

CareFactor

CPR and AEDs Saving Lives

Sudden Cardiac Arrest: Prepare for the Unexpected

Acting quickly is important when someone has a heart attack. And speedy action may be even more crucial with sudden cardiac arrest. But what's the difference?

In a heart attack, blood flow to the heart is blocked. Getting to the hospital immediately is important. Treatment is most effective when started within an hour of the first symptoms.*

Sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) is when the heart stops beating suddenly because of a problem with the heart's electrical system. While a heart attack typically has symptoms, the first sign of SCA is usually collapse or loss of consciousness.

The Cardiac Chain of Survival

Health officials expect more than 250,000 people to have SCA this year. If you are there when an episode happens you can help by recognizing the situation quickly and being the first link in what the American Red Cross calls the "Cardiac Chain of Survival."

The first step in the Cardiac Chain of Survival if someone you are with collapses or becomes unconscious is to call 911. Emergency workers will arrive in minutes.

The next step toward helping someone with SCA is a combination of performing

cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and using an automated external defibrillator (AED). An AED is a medical device that can analyze a heart's rhythm and deliver an electric shock to return the rhythm to normal.

Saving Lives with AEDs

The Red Cross estimates that up to 50,000 SCA deaths could be prevented each year if you can find AEDs in public places, such as airports and office buildings (public-access AEDs). In Douglas, AED devices are located throughout the community. They can be found at Memorial Hospital of Converse County, on the first floor near the little coffee shop, and on the 4th floor near the elevators. AED devices are also located at the Douglas Senior Center, the Recreation Center and on most police vehicles.

At MHCC the AEDs are in cabinets that set off alarms when the doors are opened. The alarms are there to summon additional help should the AED be needed. These cabinets are not locked, although there is a keyhole on them. To open the cabinet



Heart Disease: Red Flag for Sudden Cardiac Arrest

Like its name suggests, sudden cardiac arrest happens suddenly. But there are warning signs.

Sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) and heart attack share a major common risk factor: coronary artery disease (CAD). Most people who have SCA also have some form of CAD, but they don't know it.

You can avoid being caught off guard by knowing the risk factors for heart disease.

Source: National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute.

to get to the AED, just pull open the ring located on the front of the cabinet.

* Source: National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute.



Second-Floor Grand Opening

Memorial Hospital was visited by Wyoming Senators John Barrasso and Mike Enzi on June 7 for an open house showcasing the new offices and Operating Rooms on the second floor. MHCC received a loan from the USDA for Critical Access Care facilities. The Wyoming senators presented Dr. Charles Lyford, the MHCC Board of Trustees President, with a commemorative plaque recognizing Douglas for its participation in the USDA Rural Health program.

Final building inspections of the new office space are complete. The two new operating rooms are expected to be approved for service by the first of August.

Several hospital departments and offices have relocated into the newly finished space. Wellness Department has relocated from the fourth floor into the new facility on second floor. Also relocating their operations are the Respiratory Department, the MHCC Education staff office, the hospital Performance Improvement, Infection Control and IS offices. The Surgery Manager, the Pre-Operation coordinator and Jay Johnson, the MHCC EMS Manager, are also occupying new offices in the area. Big Country Rehabilitation will re-establish their Pediatric Physical Therapy services in part of the new space as well.

Tom Davis is coordinating the department moves. The new locations for each department will be more convenient for patients. As soon as office numbers are established, a directory will be published.



Nordwick News



Thomas Nordwick, FACHE
Chief Executive Officer

Thomas Nordwick, FACHE, Chief Executive Officer of Memorial Hospital of Converse County has become a fellow with the American College of Healthcare Executives, a national professional society for health care leaders.

The group only has 7,500 fellows nationwide. To obtain the status, candidates must pass an exam, meet academic and experiential requirements, earn continuing education credits and demonstrate community involvement.

"Becoming a fellow was important to me because ACHE is the premier professional organization in my field, and I am proud to be recognized by them for achieving this level of development in my career," Nordwick said.

ACHE fellows are up for recertification every three years.



Stay Sharp with Mind Games

Do you misplace your keys or forget where you parked? Small memory lapses are normal, but losing memory isn't inevitable.

People over age 75 who participate in activities such as reading, playing cards and bowling experience less dementia than those who don't stay active.*

Maintain a broad range of interests to help keep your mind focused and your memory sharp.

Toss your calculator. Try balancing your check register in your head or on paper.

Do crosswords and word jumbles. Make it a habit every day.

Recite the alphabet backwards. Try this three times a day until you can recite it backwards as quickly as forwards.

It's never too late to start exercising your mind. Talk to your doctor if you feel like you're forgetting things much more often than you used to or forgetting how to do things you've done many times before.

* Source: *The New England Journal of Medicine*, 2003.

Be Sure Your and Your Children's Vaccinations Are Up-to-Date

Pop quiz: What are the symptoms of diphtheria? What is the treatment for smallpox?

Stumped? You're not alone. But two or three generations ago, Americans would have known the answers to these questions without a moment's pause. However, because of the introduction of vaccines in the 20th century, these questions are no longer relevant to our lives.

A Triumph

Immunization was one of the most significant public health achievements of the 20th century.* If you and your children have been immunized, many serious and even life-threatening diseases such as measles, mumps, whooping cough (pertussis) and rubella no longer pose a significant danger to you. Plus, by getting immunized, you not only protect yourself – you also help protect other people in your community.

