

MERCY & UNITY HOSPITALS

She listened to her heart

YOUNG WOMEN who come to the Women's Heart Center at Mercy Hospital often have had a scare. Perhaps someone close to them has had a heart attack, and they're wondering about their potential risk.

For Jeanette LaFontaine, of Brooklyn Park, it was an episode of *her own* chest pain. Tests showed her heart was healthy but her weight put her at the highest end of the BMI scale. She decided to get serious.

"I needed a change at that point in my life," LaFontaine says. "I was eating too much, and I had gotten out of the habit of being active."

After attending a Mercy Hospital seminar about women's heart health, LaFontaine signed up for a one-year program at the Women's Heart Center at Mercy.

In that year, LaFontaine lost 70 pounds and nine inches from her waist. Her good cholesterol increased nine points and her triglycerides decreased by 50 percent (high levels of triglycerides often are associated with plaque in the arteries).

"Sometimes, people need outside help to meet their goals," says Karen Doran, RN, who manages the center.

For an annual, one-time fee of \$95, LaFontaine's visits included a health history, lab work, education and a healthy lifestyle plan. In addition, LaFontaine received lots of coaching.

"I'm a deadline person. I need goals and dates. Also, knowing I was accountable to Karen helped," LaFontaine says.

After seeing improvement as a result of the program, her husband suggested a commercial weight-loss program to build on her success. There, LaFontaine received a diet plan and visited the program three times a week for weigh-ins.

She read a book on running

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Jeanette LaFontaine was inspired to change her eating and exercise habits at the Women's Heart Center, Mercy Hospital. LaFontaine, 43, lives in Brooklyn Park and works in downtown Minneapolis.



3 Preparing for outpatient surgery



4 Battling childhood obesity



8 You're invited! Celebrate Unity on Jan. 20



MERCY & UNITY HOSPITALS
Allina Hospitals & Clinics



WEIGHT-LOSS SURGERY

LAP-BAND®: Small incisions, big results

AS A WORKING mother of seven, Marla Lukes, 51, of Fridley, was discouraged by diets that didn't result in sustained weight loss. Over the years she had fasted, exercised, downed diet drinks and tried a popular diet program. But at 255 pounds, Lukes was very close to requiring medication for high blood pressure and high cholesterol, and she knew that diabetes was in her family's medical history. Her weight was negatively affecting her work as a childbirth coach, or doula.

"When I was in a hurry to get up to a labor and delivery room to help a laboring mom, I was totally winded," Lukes says. "It was quite embarrassing." She knew it was time to make a change.

In 2005 Lukes attended a free information session about weight-loss surgery at Unity Hospital. She was most interested in laparoscopic adjustable gastric band surgery, or LAP-BAND®.

PROVEN PROCEDURE, SHORT RECOVERY

LAP-BAND surgery involves placing a device or band around the stomach to limit the food the stomach can hold. Patients feel full more quickly, enabling them to eat less and lose weight. The LAP-BAND procedure is the least invasive weight-loss surgery option, with small incisions, minimal scarring and no intestinal rerouting. The surgery itself is relatively low-risk; however, patients are fully informed prior to their procedures of

possible risks and side effects.

The patient's physician can adjust the band by injecting saline through a port just under the skin of the abdomen. LAP-BAND surgery is generally for patients with few major health problems.

The band is only a tool, however. In order to lose weight, maintain weight loss and stay healthy, patients must follow stringent guidelines for eating every day. An exercise regimen is also required; the details regarding this surgery and life with LAP-BAND are presented in detail during information sessions sponsored by Unity's bariatric program. For information on when information sessions will be held, check the schedule on Page 6 of this issue of *Healthy Communities*.

Although weight loss may occur more slowly than with traditional bariatric surgery, patients in Unity's program have lost up to 75 pounds in the first year following LAP-BAND surgery.

The procedure has a short recovery time. "I was out of the hospital the morning following the day of surgery," Lukes says.

Her surgery was performed by Jeffrey Baker, MD, a bariatric surgical specialist at Unity. He is in practice with bariatric surgical specialists Daniel Baker, MD, and Frederic Johnson, MD. Together with their clinical staff they have helped nearly 5,000 people lose weight through bariatric surgery since the program began. The program's exceptional outcomes have earned Unity a Center of



On her way: Marla Lukes is 40 pounds lighter five months after LAP-BAND surgery, with a goal of losing 100 pounds total. She says that "this weight loss feels so much more permanent."

