



Mercy & Unity Hospitals *Healthy Communities*

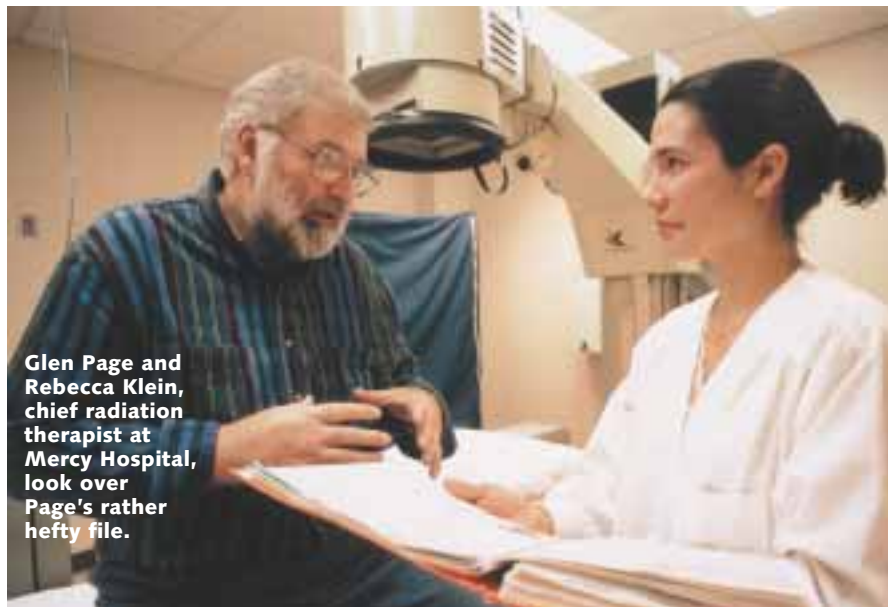
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KEEPING SECRETS

Rationalization, embarrassment hamper early detection

GLEN PAGE would be the first one to tell you, his encounter with cancer and subsequent treatment has not been a complete success story—except, perhaps, for his success in maintaining a positive attitude. Since his diagnosis of colorectal cancer in April 1998, it has been a long road to recovery, in a fight to control the cancer that metastasized to other parts of his body. Related health issues have periodically arisen, challenging his goal of wellness.

Colorectal cancer—cancer of the large intestine, the colon and rectum—is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States. Left undetected and untreated, the cancer can spread to other parts of the body. One in 20 Americans will develop this cancer at some point in their lives, and yet only about 20 percent of the population receives regular



Glen Page and Rebecca Klein, chief radiation therapist at Mercy Hospital, look over Page's rather hefty file.

screenings. With early diagnosis, colorectal cancer is very treatable, even curable. But embarrassment about the subject matter keeps some people from talking about it, and of much more dire consequence, it keeps some people from seeking treatment.

Before the doctor's appointment that led to his colorectal cancer

diagnosis, "I had probably been to the doctor a dozen times in my whole life," says Page. Those appointments were mainly for back problems associated with physical activity. In general, Page felt he was a pretty healthy person.

Page wasn't too concerned when

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OUTSMART STROKE

YOU'VE PROBABLY made a lot of smart moves in your life. Here's one that could matter most: Take steps to outsmart stroke.

Every 3.3 minutes, someone in the United States dies of a stroke. That makes stroke the third-leading cause of death in this country behind heart disease and cancer. For the many who survive stroke, the effects are often disabling and sometimes permanent. A stroke, also called a "brain attack," occurs when blood flow to the brain is interrupted by blockage or rupture of an artery in the brain.

SIX SMART MOVES

With smart lifestyle choices, you can help protect yourself from stroke.

1 Keep blood pressure within a healthful range. High blood pressure, or hypertension, contributes to seven out of 10 strokes.

2 Say no to smoking. Cigarette smoking has been linked to the buildup of fatty substances in the main neck artery that supplies blood to the brain. Blockage of this artery is the leading cause of stroke in Americans. Also, nicotine in cigarette smoke raises blood pressure. And cigarette smoke makes your blood thicker and more likely to clot.

