STOP COUNTING SLEEP & GET SOME SLEEP

Most of us would agree that there’s nothing better than a good night’s sleep. A stressful day at work or long hours doing yard work and housework can be repaired with a nice, long slumber. You awake feeling calm, refreshed and ready for anything that a new day brings.

Yet millions of people do not get enough sleep and many suffer from lack of sleep. People who are sleep deprived can have difficulty regulating hormones that control appetite, metabolism and blood sugars.

There is plenty of evidence to suggest that those who are sleep deprived or who suffer from sleep disordered breathing are at higher risk for high blood pressure, heart attack, stroke, diabetes, auto accidents and more. Surveys conducted by the National Sleep Foundation reveal that over 70 different sleep disorders and 60 percent of adults report having sleep problems a few nights a week or more. Most go undiagnosed and untreated.

Vernon Memorial Healthcare (VMH) is pleased to announce that sleep studies are now being performed in Viroqua. The new service began April 23rd. Vernon Memorial Hospital is partnering with Whitney Sleep Diagnostics and Consultants of Detroit Lakes, Minnesota.

Whitney Sleep Diagnostics and Consultants is an American Academy of Sleep Medicine accredited program that diagnoses and treats all 84 known sleep disorders.

VMH Chief Operating Officer, Kristy Wiltrout, says two sleep observation rooms have been created on the south wing of the hospital’s second floor. These rooms will allow patients to spend the night sleeping so that doctors and sleep technicians can measure the quantity and quality of a patient’s sleep in order to diagnose and treat sleep disorders. Patients who feel they may have a sleep disorder are encouraged to schedule a clinic visit with their local health care provider to talk about their symptoms. A simple one page screening form can often help determine the need for an overnight sleep study.

Do you snore? Are you keeping your loved ones awake at night? Do you feel tired in the morning after sleeping all night? Do you feel drowsy while at work?

Take our short sleep quiz on page two to see if you should talk with your primary care provider about scheduling a sleep study.

SLEEP P2

Bland Bekkedal Center for Hospice Care Nearing Completion

LONGTIME DREAM TO BECOME A REALITY

When VMH opens its doors to its new, four-bedroom, Bland Bekkedal Center for Hospice Care in-patient residence in Viroqua in late summer 2013, the facility will fill a desperately-needed health care niche while fulfilling a longtime dream of this nonprofit hospice that has served Vernon and surrounding counties for three-plus decades.

Located on 6.3 acres at 705 Arena Drive, Viroqua, VMH’s hospice house will offer a warm, tranquil environment where patients and their loved ones can spend their last days together. With an R.N. on duty around the clock, patients will enjoy the quiet peacefulness of their private room, bathroom and patio, plus indoor and outdoor amenities.

VMH Hospice Manager Donna Nelson states, “We have arrived full circle from our inception in 1982 when our team of professionals and trained hospice volunteers first began caring for terminally ill patients. Twenty-five years later, in 2007, the concept of offering a homelike environment for patients to live in comfort, safety and with dignity became a part of VMH’s strategic plan.”

Currently, only two freestanding hospice residences exist in our area, the closest being in Madison and Tomah. Our Hospice House extends our VMH Hospice mission of helping people have a peaceful life-through-death experience by offering a welcome end-of-life home for those who need it most.”

VMH will provide all levels of hospice care within the residential setting, with an emphasis on those with the highest level of need. Clients will be accepted based on a physician order and on Medicare regulations regarding appropriateness for hospice. Through a holistic combination of continuous symptom control, integrative therapies, spiritual support, respite care, family counseling and assistance with the practical tasks of daily living, VMH’s Hospice House team of staff and volunteers will create a program to suit the individual needs of each resident.

The VMH Foundation embarked on a Capital Campaign to support building and ongoing operating costs for The Center for Hospice Care in May 2011. Nelson says, “Significant funds are needed to fill the sizable gap between what insurance covers and what patients need.” Nelson, along with Campaign Co-chair, Jana Dregne and members of the Capital Campaign Committee have met with individuals, businesses, foundations and other organizations to present diverse giving opportunities in accordance with the wishes of the donor. Nelson says, “I invite people to contact me at 608-637-4362 to make an appointment to discuss additional giving opportunities.”

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VMH Laboratory Manager, Gary Tricker

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Priorities  “All in a Good Night’s Sleep”

Dr. Deborah Prior discusses how important a good night’s sleep really is to our systems.

