

HealthWise

FALL 2015

Health news from St. Joseph and St. Mary's Medical Centers

Attitude is a Great Weapon in Battling Breast Cancer

“Prehab” can help you with Rehab after Surgery

There is help for Pulmonary Fibrosis

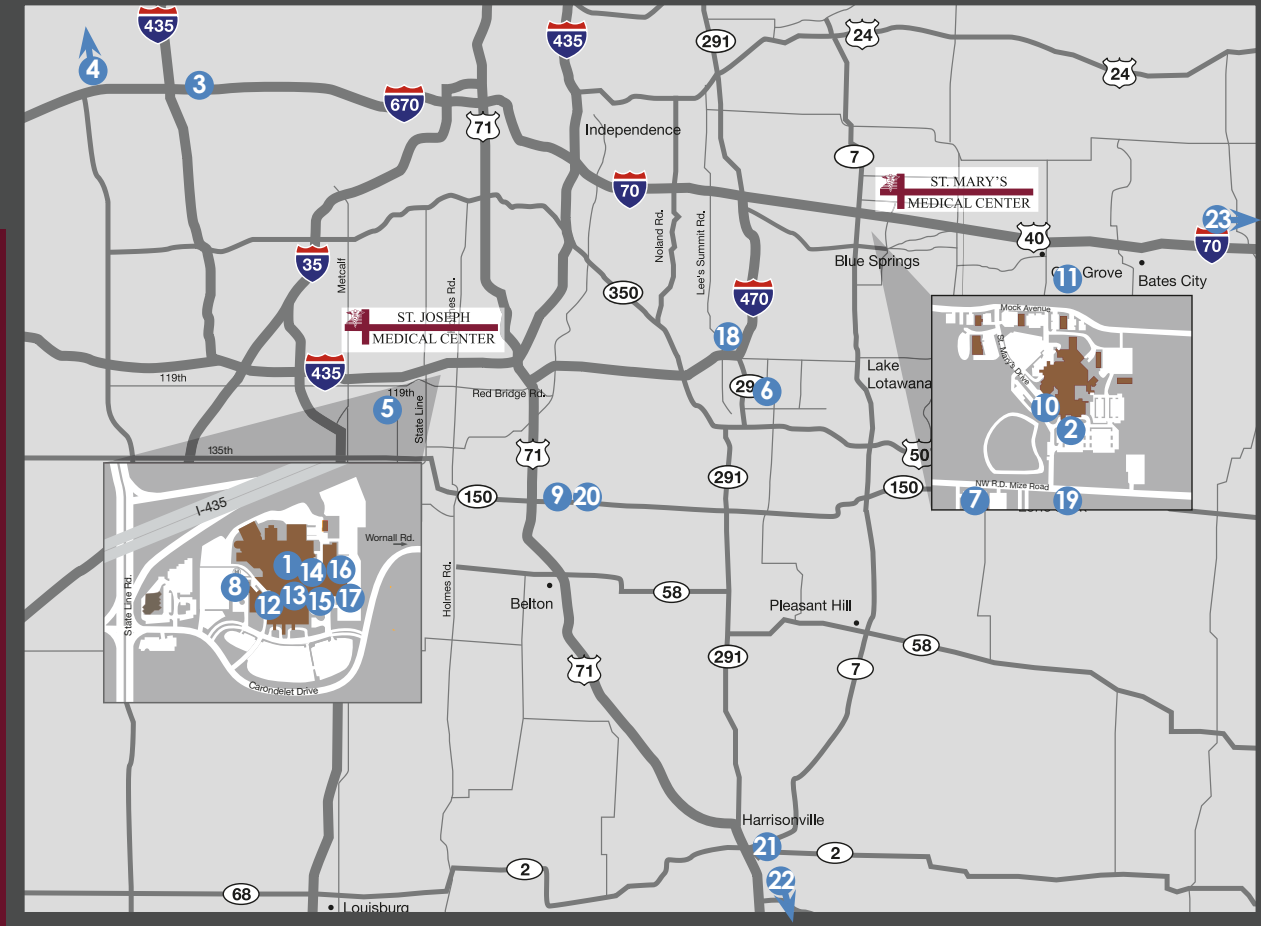
New moms find support and friendship

Smaller incisions for Gallbladder Surgery

Gotta Go, NOW? We can help.



