Quality Care for You and Your Baby Starts at VMH

Vernon Memorial Healthcare is eager to be a part of your baby’s healthy growth and development.

If you haven’t already set up a primary care provider we can help! Vernon Memorial Healthcare (VMH) has clinics in the surrounding area that offer excellent prenatal services. Band Clinic-VMH in Westby, Hirsch Clinic-VMH and VMH Family Practice and Complementary Medicine in Viroqua, La Farge Medical Clinic-VMH and Kickapoo Valley Medical Clinic-VMH in Soldiers Grove, all offer prenatal services and family-centered medical care.

Our staff embraces a multidisciplinary approach that encompasses patient care and education in a family-centered, friendly environment. In addition, specially trained nurse midwives at the Gundersen Lutheran Viroqua Clinic offer personalized, unique services at the Vernon Memorial Birthing Center, including water births for women with low-risk pregnancies.

La Farge Medical Clinic-VMH provides pregnant Amish women with a safer delivery alternative than the normal birth-at-home option.

Along with the education delivered by your primary care provider, childbirth educators at Vernon Memorial Healthcare offer classes to help you and your partner understand what to expect physically and emotionally before, during and after labor.

You will also learn about healthy diets, medications available during the birthing process, breathing and relaxation techniques, birthing options (water birth, vaginal and cesarean), and car seat safety. Evening classes are offered in four week sessions, four times a year.

Certified breastfeeding educators are available to help you understand breastfeeding. Breastfeeding support staff are available to speak with you and provide information about all aspects of your breastfeeding experience. A one session evening class provides instruction on the proper techniques that will make your breastfeeding experience rewarding for both you and your baby. Visit www.vmh.org and click on “Classes & Events” to register.

VMH understands that your baby’s birth is a very personal experience. As you design your own unique birth plan, our staff is available to offer expert advice to ensure the safety of you and your baby.

During delivery, your plan will be followed as closely as possible with the agreement that you and your provider may change the delivery plan according to the baby’s needs.

Prairie du Chien Couple Chooses VMH Birthing Center

Sarah Howard of Prairie du Chien is willing to travel for quality prenatal care. She shared with us why she and her husband chose VMH for prenatal care and the birth of their first child:

“When it was time for me to decide where I wanted to go for prenatal care, Vernon Memorial Healthcare was at the top of my list. My husband and I live in Prairie du Chien and are more than happy to make the drive for every appointment knowing the kind of care that we will receive. A warm and welcoming staff, great doctors, a clean and well maintained facility and an overall family feel, are just a few of the reasons why we chose Vernon Memorial Healthcare as we anticipate the birth of our first child.

I can’t say enough nice things about the staff at Hirsch Clinic-VMH. It all starts when the fourth floor elevator door opens. Even if someone is busy at registration, staff always look up and smile to acknowledge that we have arrived.

Dr. Deborah Prior is my OB Physician. She is always very thorough and I have felt very comfortable asking her any question about my pregnancy. Thanks to the “View My Health” patient portal I am able to stay connected with Dr. Prior online when needed. I love that I can send her an email through the portal to ask a question. It’s also great to be able to log in and double check when my next appointment is scheduled. With the many prenatal appointments I am thankful for “View My Health” as I get reminders via email for all of my appointments.

I love VMH, they have amazing health care professionals, are technologically savvy, have clean and up-to-date facilities and equipment and they always make me feel like they were waiting for me to come through the door.”
VMH Mail Call!

Dear VMH,

Over a year and a half ago I started having trouble with my hip. I tried to ignore it, but as time went on the pain escalated and I ended up in Dr. Jeffrey Lawrence’s office in February 2012. Fast forwarding to August 21st, 2012, I had my hip replaced. I really didn’t want to have surgery, but I had no control over my inherited genetics. Reflecting back on everything, I wouldn’t have wanted to have my surgery and rehab anywhere else. The entire experience was flawless. I know this because I was awake during my surgery and watched the entire operation.

Even though those [VMH] hospital beds are the most comfortable ones I have ever laid on, I fought off sleep so I could meet all three shifts. I do have to share that when I pushed the button for assistance I actually timed how long it would take to hear someone knock on the door.