There is a danger, though. Since few of today's parents have ever known anyone who had one of the diseases, they may not take the threat of illness seriously and decide to skip one or more recommended shots. If vaccination rates fall, diseases may reappear. The diseases still exist in other parts of the world, and increased global traffic raises the risk of encountering an infected person.

For example, the Japanese government stopped vaccinating against pertussis in 1974. Five years later, a pertussis epidemic struck Japan, resulting in 13,000 cases of pertussis and 41 deaths.**

A Lifelong Process

The schedule of immunizations recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) begins soon after birth and continues throughout childhood, adolescence, adulthood and into the senior years. You can find helpful charts that show which vaccinations are recommended at

what ages on the CDC Web site at www.cdc.gov/vaccines/recs/schedules/default.htm.

How Vaccinations Work

Vaccines take advantage of your body's natural ability to learn how to eliminate almost any disease-causing germ. On average it takes more than a week for your immune system to learn how to fight off an unfamiliar microbe.** Some are so powerful that they can overwhelm your body's natural defenses before it organizes a counterattack.

That's where vaccines play a crucial role. Vaccines contain either parts of microbes or whole microbes that have been killed or weakened so they don't cause disease. This allows your immune system to get to "know" the germs without any harm being done. Another great feature of your immune system is that it "remembers" how to protect you from germs it has encountered before. After you've been vaccinated, your body is able to fight off the invading microbe quickly and easily ... before you even get sick, in most cases.



It's time to be sure that children heading to school in the fall and young adults going to college have all the vaccinations they need. Contact your doctor's office to see which ones your children need. As an adult, you should be sure your tetanus vaccination is up to date, especially if you're working in the garden this summer. And in the fall, don't forget your flu shot.

Pop quiz answers: Diphtheria causes a thick, tough, gray membrane to grow in the throat, gradually closing off the windpipe. But most diphtheria deaths are caused by damage from a toxin that is produced during the illness. There is no effective treatment for smallpox, but the disease was eradicated in 1977.

* Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

** Source: "Understanding Vaccines," National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, July 2003.



Debra Heyer, MD

Thank You Note

I wanted to take a moment to let you know about the great service my 6-year-old son received in your ER. I took him to see Dr. Heyer at Oregon Trail Clinic on a Friday afternoon. Concerned with his high fever and stomach pain, she recommended I take him to the ER in case he had appendicitis. Dr. Heyer called ahead and alerted the ER doctor we were on the way. I had never been to your facility before, and I went in through the main doors carrying my son. I did not know where to go, but I saw an employee who was leaving. She took the time to go out of her way and personally show me to the ER. Thank YOU.

The registration process was very quick, since all our information was already in the system. We waited less than five minutes before we were taken back to a room. The nurses were very caring and compassionate, even making sure he had a blanket when he was cold and turning off the light when he said it hurt his eyes. My son had blood taken and gave a urine specimen, as well as X-rays and an ultrasound done. Dr. Borque kept me informed of what they were checking for and all the results. We were only there a couple of hours in total, which I think is remarkable considering what he had done.

A scary time for both my son and I was made a lot less stressful by the wonderful staff you have, and luckily my child is just fine. I would highly recommend your facility.

Thanks, Patty R.



Shake Your Salt Habit to Lower Heart Disease Risk

*Put down those pretzels! You can lower your risk of high blood pressure, stroke, heart attacks and kidney failure by decreasing your salt intake. In fact, reducing dietary sodium by 25% to 30% has been shown to cut your risk of developing heart disease and stroke by 25%.**

Follow Recommended Guidelines

The American Heart Association recommends that healthy adults eat less than 2,300 milligrams (mg) of sodium – about 1 teaspoon of salt – a day. But, the average American eats three times that amount.**

Cutting down on salt isn't as distasteful as you might think.

Tip: Start by cutting 50 mg a week – about the amount in a can of soda.

Eat Fewer Processed Foods

Most of us eat more salt than we realize. In fact, the American Medical Association wants sodium to be cut in half in processed foods and restaurant meals over the next decade.

An analysis by the consumer group Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) found that packaged roasted carved turkey can contain as much as 5,410 mg of sodium per serving.

Do you like eating out? Many restaurant dishes have more than one or two *days'* worth of salt, according to CSPI.

Tip: At restaurants, ask for low-salt dishes and sauce or dressing on the side.

Read Food Labels

Read the label to check sodium content. Look for foods that list 5% or less of the Daily Value for sodium on the Nutrition Facts panel.

Sodium Free = contains 5 mg or less of sodium per serving

Very Low Sodium = contains 35 mg or less of sodium per serving

Low Sodium = contains 140 mg or less of sodium per serving

Reduced Sodium = Usual sodium content reduced by 25% (but can still be high in sodium)

No Added Salt, Unsalted = No salt added during processing (but may still contain sodium)

If you'd like to learn more ways to eat healthy, talk to your doctor or make an appointment with one of our registered dietitians. Please call **(307) 358-2122**.

* Source: *British Medical Journal*, April 28, 2007.

** Source: American Dietetic Association.



Tips to Trim Sodium

Top salt offenders include pickled foods; canned vegetables, soups and beans; snack foods; cured meats such as bacon and hot dogs; packaged mixes; frozen dinners; and condiments.

What can you do to lower your salt intake? Cook low-sodium dishes from scratch!

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