Our Locations



- 1 St. Joseph Medical Center**
1000 Carondelet Drive
Kansas City, MO 64114
- 2 St. Mary's Medical Center**
201 NW R.D. Mize Road
Blue Springs, MO 64014
- 3 Providence Medical Center**
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Kansas City, KS 66112
913-596-4000
- 4 Saint John's Hospital**
3500 4th Street
Leavenworth, KS 66048
913-680-6000
- 5 St. Joseph Home Health**
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Overland Park, KS 66211
913-529-4800
- 6 St. Joseph Home Health (branch office)**
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Lee's Summit, MO 64086
816-655-5494
- 7 Blue Springs Internal Medicine**
220 NW R.D. Mize Road, Suite 101
Blue Springs, MO 64014
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- 8 Contemporary Women's Health**
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- 9 7201 East 147th Street, Suite 120**
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- 10 Family Medical Care Associates**
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Blue Springs, MO
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- 11 Oak Grove Medical Clinic**
816-690-6566
302 SE Salem
Oak Grove, MO 64075
- 12 Pulmonary Physicians of St. Joseph**
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- 14 St. Joseph Neurology**
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Kansas City, MO 64114
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- 15 St. Joseph Neurosurgical Associates**
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816-943-7733
- 16 St. Joseph Surgical Associates**
930 Carondelet Drive, Suite 104
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Cover story photos: Don Torrez

Unlocking the Mystery of Pulmonary Fibrosis

You don't hear as much about pulmonary fibrosis as you do other conditions such as heart disease or breast cancer. The disease is somewhat mysterious and often misdiagnosed. You might be surprised to learn that pulmonary fibrosis claims as many lives each year as breast cancer.

Pulmonary fibrosis is a condition where the lung tissue becomes damaged and scarred. Breathing becomes progressively more difficult. Among the causes:

- Environmental exposures
- Medications
- Chronic inflammation
- Infections.

While there is no cure for pulmonary fibrosis, there are therapies helping patients breathe easier and manage symptoms. St. Joseph Medical Center is the only hospital in the area hosting a monthly support group for pulmonary fibrosis patients. It's a chance for patients to learn more about the disease and share experiences.

David Gunter had a lung transplant a year ago and regularly attends the monthly meetings. "I came to listen to others, to see what they had to say and found I was not unique in what I was going through," says Gunter. "I can't say enough good things about the group. People with this disease tend to want to stop trying when breathing gets difficult, but the group keeps us 'keeping on.'"

The Greater Kansas City Pulmonary Fibrosis Support Group meets at St. Joseph Medical Center, the second Tuesday of every month. For information, call 816-943-2040.



Hope for "Aging Problem"

Millions of Americans are suffering with it, yet many are reluctant to talk about it—pelvic floor dysfunction. It can lead to incontinence, that feeling that you have to go, and you have to go *now*, and pelvic pain (including painful intercourse).

Fact is, it's not a normal part of aging or something you have to live with. There is help available for men and women suffering with pelvic floor dysfunction.

"These dysfunctions can affect all aspects of daily life including our ability to participate in work, social activities and recreational activities thereby affecting our overall health," says Vanessa Beachner, a physical therapist at St. Joseph Medical Center. She has been treating pelvic floor dysfunction for more than five years with great success.

"There are many factors that can contribute to the development of pelvic floor dysfunction including childbirth, pregnancy, hormonal changes, abdominal and other surgeries," says Beachner. "Men may develop symptoms after prostate surgery. But once we target the right muscles in therapy, the exercises are easy to work into your routine."

A referral from a physician is required for the therapy, but it is usually covered by insurance. For more information, call 816-943-4545.

Fighting Breast Cancer is a Team Sport

by Mike Fahrlander



Life is bumpy. Ask Carolyn Povolish. Her life has given her one career in the Air Force, a husband, who came with three children, and now another life in academia--teaching Human Resources Management and Corporate Training at Park University.

The latest bump came recently in the form of breast cancer. When she was told about the breast cancer, she remembers saying to her diagnostic radiologist, "Now what?"