Excellence designation from the American Society of Bariatric Surgery.

LAP-BAND WAS THE 'PERFECT OPTION'

"People told me that I wouldn't be happy with the results from the LAP-BAND procedure because I wouldn't lose weight fast enough," says Lukes, who underwent LAP-BAND surgery at Unity in May 2006. By October she had lost 40 toward her goal of losing 100 pounds. "I was actually very happy with it because I wasn't looking for quick results. This was a perfect option for me."



For more information, call Unity's Bariatric Center at 763-236-2045 or visit www.mercyunity.com and look for the Bariatric Center under *Featured Programs*. ❖

Be prepared for your same-day surgery

CHANCES ARE GOOD that if you're having surgery, your procedure will be performed on an outpatient or same-day basis, without an overnight hospital stay.

"More and more surgeries are now performed as outpatient procedures," says Mark Mount, MD, an otolaryngologist (ear, nose and throat specialist) with Allina Medical Clinic—Coon Rapids. "Innovations in anesthesia and surgical scoping (laparoscopic) abilities have made it possible for many individuals to be admitted for surgery in the morning and discharged later that same day. This eliminates a night away from home and people can recover in the comforts of their own space."

A successful outpatient surgery is in part dependent on your preparation. Follow the exact instructions provided by your physician for your situation. The following are typical of the instructions you may receive in preparation for your outpatient surgery:

- Talk to your surgeon if you take any daily medications, including aspirin. You may be asked to wait until after your procedure to take them.
- Call your surgeon if you have a change in health before your surgery, including colds, sore throat or fevers.
- You may be asked to refrain from eating or drinking anything after midnight the night before your procedure. Children who are younger than 11 can eat until six hours before surgery and drink clear liquids until



three hours before surgery.

- Health professionals need access to your fingers to check your circulation. For that reason, you must remove any fingernail polish or acrylic nails.
- Remove makeup, jewelry and all metal body piercings before your surgery. Leave your valuables at home. Don't wear your contacts because they will need to be removed.
- Do bring your paperwork, insurance card and identification. You'll be asked to arrive one to two hours before the procedure so that you can take care of any necessary paperwork or consent forms.
- Be sure to bring someone with you to drive you home and to take notes about post-surgery instructions and recovery. ❖

Serving you—Elk Ridge Health

Mark Mount, MD, is one of several physicians who performs outpatient surgical procedures at Mercy Hospital's Same-Day Surgery Center at Elk Ridge Health in Elk River. Elk Ridge Health is a state-of-the-art medical facility offering comprehensive health care that is convenient to residents in the northwest metropolitan area.

The facility includes an Allina Medical Clinic with both primary care doctors and specialty doctors (general surgery; OB/GYN; ear, nose and throat; orthopedics; and urology). Outpatient surgical procedures are performed on-site at Mercy Hospital's Same-Day Surgery Center. Cardiac diagnostic services are provided by Metropolitan Cardiology Consultants. Imaging (X-ray), magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and other diagnostic services are provided by Mercy Diagnostic Imaging Services on-site.

A variety of health improvement, education, and patient or family support activities also are offered at Elk Ridge Health, including cardiac rehabilitation.

Elk Ridge Health is on Highway 10 west of Highway 169. For more information, call Elk Ridge Health at 763-236-0414.

The solution to childhood obesity:

Eat right, move more

MERCY & UNITY, ALLINA
PARTNER IN THE NORTHWEST
METRO TO REDUCE
CHILDHOOD OBESITY

LOOK AROUND. We've gotten chubby and so have our kids. Over the past three decades, the rate of childhood obesity has more than tripled for those ages 6 to 11. Nationally, an estimated 9 million children older than 6 are considered obese.

"Obesity is a growing threat to our children," says Steven Elias, MD, pediatrician at Columbia Park Medical Clinic, Fridley. "(In pediatrics) we are seeing a greater portion of obese patients and find this alarming considering the advancements in health care and the reduction in traditional childhood diseases."

Why are so many kids today overweight? The answer is complex, involving family life, the social and school environment, cultural norms, economics, and even public policy.

Reasons include:

- pressures on families to spend less time and money on food, resulting in too frequent consumption of convenience foods high in calories and fat
- greater cost of fruits, vegetables, and other nutritious foods
- fewer opportunities for physical activity at school and after school, and less walking or biking to and from school
- leisure time not spent playing outdoors and too often spent on sedentary activities (television, movies, computer, and video games).

