

# HEALTH BEAT

YOUR GUIDE TO HEALTHY LIVING

SPRING 2008



## STRAIGHT UP

ADVANCED  
TREATMENTS  
FIX VERTEBRAL  
FRACTURES PAGE 12

**NEW YEAR'S  
BABY** HOW  
WELL-LAID  
PLANS LED TO  
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## 30 DAYS TO BETTER HEALTH

HERE ARE LITTLE TIPS THAT'LL  
MAKE A **BIG DIFFERENCE** PAGE 6

What does  
*“the good life”*  
mean for you?

*Dr. Jeffrey Sparacino*  
*Radiologist*

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# A Commitment to Our Community



I've worked for Salina Regional Health Center for the past fifteen years. When asked what I like most about my job, I have to say it's working alongside 1,200 other people who truly make a difference in this community. Not only do Salina Regional Health Center employees provide care to our patients, they are also out in the community providing health education, serving on community boards, donating their time and resources to those in need, and truly making a difference in so many lives.

That is why you will find in each issue of *Health Beat* a "Salina Regional in the Community" page. We hope you enjoy reading these stories as much as we enjoy sharing them with you.

On page 14 of this issue, for example, you'll find a story about our Santa Helpers program. Salina Regional employees helped 35 less fortunate families have a better Christmas. Many of these families would not otherwise have had any presents or dinner on Christmas Day. Other examples of Salina Regional Health Center employees' community involvement include Project Salina, United Way, "Go Red for Women," Smoky Hill River Festival, Relay for Life, Back to School Fair and so many others too numerous to mention. In our next issue of *Health Beat*, we will share with you our Community Benefits Report, which highlights some of these programs.

Creating a healthy community is what we do. It's what our employees believe in. It's what we do best. And it's that commitment to our community that I like best about my job.

*Beth Vinson*

Beth Vinson  
Director of Marketing

## HEALTH BEAT

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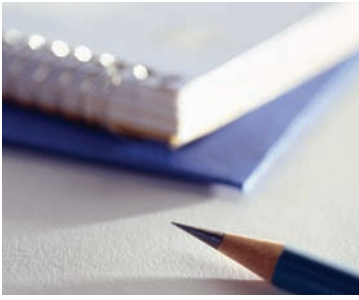
Learn about the advanced treatments for vertebral compression fractures.

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## KEEP BETTER TABS ON YOUR HEALTH

Keeping track of all your medications, care guidelines and future follow-up appointments can be a daunting task for even a minor illness. That's why all inpatients at Salina Regional Health Center now receive a Partners Committed to Health notebook to help them maintain medical information both during their hospital stay and after they go home.

Patients can use these binders to note questions to ask their physicians during their stay, and staff will catalog dismissal instructions and medication lists prior to discharge from the hospital. Patients are then encouraged to take the notebooks to future doctor's visits to update their medical information as needed.

# Scream for Sorbet

When it comes to ice cream, full flavor doesn't have to mean full fat. Satisfy your sweet tooth while sticking to your well-balanced diet with these healthier choices:

GOOD	BETTER	BEST
Breyers All Natural Dulce de Leche contains 150 calories and 6 g total fat.	Ben & Jerry's Chocolate Fudge Brownie Low-Fat Frozen Yogurt contains 190 calories and 2.5 g total fat.	Häagen-Dazs Low-Fat Chocolate Sorbet contains 130 calories and 0.5 g total fat.

*Nutrition information is based on a half-cup serving and was obtained from company websites.*



**Get the Link**

A new link on Salina Regional's website provides much of the same treatment information patients might receive during their hospital stay. Look for the Partners Committed to Health notebook at the hospital, or visit [www.srhc.com](http://www.srhc.com) and go to the KRAMES On-Demand patient education link for reliable health information.