I am not going to say which one, but one shift was 2.5 seconds faster than the other two shifts on responding. Seriously, everyone who had a hand in taking care of me must be commended. Nurses, aides, doctors, physical therapy, lab technicians, health center staff, kitchen staff (I love their grilled cheese sandwiches), maintenance (fixed my burned out lights), and the laundry staff (clean sheets) all made my stay a positive experience I will never forget.

Their professional and friendly care all contributed to my successful surgery and rehab. I can’t say enough on how much I appreciate all of this. One could say that I was a little bit hesitant limping into the hospital, but that was short lived as soon as VMH took over.

With a very sincere thank you,

P.S. I limped in on August 21st with pain and I walked out on August 23rd without pain! I can’t wait for my other hip to wear out!

How to enter:
1. Please submit photos online by sending an email to pubrel@vmh.org
2. Submissions are limited to 2 photographs per person. Please include your name, address, phone number, e-mail.
3. Only digital photographs are acceptable. Photographs must be a JPG 8 x 10 inch file and in RGB color format. Photographs should be at least 300 dpi.
4. By entering the contest, entrants grant VMH a royalty-free, perpetual, non-exclusive license to display, distribute, reproduce and create derivative works of the entries, in whole or in part, in any media, for any educational, promotional, publicity, exhibition, archival and all other standard VMH purposes. Any photograph reproduced will include a photographer credit as feasible. VMH will not be required to pay any additional consideration or seek any additional approval in connection with such uses.

Photo Contest Rules:
1. Photo contest theme: Healthy Living
3. Contest is open to the public.
4. For every recognizable person in a photo, contestants must secure a photo release from the subject or, in the case of a minor, the subject’s parent or guardian, and provide it to VMH upon request. The release form is available by contacting pubrel@vmh.org
5. Photos that violate or infringe upon another person’s rights, including but not limited to copyright, are not eligible.
6. Decisions of the judges will be final.
Our Family Cares for Your Family

"Absolutely awesome" is how Allison Eastman of Viroqua describes the prenatal care and birthing center delivery at Vernon Memorial Healthcare. Allison and husband, Judd, were fortunate enough to deliver the 2013 New Year's baby at VMH on January 8th.

Allison is a patient of Joann Fouts, D.O., who practices at Bland Clinic-VMH in Westby. "We were new to the area, when I was looking for a provider," Eastman explained. "I knew that I preferred to have a woman as my doctor and I chose Dr. Fouts. Dr. Fouts is very knowledgeable and she was always available to speak with me between my prenatal appointments if I needed questions answered.”

The Eastmans enrolled in VMH's childbirth education classes. "The class was very good," Allison said. "It helped to prepare me for childbirth.

When labor started and it was time to deliver, the staff in the VMH Birthing Center made the Eastman's feel at ease. I was very nervous," Allison said. "Everyone made us feel comfortable. When one nurse or aide would go off duty, staff on the next shift would be just as nice. Our total hospital stay from labor through delivery and after we delivered was five days so we felt like we got to know everybody!"

The Eastman's had planned that their first baby would be delivered naturally but after 26 hours of labor and no progression, they followed Dr. Fouts's advice and opted for a cesarean section. "The surgical staff was excellent, the anesthetist, Arnie Nomann, put me at ease, and the surgeon, Dr. Alex Wade, was very nice and made me feel comfortable." Allison gave birth to a 7 lb. 15 oz. daughter, Maggie, at 4:40 am on January 8th.

"We've been telling everyone what great care we received at VMH," Allison said.

Tough Start, Strong Beginning

"Due to medical concerns we planned a Cesarean section for our second child. It was discovered shortly after the birth that our son Eli was born with water in his lungs. He was having trouble breathing and needed medical intervention to survive. The staff at the VMH Birthing Center were quick to respond, and got Eli the care he needed right away. We needed to stay in the hospital until he could breathe on his own. During that time the kind staff members played with our 15 month old daughter on her daily visits, patiently answered all of our questions and those of our visiting family, and of course kept constant watch over our new son. Thankfully, and because of the excellent care we received, after only ten days we brought home a healthy baby boy.”

Amanda Sonnenburg
Viroqua, WI

Parents Amanda and Dan Sonnenburg welcomed their son, Eli Daniel into the world on December 27, 2012. Eli weighed 8 pounds, 10.6 ounces.