The solution to childhood obesity may seem obvious: eat right and exercise more.

"But kids and their parents need to have information to understand the problem and how to best deal

with it," explains Kara Larson, MD, pediatrician at Allina Medical Clinic—Coon Rapids. "How much computer time is too much? How much exercise is enough? What foods are highest in fat and sugar?"

YOU CAN HELP YOUR CHILD EAT RIGHT

As a parent, your job is to give your child the tools for a healthy lifestyle and remain as relaxed as possible about the result. To help your overweight child eat well, use the same healthy eating approach with everyone in your family:

- Eat together as a family as often as possible. The entire family should be offered the same food choices at meals.
- Choose water instead of sugary drinks.
- Do not make any food item completely off-limits; even less nutritious foods in small amounts can fit into a healthy diet.
- Avoid power struggles over food. Your job is to provide healthy choices at specific snack and meal times. It's your child's job to choose to eat or not eat.
- Stick to a regular meal and snack routine instead of snacking throughout the day.
- Offer nutritious food choices.
- Keep foods moderate in calories to help your child avoid getting too many calories. But don't make meals so low-calorie that your child can't feel full.

When is a child too heavy?

With more children becoming obese, knowing whether your child is overweight is important. But kids are still growing. And because boys and girls develop at different rates, you need to consider the age and gender of young people when looking at their BMI (body mass index) numbers.

For those between 2 and 20 years old, a "BMI-for-age" is a useful tool for determining whether a child is overweight. It plots your child's BMI on a growth chart specific for age and gender. A child at or above the 95th percentile—meaning 95 percent of children of the same age and gender have a lower BMI—is considered overweight. Children who are between the 85th and 95th percentile are considered at risk for becoming overweight.

Your child's doctor can give you the details about BMI-for-age and help you track your child's weight. You can also learn more by visiting the Web site of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.cdc.gov.

- Avoid using food as a reward, whether for an achievement or for eating all of one's green beans.
- Serve dessert as part of the meal to avoid the "dessert struggle." Offer healthier desserts, such as yogurt and fruit, more often than rich desserts.

ALLINA HOSPITALS & CLINICS HELP MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Allina, Mercy & Unity Hospitals and the Allina Medical Clinic have made childhood obesity a special focus in their efforts to improve community health.

Allina Medical Clinic participated in a recent University of Minnesota study about creating the right tools to inform and motivate parents and their children to develop healthier lifestyles. Featuring cartoon characters such as Dr. Less Screentime and Nurse Lotta Fruitsandveggies, the Clinic provided brochures and posters created through the study to make the information about being healthy and fit as engaging as possible.

"Kids were asked to write down in the brochure the physical activities they like to do and make a log to track the time they spend on activities," Dr. Larson says. The Clinic also posted interactive noteboards where parents listed ideas for other parents. But the best part, says Dr. Larson, was "the many conversations between parents and kids that took place in the waiting room. Raising awareness and generating enthusiasm for healthier living is critical for our kids today."

In Anoka-Hennepin School

District 11, Mercy & Unity are partnering in four elementary schools to present a health model to reduce obesity in youth. It's called Power Hour, an after-school program targeted at elementary school children and their families; the curriculum focuses on nutrition education and physical fitness.

"Obese children are at high risk for diseases once confined to adults, like type 2 diabetes. These kids are at risk of becoming overweight adults,

putting them at greater risk for heart disease, high blood pressure and stroke," says Rickie Ressler, Unity Hospital president and Mercy Hospital interim president. "Helping our children stay well is a big priority for Mercy and Unity."

Kids in 325 elementary schools have participated in "The Power of the Pyramid," a play that teaches kids they have the power to eat well and get fit. Allina Hospitals & Clinics, along with the Minnesota Medical Association and PreferredOne, sponsor the play. Workbooks, posters and other materials help teachers reinforce the play's messages.