Joel Phelps, COO

## NEW CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER FOR SALINA REGIONAL

Salina Regional Health Center welcomed Joel Phelps as its new chief operating officer. Phelps comes to Salina Regional from INTEGRIS Bass Baptist Health Center in Enid, Okla., where he served as assistant administrator since January 2002. Before that, Phelps was Director of Recruiting for Professional Recruiting Solutions in Richardson, Texas., and assistant administrator with Harris Methodist Health System in Fort Worth, Texas.

Phelps and his wife, Patti, have three children: a 6-year-old daughter, Camryn, and 4-year old twin sons, Collin and Connor.



### Feeling a Little Stiff and Sore?

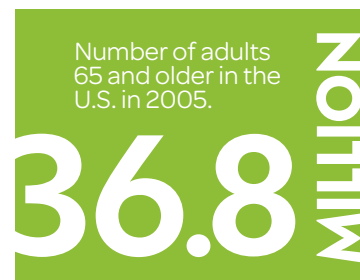
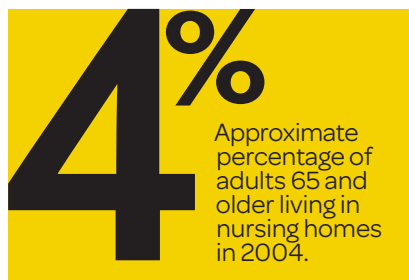
Many physical therapy patients are finding increased range of motion and independence with the augmented soft tissue mobilization system (ASTYM) treatment available at Salina Regional Health Center's Outpatient Physical Therapy Clinic. The treatment uses ergonomically designed instruments that help identify dysfunctional soft tissue and stimulates regeneration.

ASTYM utilized by specially certified clinicians at Salina Regional Health Center has demonstrated success where other approaches have failed. It has been proven successful for many chronic injuries, work-related injuries and sports injuries, including lower back pain, decreased neck and shoulder range of motion, wrist pain, knee pain, heel spurs, carpal tunnel syndrome, tennis elbow, golfer's elbow and rejuvenation from postsurgical scarring.

Patients usually receive treatments twice a week and are encouraged to continue normal activities—continued stress helps dysfunctional tissue regenerate.



Ask your physician specifically for a referral to Salina Regional Health Center's Outpatient Physical Therapy clinic or call **785-452-6668** for more information



Source: National Center for Health Statistics, Administration on Aging

## Video Games a Hit with Rehab Patients

You may have seen it on your child's list to Santa Claus. Nintendo's Wii® system has caught the eye of many kids for its physically interactive gaming technology. But, the Wii system isn't just for kids anymore.

Salina Regional's Inpatient Rehabilitation Unit introduced the Wii system to patients to help improve balance, coordination, eye-hand control—and to have fun.

Anyone who needs to work on restoring balance and coordination—from stroke to orthopedic surgery patients—can benefit from this interactive gaming therapy. Many patients find

rehabilitation to be tedious and hard, but playing games seems to lift their spirits. Some like to tell their grandkids they are playing this digital system and everyone—both young and old—likes the excitement of a great game.



For more information about Salina Regional's Inpatient Rehabilitation Unit or services, call Lorelle Boxler at **785-452-7770** or Marilyn Rundberg at **785-452-6787** for outpatient services.

# IT'S THE Little THINGS

## 30 days. 30 simple ways to improve your health

Maybe you eat too much junk food or prefer the couch to the walking path. Maybe you skip your annual doctor's appointments. Or maybe you live a perfectly healthy lifestyle but are stuck in an eating and exercise rut.

Whatever habits keep you from feeling your best, there's good news: Healthy living doesn't require radical change. "Most people I talk to want to look better, feel better and live happier, more fulfilling lives," says Ellie Krieger, M.S., R.D., host of Food Network's *Healthy Appetite* and author of *Small Changes, Big Results* (Clarkson Potter, 2005). They just don't know where to begin.

With advice from Krieger and other health authorities, we've devised a month-long plan that identifies 30 little ways to make a big difference in your well-being.



## DAY 1: SLURP ON WATERMELON

Researchers have found that watermelon raises levels of arginine, an amino acid shown to improve blood-vessel function. That means the sweet treat might provide protection against heart disease.