WATER BIRTH
Less Pain, More Comfort

MOM OF FOUR: WATER BIRTH BEST BIRTHING EXPERIENCE

Water birth is one of several birthing options offered at Vernon Memorial Hospital. Gundersen Viroqua Clinic providers were instrumental in bringing this more natural birthing option to VMH ten years ago.

Kari Anderson of Westby delivered her fourth child at VMH just over four months ago. Anderson chose water birth as part of her birthing plan after being with her sister when she delivered via water birth at VMH. "Had I known water birth would be so wonderful, I would have delivered all of my children that way," she said. "It was a neat experience. This community is lucky to have this birthing option, this choice." Anderson, like most women who have experienced water birth find that being surrounded by warm water helps with back-labor and facilitates relaxation. There is less pain. It's easier to relax between contractions and better cope with the next contraction. The water allows for natural movement that cannot occur on a birthing bed and also makes the skin stretch better for less tears. For the baby, water allows time to become accustomed to being born.

Anderson received her prenatal care from Gundersen Viroqua Clinic nurse midwives, Jennifer Eissfeldt and Kim Dowat. "Both made me feel very special during my prenatal visits and at my delivery and they are always interested in my family," Eissfeldt and Dowat currently offer water births to women with low risk, uncomplicated pregnancies. Dr. Elizabeth Roberts at Hirsch Clinic-VMH and Dr. Joann Fouts at Bland Clinic-VMH are in the early stages of also offering water births to patients who meet certain conditions.
Knee Extensions
Step 1: Sit in chair; heels off the ground with only the balls of your feet and toes on the floor. You may place a rolled towel under your knees to keep your heels off the floor, if needed. Rest your hands on your thighs or on the sides of the chair.
Step 2: Slowly extend one leg in front of you as straight as possible.
Step 3: Flex foot to point toes toward head. Hold position for 1-2 seconds. Slowly lower leg back down. Pause.
Step 4: Repeat with other leg. Alternate legs until you have done 8-15 repetitions with each leg.
Step 5: Rest; then do another set alternating legs.
Benefits: Knee extensions help to restore knee mobility and strength. The muscles surrounding the knee, hamstring and quadriceps, will also benefit and will help to maintain a stable structure for your knees.

Cross Legged Forward Bend
Stand with your feet together or slightly apart. Cross your right foot over your left foot. Exhale and slowly bend forward from the hips keeping your back straight and looking forward. Do not bend knees. Relax neck. Place hands whenever feels comfortable. Hold for 30 seconds breathing deeply. Inhale and slowly roll up to a standing position. Alternate legs.
Step 1: Stand and cross legs.
Step 2: Slowly bend at waist, keeping knees straight.
Step 3: Once you feel a gentle stretch, hold the position for ten seconds.
Step 4: Stand Up. Repeat five times

Cow Stretch
On a chair:
Cow position: Sit on a chair with spine long and both feet planted flat on floor. On an inhale, arch your back and looking forward. Do not bend knees. Relax neck. Place hands whenever feels comfortable. Hold for 30 seconds breathing deeply. Inhale and slowly roll up to a standing position. Alternate legs.
Step 1: Stand and cross legs.
Step 2: Slowly bend at waist, keeping knees straight.
Step 3: Once you feel a gentle stretch, hold the position for ten seconds.
Step 4: Stand Up. Repeat five times

Cat Stretch
On a chair:
Cat position: Sit on a chair with spine long and both feet planted flat on floor. On an exhale, round spine, letting the shoulder and head come forward. Continue moving between the Cow/Cat positions on the exhale for five breaths.
Benefits: These exercises improve posture and balance. They will strengthen the spine and neck while also stretching the hips, abdomen, and back.

TEACHING YOU HEALTH & WELLNESS AT VMH
Check www.vmh.org for a complete list of classes and health screenings offered by VMH Health Educators and providers. Register online for your next BLS Recognition class or sign up your 11-year old for the next session of Safe Sitter! Questions? Please call 637-4290 for more information.

HEARTSAVER FIRST AID $30
The Heartsaver First Aid course provides training in basic first-aid procedures – including the first-aid skills recommended by OSHA – in a format that can be delivered in a single day. It also offers elective modules in CPR, AED, and environmental emergencies.