3 Eat sensibly. Go easy on foods high in cholesterol and fat, and eat lots of fruits and

vegetables. Also, watch salt intake. Too much salt may contribute to high blood pressure. Stop using table salt and watch for salt "hidden" in processed foods.

4 Exercise often. Aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise, such as brisk walking, on most days of the week. Exercise may help protect against stroke by reducing heart disease risk, obesity and high blood pressure, all associated with higher risk of stroke.

5 Keep weight in check. Shedding pounds if you are overweight can help control other risk factors for stroke such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart disease and diabetes.

6 Manage health conditions. For example, if you have high blood pressure, heart disease or diabetes, follow your treatment plan carefully. Take medication according to your doctor's directions.

"Strokes or 'brain attacks' are a public health problem," says Brenda Link, Wellness Program supervisor, The Cardiac Centers of Mercy & Unity Hospitals. She emphasizes that while stroke ranks behind cardiovascular disease and cancer as a cause of death in this country, it is the leading cause of severe disability. "Prevention is the most effective treatment for stroke," says Link. "Participating in a screening program to identify your risk for stroke is the first step in a prevention program." ♦



Mark your calendar!



STROKE SCREENING

Date: May 11

Time: Appointments available between 7 and 11 a.m.

Location: Brian Anderson Conference Room, Heart Center, Mercy Hospital

Cost: \$25 (includes screening and education program.)

FOLLOW-UP EDUCATION PROGRAM

Date: May 21

Time: 6:30-7 p.m. (screening results), presentation at 7 p.m.

Location: Mercy Hospital Auditorium
Presenter: Allan Ingenito, MD, Minneapolis Clinic of Neurology

Preregistration is required for both sessions and free parking is available. Call Medformation at 651-697-3333.

FREE HEART SEMINAR

William H. Fabian, MD, Metropolitan Cardiology Consultants, will discuss "Living with Heart Failure" at a free community seminar, Tuesday, May 14, 7-8 p.m., in the main lobby at Elk Ridge Health, 14181 Business Center Drive NW, Elk River, Minn.



Keeping secrets

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he started having symptoms. He believed they were due to a hemorrhoid that would eventually heal on its own, so he waited to seek treatment. “I’m a procrastinator when it comes to medicine,” he says. He was 49 and there was no history of colorectal cancer in his family. But when his symptoms continued, Page’s wife, Claudia, a

registered nurse, persuaded him to see a doctor. A week after his colonoscopy, a tumor was removed from his colon. Further tests revealed that procrastination and denial had come at a high cost, giving his cancer time to spread.

His diagnosis has been a wake-up call to Page’s three older siblings. “They are all getting right in for colonoscopies,” says Page. So far, no other relative shows

any sign of the disease.

Page completed radiation therapy at Mercy Hospital this spring. It was a follow-up to surgery he had late last year, to remove a malignant tumor from his abdomen. Other surgeries have included removing a piece of his liver. His treatments have brought him to the hospital so often that staff and Page are on a first-name basis. “I’m like a frequent flyer,” says Page. “It’s a strange feeling to show up, and you don’t even have to tell them your name. My file has gone from nothing, to three to four inches, to part of it going into storage.”

Michael Spencer, MD, colon-rectal surgeon at Mercy & Unity Hospitals, heads a group of clinicians working to increase the number of people screened for colorectal cancer. It is important to remember, says Spencer, that “many patients have no symptoms at the early stages of the disease, and not having a family history does not mean you are immune.” ❖

Knowing risks and symptoms key to early detection

Knowing personal risk and the potential symptoms of the disease is key to early detection and improved management.

COLORECTAL CANCER RISKS

- Being 50 or older, although colon cancer can occur in younger people as well.
- Having colorectal polyps, ulcerative colitis or Crohn’s disease.
- Having family members who had colon cancer.
- Eating a high-fat, low-fiber diet.