Page 6

Gardening Pain?  VMH Occupational Therapy shares tips for making your gardening season pain free and more enjoyable.

Page 8

VMH Spotlight On Health  We look forward to hearing your comments about the Spotlight On Health. Please send all comments to: pubrel@vmh.org (608) 637-4219
VMH Mail Call!

Dear VMH,

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to Vernon Memorial Hospital, Dr. Jeffrey Lawrence, Dr. Richard Long and all the staff, especially those on the 2nd floor that took care of me when I had a total knee replacement on January 14, 2013. The one thing my wife Deb and I noticed was that you all seem to work together as a team and that everyone is important to that team. Put yourselves on the back as it does take everyone to make a stay at the hospital a pleasant one.

Most generally, hospital food isn’t the best. Yours is the exception! Not only was there variety, it was delivered piping hot! I was also impressed that for $5.00 I was able to get a meal brought to the room for my wife. She also enjoyed going to The Grille where the food was exceptional and the people were so pleasant.

I had the most caring, excellent and personable care at Vernon Memorial Hospital. Everyone introduced themselves, asked how I was and would ask if I needed them to get anything for me or my wife. My wife always says, “How beautiful a day can be when kindness touches it!” That is how we felt all the time during our stay.

I was impressed with the information I received from the nurse anesthetist before, during and after my procedure. He made me feel safe and comfortable even before giving me medication. I was so comfortable, I was so comfortable, I was so comfortable, I was so comfortable. I was so comfortable, I was so comfortable, I was so comfortable.

Nurses and CNAs are extremely important to Dr. Lawrence. He is putting his patient into their care after he does what he has to do. They all were exceptional and you knew they enjoyed working at Vernon Memorial Hospital as they had nothing but kind words to say about their jobs. Everyone knew what they had to do which made the change of shifts such a smooth transition. Thank you to each and every one of you for taking such good care of me.

Now to the people who make rehabilitation so important, occupational and physical therapy. These two entities were top notch! They transfer their passion toward their jobs to the patient in caring for them and teaching them to make their rehab at home a happy experience.

Last but not least, Dr. Lawrence. VMH can be so proud of this exceptional physician. He talks to you like he is your best friend, yet he is teaching all the time.

Having only been in the hospital twice in 63 years, it was so comforting to know that so many were interested in my well being. Your commitment to educate and provide a safe environment for the patient is commendable. For this, I will always be grateful and thankful.

Sincerely,

John Rima

- Decora, Iowa

DO YOU HAVE A SLEEP DISORDER?

Take this short quiz to see if you should ask your provider about scheduling a sleep study at Vernon Memorial Healthcare.

**YES** | **NO**
--- | ---
Do you snore? |  |  
Are you excessively tired during the day? |  |  
Have you been told you stop breathing during sleep? |  |  
Do you have a history of hypertension? |  |  
Is your neck size >17 inches (Male) or > 16 inches (Female)? |  |  
Do you wake up to use the bathroom more than twice a night? |  |  
Have you ever fallen asleep while driving? |  |  

Answering “yes” to two (or more) of these questions may be a positive screen for Obstructive Sleep Apnea. Consider talking with your primary health care provider about a referral for a sleep evaluation or sleep study at Vernon Memorial Healthcare.

Patients who receive a provider referral to undergo a sleep study at VMH would typically arrive at 8:00 pm and stay until 6:00 am the following day. Bathrooms and shower facilities are available.

After the sleep study, patients will receive follow up from a Board Certified Sleep Specialist who will review the results of the study with the patient and initiate therapy as needed.
Students pursuing careers in health care are invited to apply for over $12,000 in scholarship awards being offered this year by the Vernon Memorial Healthcare Foundation and Friends of VMH.

The applicant must be a student currently enrolled (and accepted) in a degree program at an accredited college, university or technical school pursuing a degree in a medical, nursing, or health care related field. The applicant must be entering their final academic year of a technical, certificate, or associate degree program or completed at least two years of study in a bachelor degree program. The applicant must have achieved a grade point average of 3.0 (on a 4-point scale), or equivalent, for the academic year immediately prior to application. Previous scholarship recipients and applicants may reapply for further financial assistance.

The 2013 application is now available online at www.vmh.org under Giving Back, Foundation Scholarships. Questions regarding the scholarship program may be addressed to Julie Steiner at 608-637-4219 or jsteiner@vmh.org.