### DAY 2: BUDDY UP

Partnering with someone to achieve your health goals may help you stay on track. Get virtual support at [sparkpeople.com](http://sparkpeople.com), an online community that offers inspiration and encouragement.

### DAY 3: SCHEDULE YOUR EXERCISE

Lack of time is a common excuse for being sedentary. That's why Krieger recommends scheduling workouts like any other appointment. Begin by blocking off 30 minutes a few times a week, then work your way up to more.

### DAY 4: SIP FROM A STRAW

A bright smile is a sign of good health. If you drink soda, or iced coffee or tea, drink from a straw so the sugars bypass your teeth.

### DAY 5: TAKE A BREATHER

Slowly inhale and exhale for five minutes, focusing on how your body feels, and your heart rate will slow, Krieger says. Do it regularly to control stress levels.

### DAY 6: WEAR A BRIGHT COLOR

Leatrice Eiseman, author of *Colors for Your Every Mood* (Capital Books, 2000), says wearing something orange, red or yellow can boost your energy because the hues elicit a sense of excitement.

### DAY 7: SCHEDULE YOUR ANNUAL CHECKUPS

When you're feeling healthy, you may be inclined to blow off regular screenings. But doing so can compromise your health. A Harvard study found that women who skipped their annual pelvic exams had nearly four times the risk of developing ovarian cancer as those who didn't.

### DAY 8: THINK AHEAD

It takes 20 minutes for your stomach to tell your brain you're full. "The key to recognizing this seemingly magical satiety point," Krieger says, "is to eat slowly, chew each bite and stop periodically to note how you are feeling."

### DAY 9: BEGIN POTTY PATROL

Do you wonder if you're drinking enough water? The color of your urine is one way to tell. Dark urine is an indicator of dehydration while clear and frequent urination is a sign that water consumption is on track, Krieger says.

### DAY 10: BALANCE YOUR LOAD

Purses, briefcases and workout bags keep getting bigger—and we keep managing to fill them. Alternate the side on which you tote your bag to maintain good posture and protect lower back muscles.

**DAY 11:**  
DAYDREAM

Long periods of intense focus can fatigue your brain, says Eric Klinger, Ph.D., a psychology professor at the University of Minnesota, Morris. That's why he advocates letting your mind wander. "Daydreaming makes us more relaxed, helps us organize our lives, increases self-understanding and helps us solve problems," Klinger says.

**DAY 12:**  
ESTABLISH A  
BEDTIME

Adults need eight hours of shut-eye for optimal health, according to the National Sleep Foundation. To ensure you're getting the right amount, establish specific bedtime and wake-up times—and stick to them.



**DAY 13:**  
DRINK A GLASS  
(OR TWO) OF  
LOW-FAT MILK

Milk helps build strong bones, and may make you stronger. A recent study showed that elderly people with high levels of vitamin D in their blood were significantly stronger during grip-strength tests than those with deficient amounts.

**DAY 14:**  
WARM UP YOUR  
TOOTSIES

If you're having trouble sleeping, slip on some socks. A study published in *Physiology & Behavior* found that wearing socks to bed better regulates body temperature, making it easier to slumber.



**DAY 15:**  
WATCH A  
FUNNY MOVIE

Whatever your brand of humor, laughing is good for your mind, heart, body (it burns calories!) and even your relationships.

**DAY 16:**  
READ TO RELAX

Having trouble sleeping? Try reading to distract you from your worries, allowing you to rest easier.

**DAY 17:**  
JUST ADD BEANS

To cut some fat from recipes for brownies and dropped cookies that call for butter or shortening, add pureed cooked cannellini bean as a substitute. The *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* says they can replace up to half the called for fat without sacrificing taste.

**DAY 18:**  
READ FOOD  
LABELS WITH A  
CRITICAL EYE

The package may say "whole grain," but that doesn't mean it's good for you. Learn to scrutinize the label by visiting the U.S. Food and Drug Administration website, [cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/foodlab.html](http://cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/foodlab.html).