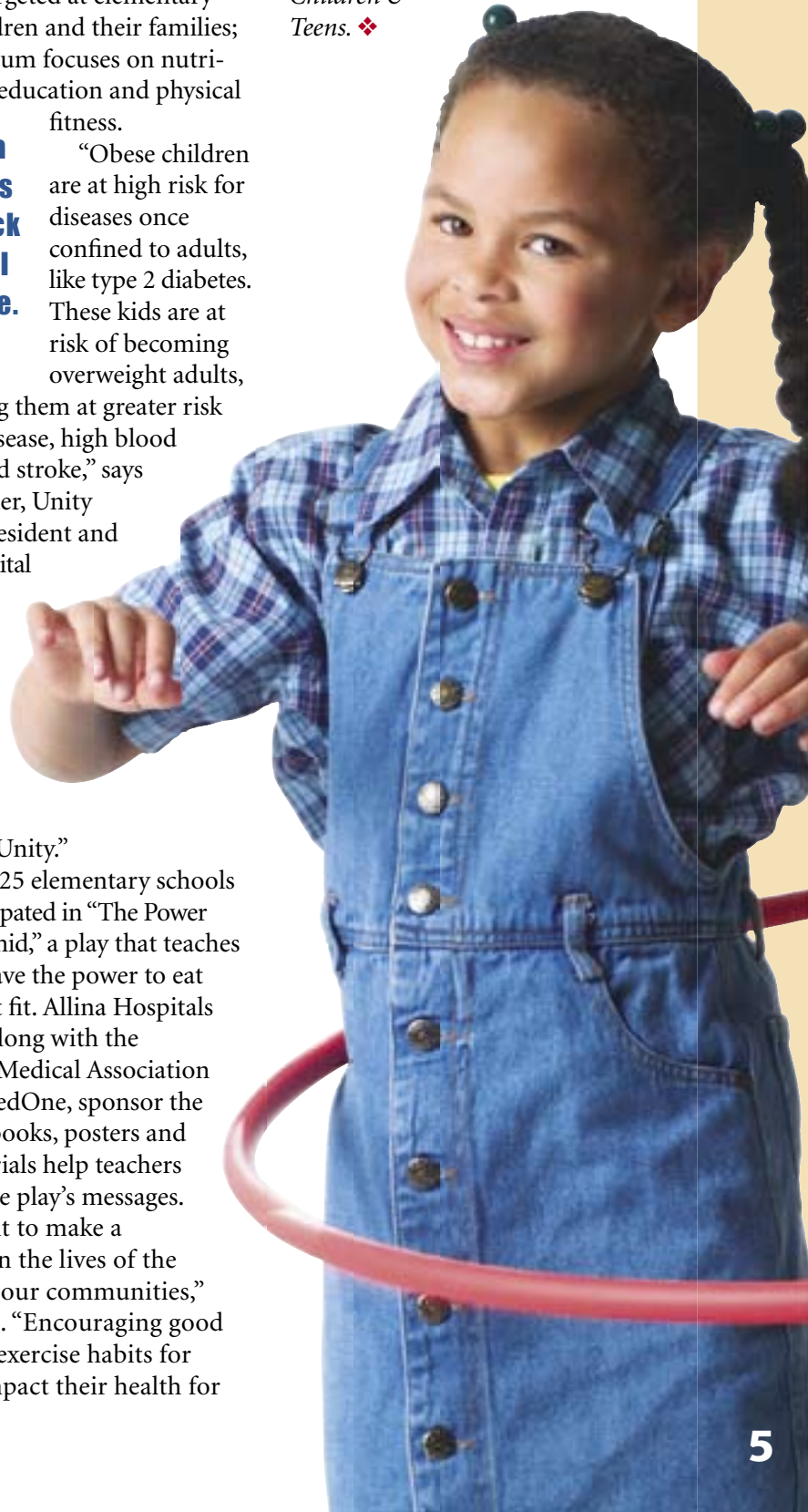
"We want to make a difference in the lives of the children in our communities," Ressler says. "Encouraging good eating and exercise habits for kids will impact their health for

their entire lives."



For more information, visit www.allina.com, select *Be Healthy*, then look under *Nutrition* for a special section *For Children & Teens*. ❖

Eat together as a family as often as possible, and stick to a regular meal and snack routine.



MERCY & UNITY HOSPITALS

*Programs with a fee are noted with an asterisk. Unless another number is noted, call Medformation® at 612-262-3333 or visit www.allina.com about these activities. Several of these programs are offered in cooperation with local and national associations.

CANCER

Cancer Resource Center
Call 763-236-4040 (Unity) or 763-236-6060 (Mercy).