A personal essay, three letters of recommendation, a current grade transcript and recent photograph are required to be submitted with the completed application. The application deadline is July 1st, 2013.
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.

**Teaching You DIY fitness tips to keep you healthy!**

**Overhead Presses** are a great way to build shoulder strength and stability, as well as targeting those hard to tone triceps.

**Please note, if you have shoulder mobility issues it is recommended that you talk with a trainer before adding these exercises to your routine.**

**Beginner: SEATED**
Keep abs tight, feet on floor, butt on bench, and back against pad. Elbows should be under and slightly in front of bar. Press bar over head, think: biceps to ears.
Keep wrists strong and knuckles to ceiling.

**Avoid pressing bar in front of head (pictured at right). This is poor form and could result in injury.**

**Intermediate: STANDING**
Keep abs and glutes tight, stand tall. Elbows should be under and slightly in front of bar. Press bar over head while keeping your abs tight. Do not hyperextend your lumbar spine (lower back) as you press the bar over your head.

**Avoid pressing bar in front of head (pictured at right). This is poor form and could result in injury.**

**Advanced: HANDSTAND PUSHUP**
**Always use spotters and a trainer when learning the handstand pushup**
In handstand position, keep hands flat, and a straight line between ankles, knees, hips, shoulders, elbows, and wrists.
Keep abs tight, look at wall or object in front of you to maintain neutral cervical spine (think good straight posture). Lower yourself until top of head touches mat.

**Avoid looking at the ground causing hyperextension of the spine (pictured at right).**

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**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.

**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.

June 7 • September 13 • 11:00 a.m.

**HEARTSAVER CPR** $40
The Heartsaver CPR course trains 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.

June 7 • September 13 • 8 a.m.

**SAFE SITTER** $40 (1 day course) - $65 (2 day course)
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 18 & 25 (1 day course) • 9:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.
June 11-12 (2 day course) • 9:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.
(Day two: 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.)

**CHILDREncH BIRTHEdUCAtiOn** $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, cesarean birth, postpartum emotional and physiological changes, maternal and newborn care after delivery, parenting, and a tour of the VMH Birthing Center.

July 30 - August 13 • 7:30-9:00 p.m.

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

August 20 • 6:30-8:00 p.m.

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

6 week session: September 12 - October 17 5-5:45 p.m.

**VMH SWIMMING 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.

October 21 - 25 4:30-6:30 p.m.

**COMMUNITY CHOLESTEROL SCREENING**

- **June 5** • 6:30-7:30 a.m.
- **June 19** • 7:30 - 9:30 a.m.
- **July 3** • 6:30 - 7:30 a.m.
- **July 17** • 7:30 - 9:30 a.m.
- **August 7** • 6:30 - 7:30 a.m.
- **August 21** • 7:30 - 9:30 a.m.

Total Cholesterol and glucose (non-fasting) Fee: $20

**Lipid Panel**
(12 hour fast required) Fee: $40

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. • June 27 • $200
Recognition (2 day) 8:00 a.m. • Oct. 17 & 18 • $225

**BASIC LIFE SUPPORT FOR THE HEALTHCARE PROVIDER (BLS)** $40
June 21 • July 19 • August 16 • August 30
8 a.m. Recognition • 12:30 p.m. Renewal

**PEDIATRIC ADVANCED LIFE SUPPORT (PALS)** $225
September 5 & 6
8 a.m.

**ECG/PHARMACOLOGY** $75
June 3
8 a.m.
We as health care professionals affect the lives of our patients in a multitude of ways. Whether it’s the man with the fractured neck that was kept from permanent paralysis; the child that was pulled from a grain silo box that had the breath of life restored to her; the office worker with an over-epinephrine in time to keep him breathing; the teenager extricated from an overturned vehicle, each of these events had the right test at the right time with the right specimen in order to make a positive contribution to the future of the patients entrusted to our care.

Statistics show that 70 percent of all patient diagnosis and treatment is based on laboratory results. We apply training, experience, ethical principles and proven procedures to ensure that every test result is the highest quality data that we are able to produce. The pre analytic portion of the testing process is where the majority of mistakes can occur. Incorrect or misleading test results due to error could end up causing major problems in the future treatment of the patient.