The Heartsaver First Aid course is specially designed to train anyone who might be the first to respond in the workplace or community. The course can be tailored to address the needs of a specific workplace or group of employees.

April 26 • 11:00 a.m.

HEARTSAVER CPR $40
The Heartsaver CPR course trains lay rescuers to recognize and treat life-threatening emergencies with adult, child, and infant victims. It includes sections on CPR and relief of choking in adults and children, as well as infant CPR and relief of choking. It supports the Heartsaver CPR course for responders who require a credential for completion.

April 26 • June 7 • 8 a.m.

SAFE SITTER $40
As a babysitter you take on a very important role. Babysitting can, and should be fun. But accepting a babysitting job also means accepting the responsibility for a child’s life. Students must be 11 years old by the date of the course to participate. Other June dates available, please contact VMH Health Education for more information.

June 11-12 (2 day course) • 9:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.

CHILDBIRTH EDUCATION $45
Childbirth Education classes present prospective parents with practical lessons on the labor and delivery process as well as breathing and relaxation techniques which can ease discomfort during birth. Included are discussions on nutrition and diet, the use of medication and anesthesia during labor, caesarean birth, postpartum emotional and physiological changes, maternal and newborn care after delivery, parenting, and a tour of the VMH Birthing Center.

March 23 - April 14 • 7-9:00 p.m.

BREASTFEEDING IS BEST $10
Breastfeeding is Best is a course taught by Breastfeeding Educator, Tara Berg. You will learn techniques to make breastfeeding experience rewarding and healthy for you and your baby.

February 26 • April 21 • 6:30-8:00 p.m.

PARENT-TOT SWIM $30
Parent-Tot Swim provides a relaxing, warm water environment for parent-child interaction. Children ages 6 months to 3 years are welcome.

5 week session: February 28 - April 4 5:45-6:30 p.m.

VMH SWIM LESSONS $30
Children ages 3-10 years old will gain the knowledge of pool and water safety while learning how to swim in a safe environment.

April 8 - 12 4:30-6:30 p.m.

COMMUNITY CHOLESTEROL SCREENING
March 6 • 6:30 -7:30 a.m.
March 20 • 7:30 - 9:30 a.m.
April 13 • 6:30 - 7:30 a.m.
April 17 • 7:30 - 9:30 a.m.
May 1 • 6:30 - 7:30 a.m.
May 15 • 7:30 - 9:30 a.m.
Total Cholesterol and glucose (non-fasting) Fee: $15

Lipid Panel (12 hour fast required) Fee: $35

The following courses are for individuals in the health care field. For complete descriptions and registration information please visit: www.vmh.org.

ADVANCED CARDIAC LIFE SUPPORT (ACLS)
Renewal (1 day) 8:00 a.m. • March 21 • $125
Recognition (2 day) 8:00 a.m. • April 18-19 • $150

BASIC LIFE SUPPORT FOR THE HEALTHCARE PROVIDER $40
February 22 • March 8 • April 12
8 a.m. Recognition • 12:30 p.m. Renewal

IV TRAINING $175
April 26 • 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

NEONATAL RESUSCITATION PROGRAM $110
February 21 • March 7 • 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

PEDIATRIC EMERGENCY ASSESSMENT, RECOGNITION, & STABILIZATION (PEARS) $80
April 25 • 8:00 a.m.

CLIP IT & KEEP IT!
Jump Off That Hamster Wheel!

The Circle of Experience is an individualistic approach to your workout. As you begin this process, you will start in the small yellow circle. In this circle, you will lift heavy weights for less repetitions and one set (use your own judgement as to what weight is heavy for you). As you progress with each workout, you will gradually push yourself outside of your Circle of Experience. Change your workouts by moving between circles as your body gets used to each level. This expands your Circle of Experience, allowing you to handle more physically.

**Functional Movements:**

Functional movements are universal motor recruitment patterns (UMRP). What are UMRPs? They are movements that you do each and every day in life. Sitting down in a chair and getting back up, that is a Squat. Picking the laundry basket off the floor, that is a Deadlift. Putting groceries on an overhead shelf, that is a Press.

These movements are natural and essential to a high quality of life. Once you lose capacity to do these UMRPs, your quality of life goes down, and that is the last thing you want to happen. You want to be able to squat down and give your grandchildren a hug, run around with them and play ball. If they fall down and get hurt, you want to be able to pick them up properly and safely, a deadlift.