**DAY 19:**  
PLAY MUSIC—  
STRATEGICALLY

If you're feeling stressed, listen to classical music, which can help ease anxiety. Also, listening to soft music during a meal may help you to chew slowly and eat less, while exercising to up-tempo tunes can help you work out longer and with more intensity.

**DAY 20:**  
CHEW SUGAR-  
FREE GUM  
BETWEEN MEALS

Chomping on gum freshens your breath, but it also can satisfy your sweet tooth and can help you eat less.

**DAY 21:**  
ROLL UP YOUR  
SLEEVE

You can save as many as three lives by donating a single pint of blood. Plus, a study by Dartmouth Medical School shows that having your blood drawn twice a year might lower risk of heart disease because it removes excess iron from the body.

**DAY 22:**  
FLEX YOUR BRAIN

The key to keeping your brain fit is to keep it stimulated. At [happyneuron.com](http://happyneuron.com), you'll find an array of online activities scientifically developed to make your brain sweat.

**DAY 23:**  
MUNCH ON  
WALNUTS

A study found that foods such as walnuts that are high in omega-3 fatty acids can help maintain bone health. Allergic to nuts? Visit the National Osteoporosis Foundation's website ([nof.org](http://nof.org)) for other ideas on preventing bone loss.

**DAY 24:**  
LEARN HOW TO  
COUNT FATS

The American Heart Association makes it easy to figure out how much fat you need in your diet. The My Fats Translator ([myfats.translator.com](http://myfats.translator.com)) calculates your daily limits and gives tips for staying within your range.

**DAY 25:**  
EAT A BOWL  
OF CEREAL

Starting your day with a bowl of high-fiber cereal—at least 6 grams per serving—can help reduce your risk of heart disease, stroke, diabetes and even intestinal polyps and colon cancer.

**DAY 26:**  
SAY "NO,  
THANKS"

One of life's biggest stressors is our inability to say no. Today, when you're asked to do something optional, practice "thanking the person for the opportunity and then turning him or her down," Krieger advises.

**DAY 27:**  
CLEAN YOUR  
CAR WITH  
ANTIBACTERIAL  
WIPES

Dashboards, seats, cup holders and steering wheels are covered with germs. And this breeding ground magnifies as temperatures climb.



**DAY 28:**  
TAKE A HIKE

Walking is good for you, but hiking makes exercise feel more like an adventure. Visit [trails.com](http://trails.com) to find hiking trails in your area.

**DAY 29:**  
GET A MASSAGE

More than an indulgence, massage eases stress as well as pain. Research also suggests that massage boosts the immune systems in women with breast cancer.

**DAY 30:**  
MAKE A  
GROCERY LIST

A study in the *Journal of Consumer Research* found that people who took this step before shopping made the healthiest food choices and avoided impulse buys. ➔

## Be a Quitter

If you're a smoker, the most important thing you can do for your health is quit smoking. Yes, it's hard. But it can save your life.

Here are some tips from the U.S. Surgeon General to get you through that critical first week:

- + Drink plenty of liquids, especially water. Try herbal teas and fruit juices, but limit coffee, soft drinks and alcohol, which can increase your urge to smoke.
- + When the urge hits, distract yourself. Do something else immediately, whether it's striking up a conversation or going for a walk.
- + Reduce your stress. From deep breathing to massage, we offer several tips in our 30-day plan.
- + Talk to someone. Lean on family and friends. Or call the American Cancer Society at 800-ACS-2345 (227-2345) to speak with someone who can help.

# AT THE MORRISON HOUSE

BY JOHN BERGGREN

Patients, families find first-class comfort when it's needed most

Having your loved ones nearby when you're ill can be just as therapeutic as any of today's modern advancements in medicine. That's why the Salina Regional Health Foundation operates the Rebecca A. Morrison House for caregivers of patients who come from outside Salina and need a place to stay.