COLORECTAL CANCER SYMPTOMS

- Rectal bleeding.
- Blood in or on the stool.
- Stools that are narrower than

usual for a period of time.

- Consistent pain during bowel movements.
- Constipation or diarrhea that lasts for more than one month.
- Persistent feelings of bloating, fullness, cramps and/or gas pains.
- A feeling that the bowel does not empty completely.

SCREENING PROCEDURES FOR COLORECTAL CANCER INCLUDE ONE OR MORE OF THESE:

- Self-administered, fecal occult blood test (recommended annually after 50). A fecal occult blood test can detect blood in the stool.
- Flexible sigmoidoscopy exam (recommended every five years after 50). This

is an exam of the rectum and lower colon using a flexible sigmoidoscope, a thin, flexible, two-foot long tube.

- Barium enema—a procedure in which X-rays and barium are used to examine the colon and rectum, done at 5-year intervals.
- Colonoscopy (recommended every 10 years after 50). A thin, flexible tube is inserted in the rectum and up into the colon.

COLON CANCER PREVENTION

- Research your family history of polyps and cancer.
- Make sure your diet includes 1,200 milligrams of calcium daily.
- Choose a low-fat, high-fiber diet.
- Exercise daily.

The Art of Caring & the Science of Health Care

Today's nurses combine both to give patients their best

You can make a big difference with a hug, a kind word or a warm washcloth at the right time," says Michael Zimmerman, RN, Unity Hospital. "It can be something as simple as arranging your patient's schedule to allow him or her to have a good nap, or even just saying, 'Why don't we sit in the solarium and feel the sun?'"

Patients and their families often celebrate nurses for giving these caring touches. However, today's nurse also offers extensive knowledge and skill that you can rely on in sickness and in health.

As the American Nurses Association

describes it, "The essence of nursing is that nurses combine the art of caring with the science of health care."

THE ART OF CARING

The art of caring is what often attracts people to and keeps them in the nursing profession.

"It can be stressful, but I enjoy providing a good experience to a patient," says Dolly Roberts, RN, Mercy Hospital. "If I can ease someone's mind that their care is going well, it's all worth it. I can't see myself doing anything else."

Nurses care for people in a variety of situations. For example, they can:

- Attend to your comfort if you are ill or injured.
- Give compassion and support if you are concerned about your health or that of a loved one.
- Monitor your health and encourage lifestyle choices that can help you stay well.

THE SCIENCE OF HEALTH CARE

The science of health care has advanced with breakthroughs in medical treatments and technology, and so has the education and skill level of today's nurse.

"We need a certain number of continuing education credits or classes each year to keep current

in our practice and to keep our license," says Rose Nelson, a licensed practical nurse (LPN) at Mercy Hospital for nearly 37 years. "We also need to know more about regulations governing health care."

Looking back on her 23 years as a nurse, Roberts adds, "So many things are more treatable, and they have to be treated in half the time."

"Technology has driven the need for more expertise," says Kathy Wilde, RN, vice president of patient care at Mercy & Unity Hospitals. "A nurse can do critical thinking at a bedside computer, where you can read your patient's vital signs and review his or her medical record."

Nurses personally bring you their knowledge and skills as they:

- Assess and monitor your health.
- Carry out your treatment plan.
- Advise your physician of changes in your health and suggest possible solutions.
- Coordinate your care, making sure that each professional involved knows what the other is doing.
- Answer questions.

HEAD AND HEART

Nurses keep abreast of current medical research, for example, by reading journals and attending educational conferences. Many also



**Rose Nelson, licensed practical nurse,
Mercy Hospital.**

ing



Lisa Sorteberg, RN, (left), and Nancy Hintz, RN, nurses at Mercy Hospital, treat a patient in the intensive care unit.

Interested in being a nurse?

conduct scientific studies and publish their findings in medical journals.

“Nursing is a rewarding, challenging and ever-changing profession,” says Nelson.