**About the Expert**

Josh Brown, BA, NSCA-CPT, CF-L1 is a Certified Personal Trainer, Cross Fit Level 1 Coach, and Viroqua Volunteer Firefighter. He strives to better himself and the people he trains every day. Brown’s passion for life and fitness comes through in the way he interacts with Wellness Center members. He enjoys helping others achieve their personal goals and creates a positive and fun workout environment. He encourages you to come into the VMH Wellness Center so he can help you become the person you’ve only dreamed you could be.

**High Intensity:**

I know what you are thinking. High Intensity! I can’t do that! What I am really talking about is relative high intensity to you individually.

For example, Relative High Intensity in the 100 meter dash for Usain Bolt is 9.58 seconds. If you went out and ran at your Relative High Intensity, I am pretty sure you are not going to be under 10 seconds.

Let’s say you ran a 1.25 second 100 meter dash, you ran slower, but got the same benefit.

Intensity is where you’ll find results. You also want to make sure that you are working at an intensity that you can handle safely and efficiently.

If your form and technique start to suffer, intensity is too high. You need to back off a little. Run a little slower, lift a little lighter weight. If your routine is too easy, you need to add a little intensity, lift a little more, add reps, run a little farther or faster.

There are a million ways to constantly vary your workouts. There are many lifts other than the squat, deadlift, and press. There are also many forms of cardiovascular activities other than the treadmill, elliptical, and rower. Stop in to the VMH Wellness Center and meet with one of the Certified Personal Trainers to help you achieve the body you want and deserve!

**Goal Post Press/Arm Circles**

**Step 1:** Goal post press: Extend arms out to sides at shoulder height, elbows bent 90 degrees, palms forward. Raise arms over head and then lower to start - 25 to 30 reps.

**Step 2:** Arm Circles: Extend arms straight out to the side. Make small circles with your arms - 1.5 seconds in each direction. Repeat 25 - 30 times.

**Benefits:** These exercises are great for toning and strengthening your shoulders and arms while promoting shoulder flexibility.

**Young Adult’s Corner**

**Arm Circles**

**Start:** Stand with feet together and arms by sides, shoulders down. Inhale as you bend your knees and push buttocks back as if sitting in an imaginary chair. Extend arms up into the air and look up past your hands. Exhale and slowly return to standing while squeezing your buttocks and thighs. Continue with 10-15 reps. **Make sure you knees stay behind your toes.**

**Chair Pose Squat**

**Start:** Extend arms up into the air and look up past your hands. Exhale and slowly bend your knees, and push buttocks back as if sitting in an imaginary chair.

**Return to Start:** Continue with 10-15 reps.

**Goal Post Press**

Stand with feet together and arms by sides, shoulders down. Inhale as you bend your knees, and push buttocks back as if sitting in an imaginary chair. Extend arms up into the air and look up past your hands. Exhale and slowly return to standing while squeezing your buttocks and thighs. Continue with 10-15 reps. **Make sure you knees stay behind your toes.**

**Jump Off That Hamster wheel**

Let’s say you ran a 12.58 second 100 meter dash. You ran a little slower, but got the same benefit. What are you talking about is relative high intensity to you individually.

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Vernon Memorial Healthcare is committed to making our communities better, healthier, safer and stronger through established partnerships, programs and outreach services.

We are working not just to mend bodies, but also to make you healthier. Our impact extends far beyond the four walls of our hospital. We, with our clinics and pharmacies partner in community programs which help improve safety, provide food and shelter, offer job training and assist with recreational activities that ultimately improve the long-term health of our communities.

Our latest figures show our impact on the community, translated to a dollar amount, accounts for $110,924,705.00 in economic activity. This multiplier effect takes into account the staff we directly employ, the goods and services we purchase and the taxes we pay. VMH contributed more than $58,234,683.00 in total income to the community.

We also support our communities through financial contributions to our schools and other not-for-profit organizations. Some of our fiscal year 2011-2012 financial contributions included: Vernon Trails, Viroqua Area Schools, Westby Area Schools, Viroqua Foundation, La Farge Schools, Pleasant Ridge Waldorf School, Viroqua Police Department, Vernon County Law Enforcement, American Cancer Society, and Viroqua Cemetery Association, just to name a few.