When Melody and Shane Taylor of Norwich came to Salina in August 2007 for the planned Caesarean birth of their daughter, Zoie, they expected only to be in the hospital for the typical two- or three-day stay. But a hemorrhage after the procedure required additional surgeries and extended Melody's stay to a week. Zoie was perfectly healthy and was released from the hospital

after three days, but Shane, a first-time dad, wanted to stay closeby.

"When the staff told us about the Morrison House, we were ecstatic Salina had such a service," Shane recalls. "Melody was very sick and scared and we didn't want to venture too far away. The staff at the Morrison House told us Zoie was the youngest guest they'd ever had."

Shane and Zoie stayed by Melody's side most of the day but would retire to the Morrison House to rest late in the evenings.

"It was so convenient to have a place to go and get away for a short time," Shane notes, "but still be close by so that if Melody needed us, we could be back with her in just a few short minutes."

And, being a first-time dad in charge of diapers and feedings didn't end up being as intimidating as Shane would have guessed.

"Most of it just came naturally and wasn't thought about," Shane says. "That was just what had to be done with the situation we were in. But the support of the staff at the hospital and the hospitality we received at the Morrison House made it easier. I managed OK."







## ROOMS ARE OFTEN AVAILABLE

While there is no charge for guests at the Morrison House, donations are encouraged. The Morrison House is funded entirely through guest donations, community support and the Adopt-A-Day program in which individuals and groups sponsor a day at the Morrison House with a \$100 contribution.

The house is open to loved ones of patients at Salina Regional Health Center, and Salina Surgical Hospital and patients receiving treatment at the Tammy Walker Cancer Center. There are 14 rooms available, which are assigned on a first-come, first-served basis. Nine of the rooms are handicapped-accessible with their own private bathrooms.

“In 2007 we averaged about 60 percent occupancy and there were only a few times where we were unable to accommodate guests who needed a place to stay,” says Linda Tysen, manager of the Morrison House.

Aside from private rooms in a secure environment, guests are provided with linens, toiletries, laundry soap, breakfast foods and fully

equipped kitchens if they would like to purchase food to prepare full meals. Two dining and living areas are favorite gathering places for guests to watch TV and enjoy a cup of coffee or a cookie from the always-stocked cookie jars.

## KEY FEATURES AT MORRISON HOUSE

- ▶ Caring staff on site 24 hours a day
- ▶ Walking distance to hospital
- ▶ Security escorts available 24 hours a day
- ▶ Clean, comfortable, private rooms
- ▶ Laundry facilities
- ▶ Fully equipped kitchens
- ▶ Telephone in each guestroom
- ▶ Computer and wireless Internet access
- ▶ Convenient parking
- ▶ Exercise room
- ▶ Handicapped-accessible

## CANCER PATIENTS BENEFIT FROM SERVICES AS WELL

Two rooms at the Morrison House were recently designated for cancer patients receiving care at the Tammy Walker Cancer Center. Often, cancer patients must receive daily treatments, which can lead to a tremendous amount of travel for those living outside of Salina.

Janis Buckler, of Delphos, was diagnosed with breast cancer in October 2007 and underwent a mastectomy, which was followed by daily radiation treatment at the cancer center. She checked in to the Morrison House on Dec. 10, the day before the ice storm struck north central Kansas.

“The driving back and forth each day would have been difficult in the first place, but with the big ice storm and all the snow we ended up having in December, all of that travel would have been impossible,” Buckler says. “I didn’t miss a treatment and it was just so convenient only staying a block away from the cancer center.

“They’ve really made me feel at home here,” Buckler adds. “I’ve met a lot of people and have visited with some people I’ve known from the towns right around where I live. It really helps you keep a positive attitude to have all the companionship with others.”

The baby who helped ring in the New Year

# BEST LAID PLANS

BY BETH VINSON

Lindsay Martin had the birth of her second child all planned. She was determined to have the child naturally—no epidural for her. She also made it perfectly clear that, for the sake of convenience, the baby would be induced. However, she did not want Pitocin, a drug commonly used to start contractions.