Breast Cancer Support Group
Cancer and the Family
Living With Cancer

A support group for all cancer patients and their caregivers.

Look Good, Feel Better

Prostate Cancer Support

Renewing Life

Eight-week series for those with a life-threatening disease and their loved ones.

GRIEF

Adult Grief Support Group
(18-plus)

Includes separate groups for death of a spouse, child or parent, and death by suicide or violence.

Teen Grief Support Group
(13 to 18)

Children's Grief Support Group
(6 to 12)

Preschool Grief Support Group
(3 to 5)

Pregnancy and Infant-Loss
Support Groups

HEALTH IMPROVEMENT

Heart Screening (two-part event)*

Screening: Saturday, Feb. 3, 7-11 a.m., Mercy Heart Center conference rooms lower level

Follow-up education session: Thursday, Feb. 15, 6-7:30 p.m., Mercy Auditorium

Cost: \$35 total for both events. Call Medformation® at 612-262-3333 to register.

Blood Pressure Screenings

Heart or Stroke Screening*

Monitored Exercise Programs*

Women's Heart Program*

One-year program. Reduce risk factors for heart disease, set goals, coaching and blood screening.

HEART

Cardiac Club

Cardiac Education Classes

■ Low-Sodium Strategies

■ Heart-Healthy Nutrition

■ Risk Factor Evaluation

■ Benefits of Exercise

■ Stress and Relaxation

■ Medication Information

■ Life Changes

CPR Courses

Mended Hearts

PREGNANCY, BIRTH AND PARENTING

The Parent Connection—Free!

A free e-mail newsletter for expectant and new parents from Mercy and Unity hospitals. Check it out and sign up at www.theparentreview.com/unityhospital or www.theparentreview.com/mercyhospital.

All About Babies*

Birth and Parenting Preparation*

Breastfeeding Preparation*

Car Seat Safety

Celebrating Families

Cesarean Birth*

Changing Shapes™: Pregnancy*

Expectant Father*

Expecting Multiples*

Father and Baby*

Fitness*

Healthy Pregnancy*

Infant Massage*

Infant and Child CPR*

New Brother/New Sister*

New Parent Connection

Pregnancy After Infant Loss

Refresher: Birth and Parenting*

Small Talk (sign language)*

Teen Pregnancy*

Vaginal Birth After Cesarean (VBAC)*

RESPIRATORY (COPD)

Breath of Mercy

F.A.N. Club (Unity)

Lung Power*

Respiratory Screening and Counseling*

SAFETY

Child Safety

For parents and/or caregiver groups.

EN C.A.R.E.

Alcohol awareness program provided by emergency nurses. Free to local schools and community groups.

Think First

Head and spinal cord injury prevention program for presentation to grades 1 through 3 or 7 through 9.

TOBACCO CESSATION

Freedom From Smoking*

Call 763-236-8042 for dates, times and locations.

WEIGHT-LOSS SURGERY

Learn more about bariatric surgery. Unity Hospital has earned Center of Excellence designation in weight-loss surgery, including both open and laparoscopic roux-en-Y and adjustable gastric LAP-BAND®. Attend a free, introductory meeting at Unity led by experts from the hospital's Bariatric Center. All are at Unity in Classroom B. Call Medformation® at 612-262-3333 to register.

At 9 a.m.: April 7

At 11:30 a.m.: Jan. 11, 25; Feb. 15; March 1, 15, 29; April 12, 26

At 6:30 p.m.: Jan. 16, 30; Feb. 6, 20; March 6, 20; April 3, 17

Weight-Loss Surgery Support

Unity Hospital's Bariatrics Program sponsors two, free support groups.

Images: Meets in 12 different locations in the metro and out-of-state area. For more information go to www.mercyunity.com or call 763-236-2068. No registration needed.

Find Your Weigh: For weight loss surgical clients who want to stay on track.

Group meets weekly at Unity Hospital (lower level board room and classrooms) on Tuesdays, 4:30 to 5 p.m. weigh-in and 5 to 5:30 p.m. meeting and education.

OTHER

Arthritis and Fibromyalgia

Brain Injury Support Group

Diabetes Care Education Classes*

Stroke Support Group

United Ostomy Association
Support Group

To register or for more information, call Medformation® at 612-262-3333 or visit www.allina.com.

*Programs with a fee are noted with an asterisk.

