14.

“I’m very excited about the success I’ve had. It was a scary situation. When I think back, of all the things to pick up to read, and I picked up the February issue of Health Watch and I read about the lady from Guttenberg. Well, had I not read that, I don’t know if I would have known I was having a heart attack.”

Heart Attack

**WARNING SIGNS**

Symptoms can vary for each person, but the most common symptoms include:

- Chest pain
- Pain in other areas of your upper body, such as your jaw, back, or arm
- Shortness of breath
- Cold sweat
- Nausea or vomiting
- Lightheadedness
Q: I have high cholesterol. What should I do?

Having a cholesterol level above 200 mg increases your risk of developing heart disease or having a stroke. Everyone over age 20 should have their cholesterol tested every five years, and it’s important to discuss your results with your primary care provider.

There are several lifestyle changes you can make to lower your number to a healthy level:

- Exercise most days of the week
- Be aware of correct portion sizes
- Avoid saturated fat
- Eat foods rich in omega 3 fatty acids
- Fill up on fruits and vegetables
- Don’t smoke
- Limit alcohol

Sometimes lifestyle changes aren’t enough and medication is needed. Regardless, you should still maintain these healthy lifestyle habits.

Michelle Arensdorf, RN, community education nurse

PARENTS: CREATE A HEART-HEALTHY FAMILY

It’s easy for home life to become a routine of fast-food meals and hours on the couch. But simple changes can encourage a heart-healthy lifestyle and will set your children up to be healthy adults.

» Running, skipping, jumping—children love being active! Join them! Get outside for a nature hike, head to a school playground for a game of basketball, or go for a family bike ride. Show them that adults enjoy being active, too.

» Take time on the weekend to prepare your next week’s meals, and then involve your children in the grocery shopping and prep work. With a little planning, you’ll be less reliant on the drive-through.

» There’s no doubt that family schedules these days are jam packed. While that’s not likely to change, you should at least evaluate to see if any improvements can be made. Prioritize and pick what’s most important. You might need to say no to some things.

» Plant a garden this spring, and let the children choose what vegetables they want to plant. Tending a garden will help teach responsibility, and they’ll be eager to reap the nutritious rewards after their hard work.

MERCY GIFT SHOP

Shop gifts and home decor at the Mercy Gift Shop. All proceeds support programs and services for children in Mercy’s care. As always, there is no sales tax.

Monday, Thursday, and Friday: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Tuesday and Wednesday: 10 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Saturday: 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Join us for the 2015 Mercy Red Dress Breakfast on Friday, February 27!

Kick off your morning with a nutritious breakfast, heart health awareness, and keynote speaker Bob Harper, three-time #1 New York Times best-selling author and television star of NBC’s The Biggest Loser!

I’m excited to spend the morning with you in Dubuque at the Mercy Red Dress Breakfast. I want you to walk away feeling motivated to improve your health and having the tools to make it happen.”

— Bob Harper

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27

Doors open at 7 a.m.
Breakfast served at 7:30 a.m.

Grand River Center, Port of Dubuque

$25 for general seating
$200 for a reserved table for eight

Registration required by February 20
mercydubuque.com/reddress
or at 563-589-9600.

MEDITERRANEAN BEAN SALAD RECIPE

MAKES 6 SERVINGS • SERVING SIZE: 1 CUP

INGREDIENTS

2 whole wheat pita breads (6-inch diameter), cut or torn into bite-size pieces
2 garlic cloves, peeled
½ teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
½ teaspoon ground cumin
3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
Black pepper, to taste
1 cup cooked black beans, rinsed and drained
1 cup chickpeas, rinsed and drained
½ pint cherry tomatoes, quartered
½ cucumber, peeled and diced
1 cup sliced romaine lettuce
2 green onions, chopped
½ cup crumbled feta cheese
1 cup sliced romaine lettuce
3 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
3 tablespoons chopped fresh mint

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 400°. On a large baking sheet, arrange pita pieces in one layer. Bake until crisp and just brown, about 5 to 7 minutes. Let cool.

2. In a bowl, mash garlic and salt to form a paste. Add lemon juice and cumin and whisk to blend. Add oil in a slow steady stream, whisking constantly until combined. Season with black pepper to taste.

3. In a serving bowl, combine black beans, chickpeas, tomatoes and cucumber. Add the pita pieces, lettuce, green onions, feta, parsley, mint and the lemon dressing. Toss to mix. Season with additional black pepper to taste.
For a list of all our upcoming classes and events, visit mercydubuque.com/events

upcoming HEART HEALTH CLASSES

**Heart Health Mythbusters**
Thursday, February 12 | 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.
Presenter: Julie Ehlinger, ARNP

**Taking Care of Your Heart: An Update on Treatment Options**
Tuesday, February 17 | 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.
Presenter: Rami Eltibi, MD

**Would You Benefit from a Specialized Pacemaker?**
Thursday, February 19 | 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.
Presenters: James Hopson, MD, Julie Ehlinger, ARNP, and Kelly Lehnhoff, RN

**Living with Heart Failure**
Thursday, February 26 | 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.
Presenter: Connie Wessels, ARNP

No fee. Registration required at mercydubuque.com/events or at 563-589-9600.

MEDITERRANEAN BEAN SALAD

*This heart healthy salad is packed with flavor, color, and great nutrition. High-protein beans, fresh tomatoes and herbs, and healthy olive oil make this Mediterranean bean salad a tasty lunch.*

— Kristie Jacobsen, RD, LD

NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION:
233 calories, 10g fat, 3g saturated fat, 11mg cholesterol, 299mg sodium, 26g carbohydrates, 5g fiber, 8g protein