That was the plan, and it was followed to the letter. Lindsay only needed Cytotec to soften the cervix and get things moving along on her own.

But there was one small detail left out of Lindsay and husband Matthew's birthing plan when she delivered Jan. 2. It never mentioned that they would be the proud parents of the 2008 New Year's Baby.

"I never even imagined that we would deliver the New Year's baby since we delivered on the 2nd. I figured the Salina hospital would have had a couple babies born ahead of us by the time we delivered on the 2nd," Lindsay says. "And not only was he the New Year's baby, he was the only boy in the nursery, too."

Sheamus Dean Martin was born on Jan. 2 at 6:56 a.m. weighing in at 7 pounds, 15 ounces. He was 20 inches long. Sheamus has one brother, Killian, who is 3 years old. The family lives in Abilene; however they chose to deliver at Salina Regional Health Center because Lindsay's OB/GYN, Dr. Natalie Morgan, practices in Salina.

Matthew said that the second time around was much easier since the couple had everything all set: "She was induced this time because it allowed us to make arrangements for our other son, Killian."

Kari Robinson, R.N., was Lindsay's nurse during delivery and also during the following two days. "She was awesome. She was so helpful and just a great nurse," Lindsay says.

Robinson was equally impressed with Lindsay. "She was a very determined patient who wanted

the birth to go just as planned. She wanted to do it her way. I respect that," Robinson says.

In honor of the New Year's baby, Salina Regional Health Center gave Lindsay and Matthew several gift packages filled with the necessities to take care of their new little one.

Matthew and Lindsay are back home in Abilene enjoying their sons. When asked about the baby, Lindsay says he just sleeps a lot: "I guess being the New Year's Baby and being surrounded by a bunch of girls in a nursery can be rather exhausting." ❏




Matthew and Lindsay Martin welcome the 2008 New Year's Baby for Salina Regional Health Center.

# SERVING PATIENT NEEDS

## Fast-track hours speed non-emergency care

BY JOHN BERGGREN



The doctor's office is closed and your nagging cold and fever have become overbearing. What do you do? Many go to the emergency department and, on days when doctors' offices are closed, the waiting room may host dozens of people in similar predicaments.

Recognizing this, Salina Regional Health Center began a trial of fast tracking non-emergency patients last year on Sundays from 2 to 10 p.m.—the busiest hours of the week in the Emergency Department.

An additional physician and staff were added during these peak times to focus solely on care for non-emergency patients. Patients with colds, headaches, toothaches, sprains, sports injuries and minor cuts were being seen with half the wait.

"We had patients comment that they'd never been in and out of the ER in under an hour," says Pat Rackley, R.N., nursing director for the department. "We saw patient satisfaction surveys come back with 100 percent satisfaction, and that's rarely ever seen on any survey. With those results, there was no doubt about the project's success and after that it was here to stay."

All patients are triaged according to their health status upon arrival to the Emergency Department. Patients who are in the most serious condition, such as those with heart attack symptoms or respiratory distress, are seen first. Those with lesser ailments are seen thereafter.

### EXPANDING THE HOURS

Fast-track hours were also added the day after Thanksgiving and are being considered for implementation on other peak business hours through the week and on long holiday weekends.

"It's a great service to the community and it's one of many new initiatives we're implementing to increase patient satisfaction in the Emergency Department," says Harry Kleiner, D.O., co-medical director

for the department. "The physical layout of the new Emergency Department and added space is helping us further streamline our services." ➔

### DID YOU KNOW?

Fast-track hours are available from 2 to 10 p.m. Sundays and during other peak times on long holiday weekends.



*Thomas Heidewald, M.D., co-medical director of Salina Regional's Emergency Department, sees a patient during fast-track hours.*

## ER FIRST SERVICE TO OPEN IN PATIENT TOWER

Anyone who has driven by Salina Regional Health Center in the past year has noticed the progress of the new six-story patient tower construction project. But the opening of the Emergency Department will be the first exposure patients gain inside the new red brick walls.