It is our responsibility as laboratory professionals to use our expertise and resources to help our medical providers choose the appropriate test for the proposed diagnosis. Assuring that a specimen is collected at the right time is very important. Metabolic factors (the biochemical processes involved in the body’s normal functioning) can change the concentration or activity of a given compound and cause misleading lab results and an incorrect diagnosis or treatment.

A mislabeled specimen, collecting the wrong type of specimen, not collecting the appropriate volume of sample or not following the correct collection or storage procedure could result in a specimen that is not appropriate for testing.

The analytical portion of the testing process has its own set of testing conditions that need to be met before a test result can be reported. This is the most tightly controlled and automated part of the process. Controls are performed on a regular set time frame helping to minimize the variation present in the testing system. Modern testing equipment has been proven to provide more consistent and accurate results than manual procedures performed by technologists. The goal is to make any variation in a given patient’s history traceable to a change in the patient’s condition caused by either biology or the behavior of the patient. This is not just about having a result, but having the right result!

The post analytic stage is another step fraught with error. Getting the result to the medical provider is a process with its own set of obstacles and barriers. The loss of the test data in the exchange of communication between the lab and the provider does occur. This part of the process is constantly under review by multiple departments in order to minimize disruptions to patient care.

Medical laboratory professionals play a vital role in every aspect of health care to ensure that patients receive the right tests, the right diagnosis, and the right treatment. By doing so we can without a doubt say that we have done our part to ultimately save someone’s life.

About the Expert

Gary Tricker serves as the VMH Laboratory Manager and is very involved in organizations connected to the medical/clinical laboratory field. He is Chair-elect of the Shared Health Services Lab Alliance and has been a member of the Executive committee of the Lab Alliance for the past 6 years. His laboratory leadership with Shared Health Services has afforded him the opportunity to serve as a member of a national Amerinet clinical lab member-input group. Tricker is a 40 year member of the American Society of Clinical Pathologists. He was the 2012 President of the Coulee Region branch of the Wisconsin Society for Clinical Laboratory Science. Tricker served as an EMT for 30 years.

In this edition of VMH Investigates, Gary Tricker, VMH Laboratory Manager, gives us a better understanding of how the Vernon Memorial Healthcare Laboratory works.

Your Lab Results Are In...

In the wake of Boston Marathon tragedy, VMH Prepares

Disaster preparedness and management in health care has changed dramatically since September 11, 2001. Hospitals and clinics are “on the front lines” in incidents where nuclear, biological, chemical or explosive agents like those used at the Boston Marathon are deliberately used as weapons in our communities. Hospitals and health care facilities are key components of our communities’ disaster management response.

Vernon Memorial Healthcare has a comprehensive emergency management plan in place in the event of a natural disaster such as a tornado or flooding or a man-made disaster like an explosion, chemical release, or a rare infectious disease outbreak.

The purpose of a disaster plan is to prepare us to respond and recover from a natural or man-made disaster so that we may continue to provide treatment and patient care in extenuating circumstances. A VMH Safety/Disaster committee works closely with local public health officials, county emergency government staff and the state emergency management agency to ensure that emergency preparedness is a coordinated effort. VMH staff participate in yearly emergency response exercises like the disaster training which took place at the hospital on April 29th. Exercises such as these help VMH improve proficiency in executing its disaster response.

About the Expert

Ronelle Heisel, VMH Infection Control Nurse explains disaster protocols to VMH staff.
Dr. Deborah Prior, Hirsch Clinic - VMH
GET GOOD SLEEP, DOCTOR’S ORDERS!

All of us need sleep. We all have experienced times when we haven't slept well or our sleep has been interrupted, making it difficult to function the next day. What is recognized more and more is how sleep impacts our health.

Sleep is restorative. It affects our ability to think and store memory. It impacts our health. It affects our balance and coordination. Mamroe said, “I'm really happy that LSVT BIG is something that I could do that would help. I would absolutely recommend it to other patients.”

Judy Wubbenhorst of Westby has been dealing with a motor neuron disease for over a year. The disease, she referred to as Stiff Person Syndrome, causes progressively severe muscle stiffness typically in the spine and lower extremities. As an LSVT BIG patient, she traveled to VMH an hour a day, four days a week in addition to doing exercises prescribed for her at home. Wubbenhorst said she appreciated the visual contact and one-on-one attention she received. Since participating in the program, Wubbenhorst is once again able to reach into upper and lower cupboards in her home, climb in and out of her car and walk with a cane versus a walker around her home. “I fully intend to be able to walk unassisted by this summer,” Wubbenhorst said, “That’s something I haven’t been able to do in five years.”