Service to the community is not only a part of VMH’s mission, it is woven through the values and actions of our employees. In addition to our community care and sliding fee scale programs and our direct financial contributions, our employees contribute their knowledge, time and passion to many causes, often leading the way for VMH’s involvement.

VMH Community Impact

Job Impact of Vernon Memorial Healthcare

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<th>Indirect Jobs</th>
<th>Total Jobs</th>
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<tr>
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Impact of VMH on Local Economy

**Revenue**

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**Labor Income**

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**Total Income**

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<tr>
<td>$29,802,806</td>
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</table>

2012 Time Lapse...

The Bland Bekkedal Center for Hospice Care: The Future of Quality End-of-Life Care

The Bland Bekkedal Center for Hospice Care groundbreaking ceremony: August 1, 2012

The Bland Bekkedal Center for Hospice Care: The Future of Quality End-of-Life Care reached the 1.3 million dollar fundraising goal that was needed to break ground for this facility that will better meet the needs of the terminally ill in our community.

Groundbreaking and site preparation at 705 Arena Drive began on August 1st. The VMH Foundation continues to raise monies for the endowment fund, building furnishings and landscaping. Construction at the site continues.

August 7, 2012

October 19, 2012

December 10, 2012
PATIENT SATISFACTION, QUALITY & SAFETY

Each day as we touch the lives of our patients, we live our mission “to provide cost effective accessible care using professionally educated staff and superior technology to meet the health care needs of our community.” Our team members – 504 strong – are committed to providing exceptional service to everyone we have the privilege of caring for. Because of this, VMH patients give us high marks when it comes to their patient experience of care.

VMH monitors many quality measures driven by a combination of regulatory requirements, strategic initiatives and other identified improvement projects. Quality information is readily available on the VMH website at www.vmh.org. VMH currently reports data on quality and patient safety through a variety of national and state forums. Significant achievements in fiscal year 2011-2012 include the following:

ORTHOPAEDIC SERVICES received the 5 Star rating for excellence through “Healthgrades” for our Total Knee Joint Patients. Health grades quality ratings tell us how well patients fared during their hospital stay in terms of mortality rates and preventable complications. The 5 star rating is the highest an organization can receive.

PARTNERS FOR PATIENTS is a national initiative supported by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services that is being implemented at VMH. Its goal is to reduce inpatient harm by 40 percent and readmissions by 20 percent over a three-year period. Along with improvements to our patient discharge process, VMH staff participate in a community wide “Care Transition” Team which is looking at ways to reduce patient readmissions and provide better communication between local and area health care entities. The following are initiatives being worked on through the Partners for Patients Project that help reduce readmissions and prevent infections for our patients:

Prevention of Catheter Associated Urinary Tract Infections was the goal of performance improvement teams at VMH. VMH has not recorded a UTI (catheter related infection) since April of 2011. The primary approach to the problem was to limit the device days.

The goal for Foley catheter prevalence with patients is 10%. VMH started at 28.7% on the inpatient medical unit. Use has declined to as low as 6.5% since beginning our program in 2011. VMH started at 60% on the surgical inpatient unit. Use has declined to as low as 9.2%. See the accompanying graph above.

Project Joints, “Joining Organizations in Tackling Surgical Site Infections” allows VMH to collaborate with other hospitals to improve the standard of practice leading to better outcomes for our total joint patients. Some of the improvements made through JOINTS include standardizing and using evidence-based agents for preparing the surgical site, enhancing the surgery home preparation instructions, and screening for Staphylococcus aureus bacteria prior to a patient coming in for surgery. These practices help us reduce surgical site infections.

A VMH Year in Review

ADVANCING YOUR CARE

PELVIC THERAPY is a specialty offered by VMH Physical Therapist, Kathryn Sutton-Anderson. She helps patients regain control of their bladder or bowel without surgery and pharmacology. Sutton Anderson attained additional training and certification for treatment of patients with dysfunction and/or pelvic pain. She is one of only a dozen therapists in the state to hold this certification.

THE BIODEX BALANCE SYSTEM is a tool used by the Physical Therapy Department to assess your risk of falling. This computerized/balance training/rehabilitation technology tests our patients ability to remain upright during environmental instability and helps improve our rehabilitation process for patients with impaired balance due to orthopedic, vestibular or neurologic disorders.