With added study, experience and certification, nurses can specialize in areas such as anesthesia, behavioral health, diabetes management, emergency care, gerontology, midwifery, neonatology, occupational health, orthopedics, pediatrics, rehabilitation and surgery.

“Nurses aren’t limited to hospitals,” says Roberts. “There are schools, group homes, doctors’ offices, nursing homes, home care and hospice agencies, to name a few.”

No matter what setting, caring from the heart remains central to what nurses do.

“With each shift, you have the opportunity to touch someone’s life,” says Zimmerman. “I want to be the nurse they’ll remember.” ❖

Nursing is the single largest line of work in health care, and the demand for nurses is growing as our population ages. For example, within the north metro area, the number of residents between 45 and 64 is expected to increase by 20 percent by 2005, while the number of people older than 75 will increase another 17.5 percent.

Many area colleges offer programs that prepare people to meet the growing need for health care.

■ **Nursing assistants** work under the supervision of a nurse to help patients with personal needs, like eating, dressing, bathing and walking. Some community colleges, hospitals, health agencies and home care agencies offer home health aide certificate programs.

■ **Licensed practical nurses** care for patients by administering medication, monitoring equipment, changing dressings and assisting with personal hygiene. LPNs complete a one-year certification program at a community college and must be licensed by

the State Board of Nursing.

■ **Registered nurses** provide care in a variety of settings, working with patients and their families to cope with illness and improve their health. RN programs range from two (associate degree) to four (bachelor’s degree) years and culminate with licensure by the State Board of Nursing. RNs with bachelor’s degrees in nursing qualify for leadership positions, such as nurse manager. Master’s and doctoral degrees prepare RNs for roles such as clinical specialist, nurse practitioner, nurse clinician, teacher, researcher and administrator.

To learn more about area nursing programs, visit www.iseek.org.

Mercy & Unity Hospitals have a variety of opportunities in nursing. To find out more, visit the Mercy & Unity Recruiting Center, 7590 Lyric Lane, Fridley (across the street from Unity), call 763-236-JOBS (5627) and select option 2, or visit www.mercyunity.com and select “employment information.”



Mercy & Unity Hospitals



To register or for more information, call Medformation at 651-697-3333.

BRAIN INJURY AND STROKE

BRAIN INJURY SUPPORT GROUP

Meets the second Tuesday of every month, 6-7:30 p.m.

STROKE SUPPORT GROUP

Meets the first Thursday of every month, October through June, 6:30-8 p.m.

CANCER

CANCER RESOURCE CENTER

A place to find multimedia informational resources on cancer, programs and individualized support. Call 763-236-4040 (Unity) or 763-236-6060 (Mercy).

BREAST CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

First Monday of month at Unity and Third Monday at Mercy. Both 7-9 p.m.

CANCER AND THE FAMILY

Five-week group with sessions for children ages 4 to 12, teenagers 13 to 18 and adult family members. Meets three times a year at Mercy & Unity and North Memorial.

LIVING WITH CANCER

Weekly group for people with cancer and loved ones. Meets at Mercy on Tuesdays, 7-8:30 p.m.

LIVING BEYOND LIMITS

Specialized 12-session group for breast cancer patients with advanced disease. Scheduled twice a year.

LOOK GOOD, FEEL BETTER

Help for dealing with self-esteem and side effects of cancer through demonstrations in the use of wigs, hats and make-up. Meets monthly at Mercy or Unity.

PATIENT PARTNER

One-to-one visits for people newly diagnosed with cancer and their families.

PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT

Support for prostate cancer patients and spouses. Meets the fourth Tuesday of the month at Human Service Center in Blaine.

RENEWING LIFE

Eight-week educational and support series for individuals with life-threatening disease and their loved ones. Meets twice a year at Mercy or Unity.

DIABETES

ADULT DIABETES SUPPORT GROUP

Meets the second and fourth Thursday of every month.

