MercyOne proudly introduces a new program for military service members, veterans, and family members.

Big progress is being made at the cancer center—read the latest update.
Welcome

A Letter from the President

The obituary for Edmund (Ed) Green, who passed away on March 27, 2019 at the age of 99, read:

Ed was a World War II Army Veteran, having served in the 473rd infantry. He was a member of the Cascade American Legion Post #528 for 64 years, a member of the Cascade Knights of Columbus—Council # 930, a member of the 4th Degree Dubourg Assembly #1573, a lifetime member of the Cascade Sportsman’s Club and a member of St. Matthias Parish in Cascade, Iowa. He was an avid fisherman, he loved to hunt, and he was a Chicago Cubs baseball fan, ... Burial will be held in Calvary Cemetery in Cascade, Iowa with full Military honors afforded by the Cascade American Legion Post #528.

Ed was my uncle and, of course, the story of his military service (and of his life of almost 100 years) is far more interesting and inspiring than words in an obituary can possibly do justice. His ‘date of entry’ into the Army was 3 Jan 1942, and he spent most of his time as a foot soldier in Italy, fighting in the Tunisian, Naples-Foggia, Rome – Arno, North Appennines and Po Valley battles. The latter, fought in the spring of 1945, was code-named Operation Grapeshot, and was the last Allied attack during the Italian Campaign in the final stages of WWII. Eventually, Ed told us some stories about his military experience overseas. The time he spent in foxholes; about transporting a German prisoner-of-war who rode in the back seat of the open vehicle he was driving; and about serving mass for a priest near the battlefield, with the hood of a jeep for an altar. Ed lived 74 years after his service in WWII, and he died a war hero in our hearts.

MercyOne honors all veterans and military service men and woman who so bravely sacrifice for this great country. They protect our freedom and, with their families, bear the invisible scars that can affect them for the rest of their lives. This month, we are excited to announce a new Military and Veterans (MILVET) Health Program, so that we can better serve those who have so selflessly served all of us. Our goal with the MILVET initiative is to ensure excellent, accessible and culturally sensitive health care and a customized experience for veterans, military service members and their families. MercyOne leaders who are also veterans are the local champions of this effort, and all members of our team have undergone special training to understand the unique needs and perspectives of this most-deserving population as they navigate the health care system. We are happy to collaborate with the VA Medical Center and other Veteran Service Organizations (VSOs) as we advance this important work.

Just like my uncle Ed, there is a wonderful life story behind every person who has served in the military. A veteran’s character is defined by pride, duty and honor. We are honored to care for veterans and their families even more effectively through the MercyOne MILVET Program, and we are grateful for our lives made better because of their service.
Live Healthier and Lower Your Risk for Type 2 Diabetes

Did you know that by living a healthier lifestyle, you could dramatically reduce the possibility of developing type 2 diabetes?

Studies by the U.S. National Institutes of Health report that by engaging in physical activity, eating a healthier diet, maintaining an appropriate body weight, limiting alcohol consumption and not smoking you can cut your risk of diabetes by as much as 80 percent.

Here are some tips to help reduce your risk.

If you are overweight, set a weight loss goal you can meet.

- Keep track of your daily food intake and physical activity in a journal and review it daily, or use a free app such as MyFitnessPal.
- For support, invite family and friends to get involved.

Make healthier food choices every day.

- Keep healthier snacks, such as fruit and vegetables, at home and at work.
- Choose low-fat dairy products.
- Select lean meats and poultry.
- Choose more fish, beans, peas, nuts and seeds as protein sources.

Strive to become more physically active. It’s easy to build physical activity into your day:

- Take a brisk walk during lunch.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator or park farther away from the store or office.
- Keep a set of weights near the couch at home to use during television commercials.

Restrict alcohol consumption.

Your risk of developing type 2 diabetes rises with an increase in alcohol consumption. Limit yourself to no more than one drink a day. If you don’t drink, don’t start.

If you smoke, quit.

Smokefree.gov offers some great tips and a step-by-step guide on how to quit.
MercyOne Introduces Military and Veterans Health Program

As a veteran, you deserve a health care provider who is informed and engaged in learning all about you, the whole person, and working with you as a partner. As a member of the military community, your unique experiences, exposures and work environments are an important part of understanding your overall health and planning your care.