Physical Therapist, Erin Scherer-Delrosa is pictured above demonstrating how the Biodex Balance System can be used to aid patient balance training and rehabilitation.

MYOFACIAL RELEASE THERAPY is a technique used by Physical Therapist, Jim Bacon on patients with compromised posture and movement patterns that often contribute to decreased function. These compromises often lead to pain. Bacon completed advanced training in this technique which focuses on relieving pain believed to arise from restricted fascial tissues — the tough membranes that connect and support your muscles, bones, organs and nerves. The focused manual pressure and fascial mobilization used in myofascial release therapy loosens up restricted movement, leading to improved movement function and indirectly to reduced pain.

LSVT, The Lee Silverman Voice Treatment rehabilitation program, available to patients with Parkinson’s Disease, was expanded to include the services of Occupational and Physical Therapy as well as Speech Therapy. The LSVT approach, also known as the Big and Loud program, requires a physician referral. Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy and Speech Therapy staff members have become certified in the program which uses a clinically-proven method for improving voice quality and functional movement in patients with Parkinson’s.

INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE was the continuing education focus of VMH Family Nurse Practitioner, Sheila Kupersmith as she completed a Post Graduate Fellowship program. By being more knowledgeable about healing-oriented medicine; nutrition; dietary and herbal supplements; energy therapy and other modalities, Kupersmith says she can be a resource for not only her patients but other medical providers.

HOLTER AND EVENT MONITOR TEST READING is now performed locally by VMH physicians, David Chakoian, M.D. and Paul Mariskanish, M.D. in an effort to improve patient access and simplify billing. Holter and Event Monitor tests are ordered by physicians to determine if there is a problem with the heart that would not normally be detected with a regular EKG. Holter and Event Monitor testing is offered through VMH Cardiopulmonary Rehab and Diagnostics along with Treadmill, Supine Bicycle, and Pharmacological Exercise Stress Tests and Echo cardiography.

With continuing advancements in science, technology and data transfer; Vernon Memorial Healthcare has stayed abreast of emerging opportunities to improve the care of our patients.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORD occurred in our Emergency Department, Ambulatory Surgery, Nursing Inpatient, Outpatient Specialty Care, G-I and Infusion Services. Benefits of the electronic health record include: improvement in the quality and convenience of patient care; increased patient participation in their care; improved accuracy of diagnoses and health outcomes; improvement in care coordination and practice efficiencies.

VIEW MY HEALTH is a secure internet portal made available to VMH patients in 2012 to allow access to personal clinical health records online. Patients who consent to be web-enabled may access View My Health on the VMH website by clicking the View My Health button and signing in with their unique user name and password. After securely logging in, patients are able to review their clinical visits, request an appointment, request a prescription refill and view published lab results. To enroll yourself in View My Health, you will need to visit your Vernon Memorial Healthcare clinic and sign an authorization form.

Kyle Moser demonstrates how the LSVT program has been used in the past solely with Speech Therapy patients. VMH is pleased to expand the use of the LSVT rehab program to help individuals with Parkinson’s.
Winter weather not only brings cold temperatures but dry air. This is a perfect set up for some annoying health conditions – dry, itchy skin and a stuffy, congested nose. There are simple remedies for these problems.

First, think of prevention. Our skin has natural oils that help it to retain moisture. The decreased humidity of winter air dries out our skin. Add to that the need to heat our homes and we dry out the indoor air even more. This problem can be reduced by simply increasing the indoor relative humidity through the use of humidifiers or vaporizers.

Dry air also affects our nose and mouth, especially when sleeping. Moisture escapes every time we take a breath. A cool mist humidifier in the bedroom helps to add moisture back into the air.

It’s important to stay hydrated by drinking enough water. Hot drinks help to dilate then constrict blood vessels in the nose to help with congestion. Adding ginger has been found to relieve congestion. Avoid caffeine or alcohol because these types of drinks dehydrate.

Cold air causes your nose to produce mucus as your nose is designed to warm and humidify air before it travels to your lungs. When that mucus dries out, it thickens and can cause irritation in your nasal passages and sinuses. Rinsing your nose with saline or a neti pot is effective in flushing out your nose and moving that crusty debris. Steam also works well. Be careful about taking a hot shower, it might work against your skin.

