

ABBOTT NORTHWESTERN HOSPITAL

Back to living

HELPING CANCER PATIENTS AND SURVIVORS FEEL BETTER AND STRONGER

IT'S HARD TO IMAGINE the conflicting emotions Bonnie Brabec must have experienced in September 2005. First, the 44-year-old from Mayer, Minn., was told she had breast cancer. The very next day, she learned she would be a grandmother.

Even before he was born, her grandson, Elliott, served as inspiration for Brabec. As she endured surgery, radiation, chemotherapy and complications from treatment, Brabec

kept telling herself, "I can get through this. I have a grandchild on the way."

But even Brabec admits that she was at a low point shortly before Elliott was born. Her skin was damaged from the radiation treatments, she had developed lymphedema because lymph nodes had to be removed, and her right side was so weak that she could barely raise her arm—much less hold her long-awaited grandson.

FIGHTING BACK

"I thought, 'Do I want to live like this, or do I want to fight back?'" Brabec says. She began receiving integrative therapies through Abbott Northwestern Hospital's Institute for Health and Healing. She had genetic testing to better understand her disease and any potential risk factors for her children. She also began seeing Nancy Hutchison, MD, a specialist in physical medicine and rehabilitation and director of

Cancer Rehabilitation Services at Sister Kenny® Rehabilitation Institute. Cancer rehabilitation services are offered in partnership with Abbott Northwestern's Virginia Piper Cancer Institute.

While cancer
—Continued
on Page 8

Cancer survivor Bonnie Brabec has regained enough strength to lift her grandson, Elliott.



Photo: Richard Anderson



3
A look at weight-loss surgery options



4
Women: Act now for a healthy heart future



6-7
Mark your calendar for classes and events


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HEALTH UPDATE

ABBOTT NORTHWESTERN HOSPITAL

Cool tricks for kids

When children get sick, it's pretty much a lose-lose situation.

Parents lose time from work, having to stay at home or take a child to the doctor's office.

Kids feel miserable and lose time from school and friends.

So if you can show your child some ways to stay healthy—some “don't get sick tricks” they can practice on their own—everybody wins.

Hand hygiene. We touch a handrail, we pick up germs. We pet the dog, we pick up germs. And then, when we rub our eyes, nose or mouth, we can become infected.

That's why health experts say hand-washing is the No. 1 trick to not getting sick—not hand splashing, but a good 20 seconds of soapy scrubbing under warm, running water. Teach your kids to wash their hands often, especially before eating, after using the bathroom and after touching animals.

Sleeve sneeze. Coughing and sneezing into your hands can spread germs. Use a tissue, urges the American Academy of Pediatrics. If one isn't available, kids should sneeze into their sleeve or elbow.

Tissue issues. Used tissues are trash, not keepsakes. Once kids know how to blow their nose into a tissue, teach them to toss the tissue in the trash. Then teach kids to wash their hands.

Selective sharing. Urge your kids not to share such things as towels, toothbrushes and utensils. The flu is most contagious before symptoms even appear, so they can't always know who's healthy and who's not.

For more cold and flu tips, visit www.allina.com and go to *Conditions & Treatments*. ❖

Additional source: U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



Skiers and snowboarders: Here's a heads-up on helmets

If you enjoy a day on the slopes on skis or a snowboard, you might consider wearing a helmet next time.

Here's why: The incidence of head injuries is increasing on the slopes, reports the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS). Those at increased risk of head injury include snowboarders, beginners, and those who are young or male.

However, research shows that

wearing a helmet can greatly reduce the risk of head injury. In a Norwegian study of more than 6,000 skiers and snowboarders, researchers found that helmet use reduced the risk of head injury by 60 percent.

The AAOS recommends that you wear a helmet while skiing or snowboarding, no matter what your age or level of experience. If you fall or crash, a helmet can absorb much of the impact—now that's using your head. ❖



Ahh...five stress relievers for right now

Stress can come and go on any given day. When it visits you, here are five ways to get some relief right away:

- 1. Just say no.** If you're too busy, too tired or otherwise don't want to do something, consider your right to refuse.
- 2. Make a call.** Pick up the phone and chat with a friend or family member. Give yourself 15 minutes to catch up with someone you care about.
- 3. Write it down.** What's going on that's stressing you out? Just jot it down and see if you feel a little better.
- 4. Go for a walk.** You don't have to go far, just get out and get moving.
- 5. Take a deep breath—or 10.** Sit comfortably with your hands on your stomach. Inhale through your nose, and slowly count to four. Feel your stomach rise. Hold for a second, then slowly exhale through your mouth as you count to four. Feel your stomach fall.