For Povolish, that "now what?" would be an experience at St. Mary's Medical Center that touched many more lives than her own.

Having earned the 2015 Women's Choice Award as one of America's Best Breast Centers for dedication to exceptional patient care and treatment, honored by the National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers and designated as a Breast Imaging Center of Excellence by the American College of Radiology, St. Mary's Breast Center is among the best at what they do. But, it also doesn't hurt when your patient's emotional outlook is very much up to the task.

A glass half-full type of person, Povolish says she's never been a "Negative Nancy", as she calls it. "Even when it's dark, you can find something positive if you just look," says Povolish. Judging from her experience as her providers see it, she faced everything with an accepting optimism, coupled with a wry sense of humor.

"Carolyn was one of those patients I will never forget," says Amy Embery, physical therapist. The two met during a "prehab" session, where patients are educated about pre-operative strength and endurance conditioning as well as dealing with post-operative complications and rehabilitation. "Her personality is larger than life and she had a great way of adding humor and charm to the not-so-charming diagnoses of breast cancer," Embery added.

This became evident as her radiologists were in the process of locating the cancer. First, there was a mammogram and then a sonogram. Povolish jokes, "We had a lot of 'fun' trying to find it (mass), as it was so deep up against the chest wall," she observed. "I think we spent about two hours looking for the silly thing."

Describing the "mass" in her chest as "silly" speaks volumes about Povolish's attitude in this experience--and life itself.

"It took some convincing with my husband that things would work out," recalls Povolish. "And I told him that if that's what gets me, well, we're all terminal from the day we're born. But, I haven't yet found an expiration date stamped anywhere on my body."

Povolish's Breast Center Navigator, Doneda Swenson, calls her a great student. "Every patient could learn from her," says Swenson. "She had the attitude that breast cancer was not going to define her. She was going to climb this wall that stands in her way, repel down the other side and land with both feet on the ground."

Her attitude was indeed contagious. Whether it was laughing about the square opening for a round breast in the biopsy table, or mentioning to doctors that certain tools used in her procedures looked like Swiss Army knives, her presence with staff invariably engendered laughter.

Povolish credits the staff at St. Mary's Medical Center for making every step in the process as easy as possible. From her surgeons to

Screening Mammography Saves Lives

Early detection is crucial in the fight against breast cancer.

American Cancer Society recommends women age 40 and older should have a screening mammogram every year and should continue to do so for as long as they are in good health.

To schedule an appointment for mammography at St. Joseph, call 816-943-3173, for St. Mary's, call 816-655-5515.

If you don't want to schedule, the Breast Centers provide walk-in mammography 8-11:30 a.m., and 1-4 p.m. You don't need a physician referral for a screening mammogram.

A Less Galling Surgery

Many people have them and don't even know it, but every year 20-25 million Americans learn they do—and that something must be done about them. They are gallstones, which tend to block the flow of bile out of the gallbladder, causing swelling, abdominal pain, vomiting, indigestion and occasionally, fever. At this point, a cholecystectomy (gallbladder removal) is typically the solution.

Christopher Daggett, DO, and St. Mary's Medical Center are among the first in the area providing micro-laparoscopic gallbladder removal surgery. The instruments used in micro-laparoscopic surgery are just 2.7 mm, compared with 5-10 mm in traditional laparoscopic procedures, which means the incision is even smaller, minimizing scarring, which minimizes pain and recovery time for patients.

The new, smaller instruments were developed by CareFusion using a titanium alloy, making it as strong and stable as its thicker counterparts.

Gallstones may also rarely be an indication of gallbladder cancer. If you experience persistent symptoms of pain, swelling and fever associated with abdominal distress, see your doctor.



Breastfeeding Support Helping New Moms

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends breastfeeding exclusively through the first six months of a child's life, continuing through the first year in addition to solid foods.

Research has shown babies who are breast fed have fewer ear and respiratory infections, are at a lower risk for diabetes and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome while getting the natural nutrients a baby needs. Breast milk is gentle to the baby's stomach, so it's less likely to cause digestive problems. Mothers who breast feed recover faster and have less risk of postpartum depression, among other benefits.