Along with her neurological condition, Wubbenhorst also relies on VMH occupational therapists for treatment. “What the occupational therapy staff at VMH is teaching us more and more about sleep and how to improve the quality of our sleep,” Wubbenhorst said. “Sleep studies are now being performed at Vernon Memorial Hospital. A sleep study or polysomnogram electronically senses and records specific activities while we sleep. This information can be interpreted by a medical provider to aid in diagnosing and treating a sleep disorder, including snoring, sleep apnea, inomnia, sleep deprivation, and restless legs syndrome. If you are experiencing a sleep disorder, speak with your medical provider. A good night’s sleep is worth it.”

Take care and sleep well!

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LSVT BIG & LOUD Program Gives Patients New Life

Research-based programs performed by occupational, physical and speech therapists at Vernon Memorial Healthcare are impacting the quality of life for patients with neurological conditions such as Parkinson’s disease. Speech therapists at VMH have used Lee Silverman’s Voice Treatment (LSVT) LOUD program since 2011 to improve the voice and speech of patients. LSVT LOUD therapy focuses on strengthening vocal and respiratory muscles to improve voice volume, breathe support and articulation.

Occupational and physical therapists at VMH were trained in 2012 in LSVT BIG, to address the unique movement impairments that patients with neurological conditions encounter. Therapists work with patients to improve motor skills like walking, arm and leg movement, and balance and hand manipulation skills such as writing or buttoning a shirt. The LSVT BIG approach helps improve a patient’s quality of life by stressing the importance of remaining active and using BIT movements to improve everyday tasks.

Diane Mamroe of Viroqua is grateful that a conversation with VMH Occupational Therapist, J enelle Boyer, led to her provider’s referral and her participation in LSVT BIG. Mamroe, who was diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease in 2006, felt she needed something to help her with her balance and coordination.

Mamroe spent four days a week for four weeks working with VMH Occupational Therapist Ilana Pescoe and physical therapist, Joe Willis. “It’s hard to explain,” Mamroe said, “but instead of hunching over I tell myself to use my limbs, walk with more strength and put more energy into my movement. It makes a difference. The exercises get me through some of the bad moments I may be experiencing with my disease, for instance if I feel clumsy.” Mamroe recalls a time when she couldn’t pick up coins, twist off a bottle cap or button a shirt. “Now I think about what my body, limbs, or fingers need to do and then I’m able to perform the various steps of the task,” she said. “It’s even helped me with my writing.”

“The debilitation of Parkinson’s can be discouraging,” Mamroe said, “I’m really happy that LSVT BIG is something that I could do that would help. I would absolutely recommend it to other patients.”

Judy Wubbenhorst of Westby has been dealing with the effects of an auto immune disease she was diagnosed with in 2007. The disease, she referred to as Stiff Person Syndrome, causes progressively severe muscle stiffness typically in the spine and lower extremities. An evaluation by VMH Physical Therapist, Joe Willis brought forth his recommendation for the LSVT BIG program. In Wubbenhorst’s case, Occupational Therapist, I lana Pescoe explained that our nervous system is adaptable and new nerve pathways and muscle responses can be stimulated with specific motion patterns.

Wubbenhorst opted in and enrolled in the intensive four week program. While not easy, Wubbenhorst admitted, “It’s the most wonderful program I’ve ever been involved with.”

As an LSVT BIG patient, she traveled to VMH an hour a day, four days a week in addition to doing exercises prescribed for her at home. Wubbenhorst said she appreciated the visual contact and one-on-one attention she received. Since participating in the program, Wubbenhorst is once again able to reach into upper and lower cupboards in her home, climb in and out of her car and walk with a cane versus a walker around her home. “I fully intend to be able to walk unassisted by this summer,” Wubbenhorst said, “That’s something I haven’t been able to do in five years.”

Along with her neurological condition, Wubbenhorst also relies on VMH occupational therapists for treatment of her lymphedema. She struggles to keep her left arm from swelling since her lymph nodes were removed during breast cancer surgery.

Wubbenhorst said the relief she received from the specialized light massage treatment provided by Ilana Pescoe, OTR and Andy Yttri, COTA was amazing. “The education and other treatment tips are invaluable,” she added. “What the occupational therapy staff at VMH knows about lymphedema is more than anyone can learn on their own. They are just easy to work with.”