Finally, if your stress is overwhelming you on a regular basis, talk to your doctor about getting help. ❖

Source: National Women's Health Information Center



Award-winning care for weight-loss surgery

Weight-loss surgery has helped thousands of obese people lose weight and lower their health risks. Not every obese person is a good candidate for this surgery, but it is an important option for those who meet the medical qualifications and are willing to make real lifestyle changes.

Abbott Northwestern's Bariatric Center staff and the associated surgeons who work with the Center are committed to helping patients resolve weight-related diseases and regain healthy lives.

The Bariatric Center has received national recognition as a center of excellence for offering safe, sensitive and comprehensive care. It offers a variety of services, including education, assessment, referral to diet and exercise counseling, and surgery and after-care at Abbott Northwestern or in collaboration with a patient's local health resources.



Get started on your new healthier life by calling the Bariatric Center at 612-863-7501

or go to the *Services & Programs* page and click on the *Bariatric Center* link at www.abbottnorthwestern.com.

surgery, remember that the procedure itself is just part of the process. You will need to make lifelong changes in the way you eat, such as having smaller meals, choosing healthful foods, and taking vitamin and mineral supplements. Staying physically active is also important.

Again, this is an important decision, one that should be made with care. For many people who choose surgery, it can mean a healthier, happier, more active life. ❖

Weight-loss surgery: Options to consider

WHEN KORI STINGER was a teenager, she never had a mirror in her room. She did not want to be reminded she weighed 275 pounds.

The weight-loss surgery Stinger had at age 21 changed her life, and not just because she looked great after losing more than 100 pounds. She also improved her cholesterol and blood glucose levels, reducing her risks for heart disease and diabetes—conditions that run in her family.

Surgery for obesity, called bariatric surgery, can also help reduce the risks for sleep apnea, arthritis, back pain and incontinence, according to the American Obesity Association.

But it isn't for everyone. If you're considering bariatric surgery, there are important issues you should discuss with your doctor.

MAKE AN INFORMED CHOICE

The decision to have bariatric surgery should be considered carefully, according to the National Institutes of Health. Asking your doctor the following questions is a wise first step.

Do I qualify for this surgery?

You must meet certain weight and health guidelines to be a candidate for the surgery.

Which kinds of surgery are available? Some surgeries—gastric banding, for example—restrict the amount of food you can eat by creating a small pouch at the top of your stomach. Another method bypasses part of the small intestine, limiting the calories and nutrients your body absorbs. A combination surgery does both.

What are the risks?

Your doctor will also want you to understand the risks and changes the surgery will bring. Though not common, serious complications can occur. And some people may have long-term problems, especially if they don't adopt lifestyle changes necessary to stay healthy.

How much weight will I lose?

Most people lose at least half of their excess weight over the first year, although some may gain a portion of their weight back.

EXPECT A NEW WAY OF LIFE

If you decide to have weight-loss

Talk to your doctor if you have questions about surgery.



An opportunity of

WHY WOMEN SHOULD TAKE HEART DISEASE PERSONALLY—AND HOW TO ACT ON IT NOW

WOMEN and heart disease. You've read about it. You know it's a problem.

But have you ever considered it *your* problem?

Knowing that heart disease is the leading killer of U.S. women may not hit close to home. But what if you knew your risk for dying of heart disease within the next 10 years?

"You don't suddenly develop heart disease," says Lori Mosca, MD, PhD, a national authority

on preventive cardiology from Columbia University.

But for four out of 10 women, the first sign of heart disease is a fatal heart attack, Mosca says. She doesn't tell women that to frighten them—but to motivate them.

Granted, most women are very busy. But taking the time to find out about your personal risk of heart disease—and working with your doctor to lower it—could be the opportunity of your lifetime, Mosca says.

KNOW YOUR NUMBERS

To learn your personal risk for heart disease, you'll need a few numbers. You already know your

age and your smoking history.

You'll need your doctor's help, however, to find out your blood pressure and cholesterol levels.

Using these numbers, your doctor can determine whether you are at high, average or low risk of having a heart attack or dying of heart disease within the next decade. (Some medical conditions, such as diabetes or peripheral arterial disease, automatically put you at high risk.)

YOUR ACTION PLAN

Once you know your personal risk, you can take specific actions to lower it, if needed, Mosca says.

Step 1. For starters, focus on

your lifestyle, says the American Heart Association. Heart-healthy changes you can make include the following:

- not smoking
- avoiding secondhand smoke
- getting at least 30 minutes of physical activity daily
- eating a heart-healthy diet that is low in fat and high in fruits, vegetables and whole grains
- maintaining a healthy weight or losing weight, if needed.