At MercyOne, we are proud to give back to you, who have given so much for us. Through our Military and Veterans Health Program (MILVET), our goal is to provide convenient access to high-quality care services that meet the specific needs of military service members, veterans and their family members.

We are honored to have the opportunity to collaborate with community and state leaders, VA Medical Center leaders, Veteran Service Organization leaders, and diocesan leaders on this important health initiative.

Our Health Program

Through our Military and Veterans Health program, we are committed to providing respectful and culturally competent health care services in the following ways:

Our colleagues are trained in military and veterans’ health. Our providers have undergone training to help understand and respond to the health concerns and challenges specific to the military community, including the illnesses and injuries associated with military service and deployments.

We identify patients who are military services members, veterans or family members. The first step in getting the right care is making sure your health care team knows that you are a service member, veteran or family member. To streamline this process, we’ve added military community-specific questions to our registration process.

We welcome you, and we want you to know that you and your family will be taken care of. Your military background is part of who you are. At MercyOne, it’s part of your health care, too.

On behalf of all of us at MercyOne, thank you for your service to our country. We’re here to serve you.

If you have any questions about our Military and Veterans Health Program, please contact us at 563-589-8825.
A Veteran’s Perspective

Christina Schauer, MSN, RN, director of clinical and professional development, is leading the Military and Veterans Health Program at MercyOne. Here she explains why this program will have such a positive impact on service members, veterans and family members.

Closing gaps in health care for veterans is complex and, for me, very personal. I joined the US Army Reserves in 1999 as a senior in high school. Four years later, as a 20-year-old college sophomore, I was deployed to Baghdad, Iraq, from May 2003 through May 2004.

As a nurse and veteran, I view our Military and Veterans Health Program as an exciting opportunity to improve quality and access to health care for military and veterans. Many assume that service members and veterans receive their care through the VA and military health facilities, but in reality, the majority of this population receive their care in civilian hospitals just like MercyOne.

A significant challenge in providing quality care for military and veterans in the civilian setting is that military service is not routinely identified, even though that key information is needed by the health care team to develop a comprehensive plan of care.

Personally speaking, I have received my health care almost exclusively from civilian health care facilities since my return from Iraq. Using my maternal care as an example, I was never asked about military service during my prenatal visits, so my providers could not have been aware of the variety of chemicals I was exposed to during my time in Baghdad, nor how my experiences in Baghdad might impact my transition into motherhood.

Compounding this gap, many health care workers have received minimal education on the impact of military exposures and experiences on a patient’s health, leaving an opportunity for the health care team to miss associations between current ailments and past military experiences.

Through MercyOne’s Military and Veterans Health Program, we have taken the first step towards closing this gap by asking each patient about his or her military experience during the admission process. Additionally, over 500 of our colleagues have participated in military and veteran cultural competency training to learn about military specific ailments, exposures, and injuries. Our colleagues now have an elevated awareness of military and veteran health issues and are eager to serve this population.

On behalf of all of us at MercyOne, thank you for your service to our country.

We’re here to serve you.
Q&A

A Q+A with Jeanne Ulrichs, MA, CCC-SLP, Speech Language Pathologist

Q: I am having trouble swallowing and have been recommended for a FEES test. What is that?

A: A fiberoptic endoscopic evaluation of swallowing (FEES) test is a procedure used to assess how well you swallow. During the procedure, a speech therapist passes a thin, flexible instrument, called an endoscope, through your nose. The endoscope has a tiny camera and light attached to it. This allows your therapist to view parts of your throat that may not be working properly on a video screen as you swallow food and liquids.

Q: Is there anything that I need to do to prepare for the test? Does it hurt?

A: There is nothing you need to do to prepare for the test. You will be seated and will swallow a variety of foods and liquids. Most report feeling a pressure as the scope is passed through the nasal passages, but not pain. It is generally well tolerated, and the test lasts about 20 minutes.

Q: Who is a candidate for FEES?

A: Individuals experiencing hypernasal speech, food/liquid coming up through the nose, abnormal voice quality, or coughing and choking while eating would be excellent candidates for FEES.