"It's fun to be the first service open to the public in the new tower, but really there are so many new features to come with this project that people will appreciate that this is only a taste of what's to come," says Pat Rackley, R.N., nursing director of Salina Regional's Emergency Department. The patient tower, which will provide private rooms to all patients, should be fully occupied by the end of the year.

The new Emergency Department is twice the size of the old one, which dated back to the days prior to hospital consolidation, when Salina had two hospitals with emergency departments. It incorporates some of the latest technology, including four trauma-cardiac event suites; advanced high-intensity lighting in each patient room; independent air handling that can isolate the department during a biohazardous event; and televisions in non-emergency patient rooms. The department still maintains quick connectivity to Salina Regional's surgery and cardiac cath lab services when needed.

A heliport was added above the Emergency Department on the sixth floor of the patient tower, which can be reached by express elevators.

Access to the department will still be off of Eighth Street, only now the drive is slightly south of the former entry point. Clients can follow the EMERGENCY signs to the designated parking as directed.



Salina Regional offers advanced treatments for vertebral compression fractures

# STAND UP FOR HEALTH

BY JOHN BERGGREN



A healthy vertebra will not break unless subjected to a major traumatic injury. But a vertebra weakened by osteoporosis or cancer can suffer a compression fracture with movements as subtle as stepping out of a bathtub or sneezing. Sometimes the exact event can't even be traced.

Osteoporosis is the primary cause for vertebral compression fractures. The National Osteoporosis Foundation estimates that 10 million in the United States suffer from the disease. Of these, 80 percent are women and odds are one in every four postmenopausal women will suffer from a vertebral compression fracture.

Salina Regional Health Center offers two highly effective, minimally invasive treatment options for fractures of this nature. Vertebroplasty has been available for years and is most widely utilized, while kyphoplasty is a newer option that has potential to restore greater vertebral height. Both options are about 85 percent effective in relieving back pain almost immediately.

### BACK PAIN 'UNBEARABLE'

Stella Krannawitter, 82, of Hoxie, was diagnosed with osteoporosis years ago. Though macular degeneration has taken most of her vision, she still enjoys baking, especially for friends and neighbors when they've come upon hard times.

"I just bake things I remember," Krannawitter says, "because I can't see well enough to read a recipe."

Her loss of vision also impairs her balance from time to time, and late last year that led to a tumble. Krannawitter suffered bruised ribs and excruciating back pain.

"The ribs made it hurt to breathe, but the back pain was what was so unbearable," Krannawitter says. "They told me I had two options: Lie in bed for six to eight weeks to see if my spine would heal on its own or try vertebroplasty."

Krannawitter sought relief sooner rather than later and was taken to Salina Regional's state-of-the-art radiology department. There she underwent vertebroplasty, and the pain subsided almost immediately.

"I was awake for the whole procedure and I felt relief almost right away," Krannawitter notes. "My kids were there when I came out and they said they could see just by the look on my face that I felt better."

### HIGH-TECH IMAGING GUIDES PROCEDURE

Vertebroplasty is a short 15- to 30-minute outpatient procedure. Patients are given a local anesthetic and an IV sedative. Then, with real-time fluoroscopic imaging as a guide, a needle is inserted into the crushed or fractured vertebra. An acrylic bone cement is then slowly injected into the fracture and the cement then hardens to stabilize the bone.

"There are very few complications associated with this procedure," says Salina radiologist William Garlow, M.D. "We use high-resolution imaging as our guide into the fracture and can see when the cement has filled the area we're working to stabilize."

### KYPHOPLASTY ATTEMPTS TO RESTORE ADDITIONAL HEIGHT

Kyphoplasty is similar to vertebroplasty in that a cement is injected into the fractured vertebra, but a larger needle is used that allows a balloon to be placed into the fracture. The balloon is inflated inside the fracture to create a larger cavity to hold the cement, which also assists in restoring height and proper alignment to the compressed vertebra.