"While breastfeeding is natural, sometimes moms have difficulties," says Sandy Kapka, RN, BSN, lactation consultant with the Birthing Center at St. Joseph Medical Center.



"Many mothers give up on breastfeeding before they want to for various reasons, many of which can be resolved with good care and support."

The Birthing Center hosts a free Breastfeeding Support Group for mothers delivering at St. Joseph. Participants say they get reassurance from other moms facing similar challengers—not to mention the socialization for babies and moms.

The support group meets every Monday, 11 a.m.-noon. For more information, call 816-943-4645.

► therapists and even an MRI nurse who calmed her claustrophobia during the exam, she felt as though she'd been adopted by the team – which is exactly the way the approach is supposed to work.

"If it weren't for Doneda (Swenson) walking me through this and the way St. Mary's handled this...I could see how people would be in a pool of tears and just freaked out completely," Povolish recalled. What Povolish may not have appreciated at the time, is that the team MVP is the patient.

"Carol's dedication to her health, along with her acceptance of the team approach, enabled her to get back to her life with a vengeance," says Embery. "I'm not sure if she realizes how much I gained from her. She was so open and uncensored about her progress, which we don't always get from patients. She was also quite honest about her exercises and the times she didn't feel well enough to complete them. As a therapist, this information was useful in setting goals for other, less vocal patients."

"Even when it's dark, you can find something positive if you just look,"

Povolish certainly made a lot of friends along the way, including a younger patient she became acquainted with during radiation therapy. The woman was clearly down, and openly discussed her hopes the disease would take her life. Povolish would have none of it.

"If you weren't here, I wouldn't have had the chance to meet you,"

Povolish reminded the woman. They talked and shared and soon found they had a common interest in fishing. Subsequent meetings between the two found the woman in much better spirits. They even have a fishing trip planned in the future.

"It's just a bump on life's bumpy road," says Povolish. "We all have to have something weird happen to us," she philosophized. And, so far, Povolish has been able to make that "something weird" - into something quite wonderful.

Prehab For Better Rehab

If you've had, or know someone who's had a total knee or hip replacement, you know there will be physical therapy after surgery. It's the standard of care for joint replacement patients. But a recent study by the *Journal of Bone & Joint Surgery* (JBJS), suggests that physical therapy before joint replacement surgery, or "pre-habilitation," can diminish the need for postoperative care by nearly 30 percent, saving an average of \$1,215 per patient who might normally need skilled nursing facilities, home health agencies or other postoperative types of care.

With 50 million Americans diagnosed with arthritis, which leads to joint replacements, and the baby-boomer population aging, the numbers of replacements are growing. More than a million were performed last year, and while the length of hospital stays following surgeries has decreased from an average of 9.1 days in 1990 to 3.7 days in 2008, the cost of post-acute care, primarily in skilled nursing facilities and home health agencies, has grown dramatically. These figures are not lost on Medicare, which has championed this approach with joint replacement physicians.

"We feel that getting joint replacement patients prepared for recovery ensures the best recovery experience possible," says Ron Willeke, Supervisor of Outpatient Therapies at St. Joseph Medical Center. "This begins three to four weeks prior to surgery, with a complete body assessment, including strength and range of motion testing. We also instruct them on what to expect after surgery, especially changes in their body and feeling."

Nerve signals to the brain that make that happen can be lost in joint replacement, so therapy is important in re-training the brain to sense muscle length and tension around those joints to compensate for that loss.

Bob Aubuchon is a believer. Aubuchon was in a lot of pain before having hip replacement surgery last summer. He had never had surgery before and was a little apprehensive about



Bob Aubuchon works with Anna Merrill, Physical Therapist, after his hip replacement. He said his "pre-hab" was well worth the time.

what was ahead. He says his "pre-hab" session put him at ease. "I felt much more comfortable after meeting my therapist and learning what to expect after surgery," said Aubuchon. "It did a lot for my mental health."

"Pre-habilitation helps us provide continuity of care," says Willeke. "Patients will most likely have the same therapist for their post-surgery rehabilitation that they saw in pre-hab. That same therapist usually visits them during their hospital stay, too, so it's a familiar face during what can be a challenging time."

For more information on pre-habilitation, call 816-943-4545.