To avoid drying your skin, keep showering to a minimum. Take lukewarm showers and keep them short. If you need to use soap, use a mild soap like Dove, Nutrogena or Aveeno. Pat yourself dry, don’t rub. Lastly, put on moisturizing cream immediately in an effort to trap any remaining moisture.

For very dry skin, like often happens with our hands, rubbing them with petroleum jelly at bedtime and then covering them with cotton gloves works well.

Try to avoid scratching dry, itchy skin as it makes it worse. Oatmeal baths can be beneficial for itching. So can a little cider vinegar in the bathwater. Be careful about water temperature and length of time. It’s always a balance to reach the goal you are aiming for. Remember to avoid “scratchy” clothing – loose, comfortable clothing is best to avoid itching.

Stay Warm & Think Spring!
Westby residents Erin and Jesse Barstad and their two children (Leo, age 5 months and Reed, age 4) use the medical services at Bland Clinic-VMH and are thrilled with the care that they receive.

Both Barstad and her husband appreciate the family-centered care. Leo and Reed are patients of Bernadette Adams, FNP. Husband, Jesse sees William Calkins, MD and Erin’s provider is Joann Fouts, DO.

“Bland Clinic is two blocks from my home and I never have to wait for long stretches of time to see a provider” Erin said. “My entire family can be seen for check-ups in under an hour.” Jesse has received care from Bland Clinic for his entire life, “I was born at VMH in 1978 and doctor at Bland Clinic first with Dr. Bland and then with Dr. Calkins. Bland Clinic is close and convenient. Dr. Calkins is easy to talk to and a nice person. I like that I can have a very brief appointment but still feel like we talked about everything we needed to.”

Quality service and supportive family care is what is meaningful to Barstad and her family. “Bland Clinic provides personal care and they are always very responsive to questions and the needs of my family. If I have a question, I simply call the clinic and someone always calls me back right away,” Erin said.

Seeing clinic staff and providers in the community helps to make the experience even more personal for Barstad and her family. “Bland Clinic providers and staff are members of the Westby/Viroqua communities and seeing them out and about in the community or at the grocery store makes me feel like care is always nearby,” she said.

The Barstad Family has chosen Bland Clinic-VMH as their primary care clinic because of its convenient location, friendly staff, and knowledgeable providers. They enjoy knowing that their providers see them as individuals and know them by name when they see them at events in their small town.
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Kyle Baklund
A Great Staff is Our Greatest Strength

Vernon Memorial Healthcare staff play a key role in providing educational opportunities for students of all ages. We offer educational experiences that often help students choose their lifetime career. In 2012 alone, VMH staff spent time with more than 1,638 students through classroom presentations, workshops, job shadow experiences, nursing and medical provider training. Some of the ways that we help educate our future health care work force include:

- **Healthy Habits Workshops** for 3rd and 7th graders; Farm and Home Safety Day Camp for 4th grade students; demonstrations and lectures to high school students enrolled in Health, Medical Terminology, and Anatomy and Physiology classes; Scenic Rivers Area Health Education Center’s Health Careers Camp; Viterbo University Senior nursing students; Anesthesia students;
- **WTC Nursing students**; UW-Madison fourth year medical students; student job shadow experiences; student internships in Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Radiology, Lab, Cardiac Rehab, Community Health Education.

Local Students Brighten Up KVMC

Students in Katie Strangstalien’s art classes at North Crawford schools are enjoying allowing the community to view their art projects at Kickapoo Valley Medical Clinic-VMH in Soldiers Grove. The project was initiated by Physician Assistant, Tammy Pedretti, who was looking for a way to make the walls look less plain at the clinic and a way to get the community involved in that process.

The student artwork is displayed on a rotating basis every few months. “I loved the idea of the artwork being displayed and thought it could be very motivating for the students”, said Strangstalien. “Watching the students’ eyes light up when they hear that their art has been selected for display is great.”

Pedretti and the KVMC staff loved the colorful artwork and the diverse subject matter. “It really brightens up the clinic”, said Pedretti. “The students do a very nice job.”

Strangstalien noted that Pedretti has been great to work with. “Tammy has been so wonderful at making this process convenient and simple. She told me that the community loves seeing the student art. We are hopeful that this will become a long term tradition.”

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