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A Great Staff & Volunteers are Our Greatest Strength

Kickapoo Valley Medical Clinic-VMH welcomes David Hubbard, M.D. Dr. Hubbard will begin his practice in Soldiers Grove July 1st. Dr. Hubbard comes to Soldiers Grove from Boscobel.

Dr. Hubbard is no stranger to the area. He is a native of Norwalk, Wisconsin. His wife, a pharmacist, is from Ontario.

Dr. Hubbard, who is board certified in family practice, did his residency at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville. He obtained his medical education at Ross University.

Medical is Dr. Hubbard’s second career. While working as a high school agriculture/ag mechanics teacher, he spent time after school volunteering as an EMT. Hubbard says that’s when he discovered medicine was his true passion.

Dr. Hubbard looks forward to practicing medicine closer to home and being a part of Soldiers Grove. Hubbard is proficient at managing diabetes and hypertension, among other chronic diseases. He looks forward to the opportunity to get to know his patients and their interests so he can provide quality, personalized care. “By listening to my patients and becoming familiar with them, I feel I can provide great care because I am aware of the unique conditions that may impact their overall health,” Hubbard said.

The Soldiers Grove area offers opportunities for Dr. Hubbard to pursue his hobbies. He enjoys traveling, fishing and bicycling. He also collects antique tractors.

SCOTT JOINS VMH EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT

Patrick Scott, M.D. has joined the Emergency Department at Vernon Memorial Healthcare. Dr. Scott, a 1987 graduate of the UW-Madison Medical School, completed his residency at Gundersen Medical Center in La Crosse. Dr. Scott has worked as a general practice physician at Gundersen Lutheran primary care clinics in West Union, Decorah, Calmar, Prairie du Chien, Whitehall, Blair and Sparta. Since 1998 he has been an Emergency Medicine physician at Tomah Memorial Hospital, serving as Medical Director there for five years. Dr. Scott began practicing at VMH on April 26th.

Dr. Scott says he likes the excitement that goes along with being an Emergency Department physician. “I like being able to quickly recognize and diagnose a wide variety of medical problems and then determine the most reasonable way to address the problem,” Scott said, “I try to spend enough time observing and evaluating the patient to assure myself that there is nothing immediately life threatening.”

Dr. Scott said he appreciates the fact that Vernon Memorial is patient-focused while valuing the strengths of its staff. He enjoys Viroqua and the feel of the downtown.

Dr. Scott is married and has three children. His wife, Lydia is a registered nurse who works in home health in La Crosse. He has one daughter in college and two middle school and high school age sons.

Dr. Scott enjoys riding motorcycle, cross country skiing and antiquing.

Gardening Pain? We Can Help!

VMH OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY HELPS REDUCE PAIN WHILE GARDENING

Gardening season is here! Do you have pain or safety concerns while working in your garden? If so, you may be able to modify your gardening technique in order to continue gardening in a safe and fulfilling way.

Stretching and strengthening tailored to your joint problems can correct poor alignment and help prevent joint distortion so that you can keep growing your fruits and veggies for years to come.

Gardening, based on its popularity as well as its ability to assist with increasing and maintaining physical and mental well being, is an activity that has been a strong focus of Occupational Therapists.

According to the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) between 75% and 85% of households engage in gardening tasks. Occupational therapists are a great resource for those who want to continue gardening safely and without increased pain.

Occupational therapists at Vernon Memorial Healthcare are medically trained professionals who focus on task modification based on your anatomy and knowledge about disease processes.

While an occupational therapy assessment is recommended for an individualized program, there are some basic joint protection recommendations and general rules. Here are some guidelines for healthy gardening techniques:

- **Protect Your Joints** - Choose implements with padded or larger handles to protect joints in your hands and fingers from excess pressure and stress. Keep hoes and tools clean and sharp!

- **Conserve Energy** - Sit while working to conserve energy and decrease stress on your back, knees and hips. Take rest breaks and stop work before you over-tire. Try a stool or kneeling pad. Stools with long handles are available in some garden catalogues.

- **Limit Lifting** - Watch out for those heavy bags of soil, mulch and fertilizer. Instead of moving the whole bag, divide it into smaller, more manageable loads and use a cart or wagon to move materials. Fill your shovel halfway. When lifting, use the muscles, in your legs and not your back. Build a raised bed if possible or do some container gardening.

Thank you VMH Volunteers!