Breast Cancer Awareness Activities

Ella Fitzgerald said, "The only thing better than singing is more singing." St. Joseph and St. Mary's Medical Centers are hosting events marking Breast Cancer Awareness Month that are centered on singing, stories and laughter.

Make Your Life *Sing*

Thursday, October 1

6-8 p.m.

Education Center
St. Mary's Medical Center

Thursday, October 8

6-8 p.m.

Alex George Auditorium
St. Joseph Medical Center

Join us for uplifting, thoughtful and humorous music and stories with Joy Zimmerman, singer/songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, and social worker. Joy shares insights from her own journey and years as a resilience group leader to help strengthen and celebrate our lives.



The events are free, but seating is limited. To make a reservation at the St. Mary's event, call 816-228-3335, for the St. Joseph event, call 816-943-2584.

Get on the Inside Track

Lace up those sneakers and join St. Mary's Inside Track at Independence Center. Get together with family and friends and walk your way to wellness. There are many benefits:



Take Steps to Better Health

It's fun and it's FREE

You can walk in a comfortable, indoor environment.

Monthly blood pressure checks (*first Thursday of each month*).

A free Inside Track t-shirt and membership card when you register.

The more you walk, the more prizes you earn. Incentives are awarded after 25, 50, 100 and 150 walking visits.

Registration is easy. Just stop by Independence Center Guest Services to sign up, and then sign in every time you walk.

Recognized for Cardiac Care



St. Joseph Heart Institute and St. Mary's Heart Center have received the American College of Cardiology's Get with the Guidelines Platinum Performance Achievement Award for 2015. They are among only 319 hospitals nationwide to receive the honor.

The award recognizes the medical centers' commitment and success in implementing a higher standard of care for heart attack patients and signifies that they have reached an aggressive goal of treating these patients to

standard levels of care as outlined by the American College of Cardiology/American Heart Association clinical guidelines and recommendations.

St. Joseph Heart Institute and St. Mary's Heart Center have also earned echocardiography accreditation from the Intersocietal Accreditation Commission.

Accreditation by the IAC includes a thorough review of its operational and technical components by a panel of experts. The IAC grants accreditation only to those facilities that are found to be providing quality patient care, in compliance with national standards through a comprehensive application process including detailed case study review.

St. Mary's Medical Center Earns Accreditation in Laboratory and Pulmonary

The St. Mary's Laboratory and the Pulmonary Department earned accreditation from the College of American Pathologists. The lab had a perfect inspection—that's ZERO deficiencies on more than 3,000 standards. The Pulmonary department had just one in the 3,000 standards.



During the visit, CAP representatives examined records for quality control of procedures over the past two years. They also looked at staff qualifications, equipment, facilities, safety program and records, and overall management.

Check Out Your Patient Portal

Our secure patient portal makes time-consuming tasks simple. Patients of St. Joseph and St. Mary's Medical Centers are encouraged to sign on during their hospitalizations. With just a few clicks, you can check lab results and other hospital reports, discharge instructions, view medications and allergies, and more.

After you've set up your account, you can access the portal on your schedule, whether at home, on vacation or at another medical office by logging onto mypatientportalkc.com. Use the portal anywhere you have a browser and manage the information 24/7.

If you want to establish the portal after a hospitalization, call Medical Records at 816-943-2112.



The 4th Annual 5K for MJ on Saturday, August 29, in Olathe supporting the COPD Foundation was another big success. The Pulmonary Support Group is one of the benefactors of the event.

MJ, or Mary Jo Byrne had been a patient of Patrick Perkins, MD, with St. Joseph Pulmonary Physicians. After she passed away with COPD in 2012, her family created 5K for MJ to increase public awareness about COPD and support COPD patients. The COPD support group at St. Joseph is one of the beneficiaries of the run.



Dr. Perkins makes the run a family event. He's seen here with his daughters in the 2014 run.



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Women choose St. Joseph and St. Mary's Medical Centers *This award proves it.*



St. Joseph and St. Mary's Medical Centers have earned the 2015 Women's Choice Award among America's Best Hospitals for Orthopedics and America's Best Breast Centers.



The Women's Choice Award identifies hospitals women can choose with confidence knowing they excel at clinical care and patient experience.



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