“Just pick one thing to change at a time,” says Mosca—such as eating more veggies or taking a walk after dinner. You’ll feel good when you meet small goals, and you can move on from there.

Step 2. Control your cholesterol and blood pressure. Ask your doctor what numbers you should aim for.

The lifestyle changes above can help improve your numbers. But if your risk for heart disease is high, talk to your doctor about whether you should take medications as well.

TAKE IT TO HEART

Learning more about your specific risk can help you take heart disease personally—and take the important steps to a healthier future. For more information, visit www.mplsheart.com/women. ❖



Additional source: Lori Mosca, MD, PhD, *Heart to Heart: A Personal Plan for Creating a Heart-Healthy Family* (HCI Books, 2005)

Women’s Heart Health Program: Understanding your heart health

The first step in ensuring your heart health is awareness. Each year more women die from heart disease than from breast, ovarian and uterine cancers combined—yet many women do not even know they are at risk.

The Minneapolis Heart Institute at Abbott Northwestern Hospital offers the Women’s Heart Health Program to address the unique heart health issues facing women and to help them learn about their risk factors.

The program provides a range of services for women with heart disease, including a complete cardiovascular assessment, coordination with your primary doctor and nutritional guidance. The program can also refer you to Abbott Northwestern’s Institute for Health and Healing for integrative therapies and to the LiveWell Fitness Center to see an exercise physiologist.

The Women’s Heart Health Program also offers a women’s heart health assessment, a screening with a nurse to develop a personalized plan to improve your heart health. To learn more or to schedule your heart health assessment, call 612-863-3900.

a lifetime

Heart disease: Men and women are not equal

The key to surviving a heart attack is to recognize the symptoms and get help right away. But the symptoms of a heart attack in women may be quite different from what men experience. Thus, women may delay seeking help.

Because women’s heart attack symptoms can be less obvious than men’s, women should pay attention to any unusual pain, discomfort, fatigue or light-headedness. “In particular, any symptoms that occur with exertion—dizziness, weakness, or pain in the chest, jaw, shoulder or back—should be evaluated,” says Elizabeth Grey, MD, cardiologist with the Minneapolis Heart Institute at Abbott Northwestern Hospital.

In addition, women may need different diagnostic tests to accurately diagnose heart disease. “Women tend to have less plaque build-up in major arteries and more disease in the smaller arteries,” Grey says. “Sometimes an echocardiogram or nuclear imaging is added to a treadmill stress test for more accurate results.”

The challenge for women and their health care providers is that smaller arteries can’t be treated with procedures such as bypass surgery or angioplasty. “But heart disease in women tends to occur later in life than in men. That’s a lucky thing, because it gives women an extra 10 years to modify their lifestyle and reduce their risk factors,” Grey says.

Women can significantly reduce their risk of a heart attack by working with their doctors to manage conditions such as high cholesterol, high blood pressure and diabetes. Adopting a healthful lifestyle can have a major impact. “No. 1 is to quit smoking,” Grey says. Weight loss, a healthful diet and exercise are also important.



For more information about heart health, visit www.allina.com. Under *Conditions & Treatments*, go to *Heart Health Condition Center*.



ABBOTT NORTHWESTERN

To register or for more information, call Medformation® at 612-262-3333

Health classes,
coming events

www.abbottnorthwestern.com
or call 612-262-3333.



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Regular volunteer orientation takes place every second Wednesday. For more information, please call Volunteer Services at 612-863-4281.



ARTHRITIS

The following support group is offered by Sister Kenny® Rehabilitation Institute's Arthritis Care Program:

Juvenile Arthritis Support Group

CANCER

Living Room Resource Center

A resource library with information about cancer diagnosis and treatment.

Support groups offered by the Virginia Piper Cancer Institute:

Autologous Stem Cell Transplant

Breast Cancer

General Cancer Support Group

Kids Count, Too

Look Good, Feel Better

Patient Partner

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

Vocational Programs for People Living With Cancer

DIABETES

Diabetes Education

One-to-one and group education for people with all forms of diabetes.

HEALTH IMPROVEMENT

Aphasia Support Group

Stress Reduction Biofeedback Program

HEART AND LUNG

Heart Failure Support Group

Heart Transplant Support Group

For people on the heart transplant waiting list and their families.

INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND HEALING

Please call 612-863-3333 to register for events and classes at the Institute for Health and Healing.