Our records go electronic

MERCY AND UNITY Hospitals have joined other facilities in the Allina Hospitals & Clinic system to trade traditional on-paper patient charts and orders for an electronic medical record system.

“Installing this electronic medical record system has been a top priority here at Mercy and Unity,” says Rickie Ressler, president of Unity and interim president of Mercy. “The electronic medical record is a proven tool that enhances the quality and safety of the medical care patients receive.”

Here are some of the benefits of Allina’s electronic medical record system, now at Mercy and Unity:

- **Timely access to medical information.** Every Allina patient has one medical record—for hospitals and clinics—which can be immediately viewed by doctors and other clinical staff, regardless of their location.
- **Immediate safety checks.** The system automatically cross-checks new prescriptions to ensure there are no negative interactions with a patient’s allergies and current medications.
- **One-time collection of patient information.** Patients only need to provide their information once.
- **Quicker access to test results.** Clinical staff are immediately notified by e-mail when test results



have been added to a patient’s electronic medical record.

As always, patient privacy is strictly protected. Only those involved in your care will access your medical record.

Patients can sign up for online access to portions of their medical records through *MyChart*, a free health care tool from Allina Hospitals & Clinics. *MyChart* provides patients with convenient, secure online access to your Allina health information and is offered at many Allina Hospitals & Clinics that are now using the electronic medical record system. For information, visit www.allina.com/mychart. ♦

She listened

—Continued from Page 1

and started training. Her first day began with running 30 seconds and walking four-and-a-half minutes. Building on that, she ran her first 5K last summer.

Today, LaFontaine says she feels great. She also has a heightened awareness of how overeating and inactivity have made obesity, and by extension heart disease, major health problems in the United States. She’s become a meticulous label reader.

“I know I have to be vigilant and diligent,” she says. “I have to remember what could happen if I start buying doughnuts again.”

For more information about the Women’s Heart Center at Mercy Hospital, call 763-236-WMEN (9636) or visit www.mercyunity.com and look for *Women’s Heart Center* under *Featured Programs*. ♦

Heart disease: No.1 killer of U.S. women

Heart disease is gender blind. An estimated 43 percent of deaths in American women, or nearly 500,000 annually, are caused by cardiovascular disease (heart disease and stroke) each year. In Minnesota four out of five Minnesota women are at risk for heart disease.

- Women’s heart disease risk starts to increase significantly at menopause.
- Younger women who smoke and take birth control pills increase their risk of a heart attack 10 times.
- Women can lower their heart disease risk by as much as 82 percent through healthy lifestyle changes.

Symptoms of a heart attack can be different for women, which complicates their ability to identify trouble quickly. Women who have heart attacks often wait longer than men to seek emergency medical help. Watch for the following signs that are common in women:

- Discomfort or pain in your upper body or chest such as pressure, squeezing or tightness lasting more

than a few minutes.

- Pain that moves to your shoulders, neck, arms, jaw, teeth or back and spreads. Other possible locations of pain caused by heart problems are the midchest, shoulders, elbows, upper abdomen or fingers.
- Sudden weakness and/or extreme fatigue, light-headedness, dizziness, shortness of breath, nausea or loss of appetite.
- Pain in the jaw, teeth, throat, neck, shoulder and back.
- More subtle signs of a heart attack include discomfort in the abdominal area, heartburn, sweating, dizziness, weakness or palpitations.

The key to surviving a heart attack is to recognize warning signals quickly and get medical help right away.

For more about heart disease and heart health, visit www.allina.com, go to *Conditions and Treatments*, then to *Condition Centers* and select *Heart Health*.



JOIN THE FUN ON JAN. 20...IT'S FREE

Celebrate Unity

IF YOU HAVEN'T SEEN UNITY
LATELY, YOU HAVEN'T SEEN UNITY!



YOUR UNITY is better than ever, refreshed and ready for the future! Bring the family and visit Unity from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., on Saturday, Jan. 20.

- Join your neighbors and friends celebrating Unity's recent renovation.
- Take tours, visit displays and learn more about the inner workings of a modern community hospital.
- Enjoy games, prizes and healthy snacks.
- Born at Unity? You'll be a guest of honor.
- Chat with famous people from the history of medicine.

The event is free, but bring a nonperishable food item for local food shelves. And let us know you're coming. Register by calling Medformation® at 612-262-3333.

Unity Hospital is located in Fridley on Osborne Road between University and Central. ♦

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