DIABETES CARE EDUCATION CLASSES*

GRIEF

Grief support groups meet at the same time so family members can come together, participate in separate groups, and go home together.

ADULT GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

Helps those 18 and older deal with the death of a loved one. Includes separate groups for pregnancy and infant loss; death of a spouse, child, parent; and death by suicide or violent death.

CHILDREN'S GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

For children 6 to 12 who have experienced the death of someone close to them.

PREGNANCY AND INFANT LOSS SUPPORT GROUPS

Support groups for anyone who has experienced a loss, including ectopic miscarriage, stillborn and SIDS.

PRESCHOOL GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

For children 3 to 5. Through play, preschoolers learn to cope with the reality of death.

TEEN GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

For teens 13 to 18 who have experienced the death of someone close to them.

HEALTH IMPROVEMENT

BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENING

The auxiliaries of Mercy & Unity Hospitals offer free blood pressure screenings at Mercy on the first Wednesday of every month, 1-5 p.m., in the hallway outside the hospital's cafeteria; and at Unity on the last Thursday of every month in the hospital's main lobby, 1:30-5 p.m.

GENTLE YOGA*

Located at Coon Rapids YMCA.

HEART/STROKE SCREENING*

Participants complete a heart or stroke questionnaire, have their blood pressure checked and have a blood screen for total cholesterol, HDL, LDL, triglycerides and glucose. Health counseling is available.

SUPERVISED AND MONITORED EXERCISE PROGRAMS*

Exercise and lifestyle modification programs that require physician referral.

T'AI CHI CHIH*

Promotes relaxation and refreshes the mind through gentle movement. Located at the Coon Rapids YMCA.

THE SOLUTION PROGRAM*

Twelve-week weight management program based on behavior, nutrition and exercise. Held at community YMCAs.

HEART

CARDIAC CLUB

For cardiac patients and the community.

If you do not find the program or class you're looking for in this listing, call Medformation for information about offerings at other Allina hospitals, or visit www.Medformation.com. Programs with a fee are noted with an asterisk*.



CARDIAC EDUCATION CLASSES:

Low-Sodium Strategies
Heart Healthy Nutrition*
Risk Factor Evaluation
Benefits of Exercise
Stress and Relaxation
Medication Information
Life Changes

C.P.R. COURSE FOR FAMILY AND FRIENDS*

Teaches cardiopulmonary resuscitation and relief of foreign body airway obstruction. Participants choose one—rescuer adult course, or adult, child and infant course portions.

MENDED HEARTS

Former cardiac patients visit and provide support to cardiac patients and their families.

PREGNANCY, BIRTH AND PARENTING

ACTIVE PARENTING AND ACTIVE PARENTING OF TEENS

These six-session classes are for parents of 2- to 12-year-olds and 12- to 17-year-olds.

ALL ABOUT BABIES*

Helps expectant parents, grandparents or adoptive parents learn to care for a newborn.

BIRTH AND PARENTING PREPARATION*

BREASTFEEDING PREPARATION*

BREASTFEEDING: RETURNING TO WORK*

CELEBRATING FAMILIES

Tell your birth story, hear how others have adjusted to their newborn and learn basic infant safety (choking and infant CPR).

CESAREAN BIRTH*

CHANGING SHAPES™: PREGNANCY FITNESS*

EXPECTING MULTIPLES*

HEALTHY PREGNANCY*

INFANT MASSAGE*

INFANT AND CHILD CPR*

Two-hour class to learn resuscitation methods for infants and children younger than 8.

LAMAZE BIRTH PREPARATION*

Prepares expectant parents for the birth process, including help with Lamaze relaxation and breathing. Cesarean birth, postpartum care and parenting are also discussed.

NEW BROTHER/NEW SISTER*

One-session class designed to help children older than 3 understand what it is like to have a new brother or sister.

NEW PARENT CONNECTION

Support group for parents with babies up to 4 months. Meets weekly. Co-sponsored by Early Childhood Family Education.