Acupuncture

Drum Circle

Herbal Therapies

Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction

Nutritional Support for Specific Health Concerns

Physician Consultation

Yoga

NEUROSCIENCE

Support groups offered by the Minneapolis Neuroscience Institute:

Acoustic Neuroma

Headache

Ménière's Disease

Parkinson's Disease

PREGNANCY, BIRTH AND PARENTING

All About Babies

Birth and Parenting Preparation

Breastfeeding Preparation

Expecting Multiples

Infant and Child CPR

Infant Massage

New Brother/New Sister



If you do not find the program or class you're looking for in this listing, call Medformation® at 612-262-3333 for information about offerings at other Allina hospitals, or visit www.allina.com.

ESTERN HOSPITAL

or visit www.allina.com.

Small Talk: Communicating With Your Baby
Refresher Birth and Parenting Preparation
Vaginal Birth After Cesarean

STROKE

Stroke Support Group

For stroke survivors and family members at Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Institute. Call 612-863-4996 for information.

VISION

Offered by the Phillips Eye Institute:
Refractive Surgery: Is it for You?

WEIGHT-LOSS SURGERY

Please call 612-863-7501 for information about weight-loss surgery support groups. All groups welcome people who have had or are considering weight-loss surgery at Abbott Northwestern or at other hospitals.

LAP-BAND® Support Group

Offers information, support and socializing. Meets the second and last Tuesday of the month, 6-7:30 p.m.

Duodenal Switch Support Group

Focuses on lifestyle changes, the decision process and challenges that are unique to this procedure. Meets the first and third Tuesday of the month, 6-7:30 p.m.

Renewal Support Group

For individuals who have had or are considering gastric bypass surgery. Meets Tuesdays, 6-7:30 p.m. Call 612-338-1100 for information.



COMING EVENT

In Touch With Heart Health: Take Steps to Prevent Heart Disease and Stroke

Part One: Heart Health Screening

Saturday, Feb. 17, 7-11 a.m., by appointment

Participants will complete a computerized risk assessment, blood pressure screening and fasting cholesterol/glucose blood test. Adults only.

Part Two: Heart Health Presentations

Tuesday, Feb. 27, 7-9 p.m., by appointment

Presentations pertinent to your screening results presented by a cardiologist, dietitian and neurologist. Health professionals and educational displays will also be available for one-on-one interpretations and consultation.

Location: Mount Olivet Lutheran Church

5025 Knox Ave. S., Minneapolis

Cost: \$35 per person includes screening and educational program. Limited scholarship funds are available.

To register: Call Medformation® at 612-262-3333. Advance registration is required.

Questions: Call 612-863-3839.

Living

—Continued from Page 1

remains a dreaded disease, surviving cancer is no longer uncommon. But for many cancer patients, simply surviving is not enough. “Our patients often say, ‘I’m happy I survived—now I want my life back,’” Hutchison says.

Despite recent improvements in surgery, chemotherapy and other treatments, cancer and its treatments can still affect how a person functions in everyday life. Cancer patients may have difficulty with daily living and vocational skills, eating, swallowing, mobility, exercise, strength, coordination and stamina.

ENHANCING QUALITY OF LIFE

Cancer Rehabilitation Services can help cancer patients in all stages of the disease enhance their quality of life and improve function. Services include a lymphedema clinic, inpatient and outpatient cancer rehabilitation consultations, and exercise prescriptions.

“Any decline in a skill or function can benefit from a rehabilitation consultation,” Hutchison says. As

more cancer patients live longer with the disease, helping them regain function is crucial.

“We know that patients can live for years with their cancer in an arrested state. You can live with this disease and still have good quality of life,” Hutchison says.

Even when a complete cure is not possible, rehabilitation services help patients and their families achieve important goals. Hutchison recalls one patient who wanted to regain enough strength to walk his daughter down the aisle on her

For more information, call
612-863-4495 or visit
www.sisterkennyinstitute.com.

wedding day. Another patient being treated for esophageal cancer sought help because of swallowing trouble. He wanted to avoid a feeding tube for as long as possible.

Brabec worked with a specially trained physical therapist to help manage her lymphedema. Hutchison prescribed exercises and other therapies to help Brabec regain her strength.

“I began to see results within a few weeks, and every week I could tell it was getting better,” Brabec says.

By the time Elliott was born, Brabec was strong enough to hold



Photo: Richard Anderson

Bonnie Brabec with her grandson, Elliott.

him. “We grew together,” she says. Now Brabec cares for Elliott two days a week, something she hoped she could do from the moment she learned she would be a grandmother.

“I want to tell other people with cancer not to give up,” Brabec says. “This is something I’ll have to work on forever, but I’ve come a long way.” ♦

HOW TO REACH US

Directions Line 612-863-5550

Emergency Department . 612-863-4233

General Information . . . 612-863-4000

Medformation® 612-262-3333

Patient Information . . . 612-863-4111

For hospital information and services,
visit www.abbottnorthwestern.com.

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