To learn more about FEES, visit mercyone.org/dubuque.

MercyOne Dubuque Cancer Center Update

As the summer months passed, we watched the structure of the MercyOne Dubuque Cancer Center take shape, with large cranes hoisting massive steel beams into place. On the upper level, it was easy to see where patients receiving chemotherapy or immunotherapy would sit, looking out the large windows that overlook the scenic Mississippi River valley.

On the lower level, the clinic rooms for both radiation oncology and palliative care were evident, as were spaces for a patient resource room, quiet space, and conference rooms. The vaults that will contain the treatment and imaging equipment were poured with massive volumes of concrete and lined with lead to protect outside the vaults from radiation.

By the end of October, the entire building was closed in, allowing the building to be heated as the workers spend the winter months completing the interior of the cancer center. The entire project remains on schedule at this time; and this spring, integrated and comprehensive cancer care will become a reality for the first time in the Dubuque area.
Breast Cancer Support Group

Connecting with others who are walking the same path can help you through a breast cancer journey.

Our new support group provides a safe space to receive emotional, educational, and practical support. The group is led by MercyOne’s oncology nurse navigator and focuses on topics related to breast cancer diagnosis, treatment, and coping.

Anyone who has received a breast cancer diagnosis, whether currently receiving treatment or a survivor, as well as loved ones, are welcome to attend.

Join us at our next meeting!

Thursday, December 19

For more information, contact our oncology nurse navigator, Kairee Graves, at 563-589-9960.

Robotic-assisted procedures at MercyOne

Did you know there are many procedures that can be performed at MercyOne using robotics? Robotic-assisted surgeries are associated with great precision and faster healing.

Here are some of the procedures available:

- **General Surgery**
  - Colon resection or removal
  - Gallbladder removal
  - Hernia repair
  - Nissen procedures

- **Gynecology**
  - Hysterectomy
  - Other gynecological procedures

- **Orthopedics**
  - Hip replacement
  - Knee replacement

- **Urology**
  - Kidney removal
  - Prostatectomy

For more information on robotic-assisted procedures at MercyOne, visit mercyone.org/dubuque.

Baked Pumpkin Oatmeal Bars

Serves: 12

**Ingredients**

- 1 ½ cups quick oats
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup milk
- ½ cup pumpkin purée (not pumpkin pie filling)
- ½ cup pure maple syrup (not pancake syrup)
- ¼ cup canola oil
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 tablespoons chia seeds
- 1 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup pecan halves, roughly chopped

**Directions**

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees and spray an 8" x 8" baking pan with nonstick spray.
2. In a large bowl, add milk, pumpkin purée, maple syrup, canola oil, egg and vanilla, then whisk to combine. In a separate bowl combine 1 ½ cups quick oats, all-purpose flour, chia seeds, pumpkin pie spice, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Add combined wet ingredients into dry ingredients; stir to combine. Fold in chopped pecans, then pour batter into prepared baking pan.
3. Bake for 40 – 45 minutes, or until the edges are golden brown and the center has set. Check on the bars at the 25-minute mark. If the edges are browning too quickly, place a piece of foil on top of the baking pan. Cool before slicing into bars, then store in the refrigerator, or individually wrap bars and freeze.
Mercy Gift Shop
All proceeds support programs and services for children in MercyOne’s care.
Monday, Thursday and Friday: 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Tuesday and Wednesday: 10 a.m. – 7 p.m.
Saturday: 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Follow us on Facebook for sneak peeks of new merchandise: facebook.com/mercyserviceclub

Baked Pumpkin Oatmeal Bars

“When it comes to pumpkin do you automatically think about pumpkin pie and all things sweet? There are many health benefits to it that may surprise you. Pumpkin is rich in fiber, offering 7 grams per cup of puréed pumpkin. Pumpkin’s bright orange color indicates it’s also rich in beta carotene, which is converted to Vitamin A in our bodies. Vitamin A is essential for eye and skin health. Incorporate this pumpkin recipe into your fall favorites and enjoy all season long.”

— Stacy Huss, RD, LD

Nutrition information (per serving):
162 calories, 19g carbohydrates, 3.5g protein,
1g saturated fat, 8g added sugar,
2g fiber, 66mg sodium