PREGNANCY AFTER A LOSS

Offers both a class and a support group for expectant parents who have experienced the loss of a previous baby.

REFRESHER BIRTH AND PARENTING PREPARATION*

For those who have given birth within the last five years. Fee includes New Brother/New Sister class.

REFRESHER LAMAZE BIRTH PREPARATION*

For those who have attended Lamaze Childbirth Preparation within the last three years.

TEEN PREGNANCY*

VAGINAL BIRTH AFTER CESAREAN (VBAC)*

RESPIRATORY

BREATH OF MERCY

Support group for patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Meets at Mercy the fourth Wednesday of every month, 1-3 p.m.

F.A.N. CLUB

Support group for patients with COPD. Meets at Unity the third Wednesday of every month, 1-3 p.m.

LUNG POWER*

An education and exercise program for patients with COPD and their families.

RESPIRATORY SCREENING*

Complete a pulse oximetry test and a breathing screening to determine how much oxygen is carried by the blood and if there are any breathing impairments. Respiratory counseling is available.

SAFETY

CHILD SAFETY

For parent and/or caregiver groups, this presentation covers home, auto and toy safety issues.

EN C.A.R.E.

Emergency Nurses Cancel Alcohol Related Emergencies (EN C.A.R.E.) is an alcohol awareness program. Free to local schools and parent and civic organizations.

THINK FIRST

Head and spinal cord injury prevention program for presentation in the classroom in grades 1 through 3 and 7 through 9.

TOBACCO CESSATION PROGRAMS*

FREEDOM FROM SMOKING QUITTING ON YOUR OWN

OTHER

ARTHRITIS AND FIBROMYALGIA INFLAMMATORY BOWEL DISEASE SUPPORT GROUP

UNITED OSTOMY ASSOCIATION SUPPORT GROUP

Meets the first Monday of each month, October through May, at Mercy Hospital.

WEIGHT INTERVENTION/GASTRIC BYPASS SURGERY MEETING

For people who are 100 pounds or more overweight, who have been unsuccessful losing weight by other means and want to learn more about surgical intervention. A support group is also available for those considering gastric bypass surgery or those who have already had it.

Note: Several of our educational offerings, programs and support groups are offered in cooperation with local and national societies and associations, including the American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, American Lung Association, Minnesota Chapter of Crohn's & Colitis Foundation of America, National Head Injury Foundation and the North Suburban Branch of the Twin Cities Diabetes Association.

May is National Osteoporosis Prevention Month

ACCORDING TO the National Osteoporosis Foundation, osteoporosis, the bone-thinning disease, is responsible for 1.5 million fractures each month. That's 4,110 fractures every day and one every 20 seconds! Yet, most people are unaware that fractures are related to osteoporosis. Osteoporosis can do damage for decades without being noticed. Too often, the first sign is a disabling fracture—usually of the spine, hip or wrist.

“Half of all women and one-third

of all men will have a fracture due to osteoporosis; and yet, there are steps they can take to prevent bone loss,” says Jenny A. Fransen, RN, of Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Institute.

“Fractures due to osteoporosis can lead to chronic pain, loss of independence; and in the case of hip fractures, can be life threatening.”

What was once regarded as a natural process of aging, is now recognized as a treatable disease.

The general public is invited to learn more about this disease and ways to prevent it at the Osteoporosis Awareness Event (details below). ♦



Join us to learn more about osteoporosis

ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

- A heel screening to determine bone density.
- A presentation by Lynne Eldridge, MD, a specialist in treating osteoporosis.
- “Taking Charge of Osteoporosis” class, where treatment options and prevention will be discussed.
- An exercise session taught by physical therapists from Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Services of Unity Hospital. Please wear loose-fitting clothing and shoes appropriate for exercising.

Registration is required. Cost for the event is \$20.

For more information or to register, contact Medformation at 651-697-3333.

Date: Saturday, May 18

Time: 8 a.m. to noon

Location: Unity

Hospital Auditorium,

550 Osborne Road,

Fridley, Minn.

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