The procedure is done under general anesthesia in a surgical setting and requires that a small incision be placed on each side of the affected vertebra. X-ray imaging is used to help guide balloon placement and realignment of the spine.



*Melissa Hulse, Pharm.D., received kyphoplasty to fix a vertebral compression fracture caused by metastatic breast cancer, which had spread to her spine. The procedure allowed her to restore function and receive good pain relief so she could focus on cancer treatment and daily living.*

"It's similar to vertebroplasty, but may be a better option when there are multiple fractures or there is more deformity in the vertebral body, which needs realignment," says Salina orthopedic surgeon Gary Harbin, M.D. Patients usually stay in the hospital overnight following kyphoplasty.

### A BATTLE AGAINST CANCER

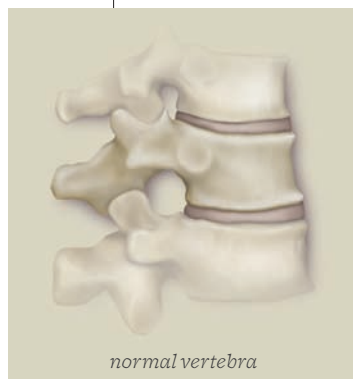
Thirty-two-year-old Melissa Hulse, Pharm.D., a pharmacist at Salina Regional, simply thought she had wrenched her back while opening a window. She received physical therapy and seemed to be getting stronger, but all of a sudden the pain got much worse again and started radiating to the front of her abdomen.

Tests eventually revealed that Hulse had suffered a vertebral compression fracture as a result of metastatic breast cancer, which had spread to her spine. Hulse's back pain had left her so weak that she couldn't pick up her 10-month old daughter.

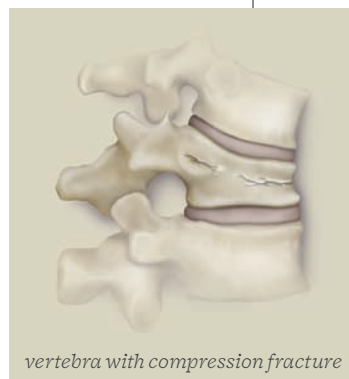
"I felt like I needed to pursue kyphoplasty for the pain control and to restore whatever amount of function I could," Hulse recalls. "Probably a month after the procedure, I felt like I could even pick up my 3-year-old."

The pain control has helped Hulse focus on her cancer treatment.

"It's been a huge adjustment for everyone at our house," Hulse says. "But I've shown response to the treatment and several of the tumors have shrunk dramatically." ◀



normal vertebra



vertebra with compression fracture

# Santa's Helpers Make Christmas Bright



Mike Mattek helps Heartland representatives load up the van for Christmas package delivery to families in need.

Ah, Christmas. That special time of year filled with twinkling lights, get-togethers with friends and presents under the tree. For all too many families, however, Christmas is a sad reminder that there is not enough money to pay the bills, let alone buy presents.

For many years Salina Regional Health Center employees have teamed up to be “Santa’s Helpers” for families in need. Last year, Salina Regional Health Center provided Christmas presents for 35 families, which included 78 children.

“The children were so excited. They stood still for a little while just taking it all in as we arrived with the presents to put under their tree. Their eyes were huge. Then they started jumping up and down,” says Angie Nickel, administrative assistant who along with two other co-workers helped deliver the gifts their department donated. “The children’s mother was so thankful. She started crying and we all ended up crying, too.”

Yvonne Davis, marketing secretary for Salina Regional, coordinates the Santa’s Helpers program for the health center. “It’s a lot of work coordinating all the different departments with different families, but then when I see the hundreds of wrapped packages in one room ready for pickup, it makes it all worthwhile.”

Davis says that the Heartland Program coordinators are appreciative of Salina Regional employees’ generosity. “One of the consultants asked me where we get the funds to purchase the presents for the families. When I told her that the employees do this on their own out of their own pockets, she was floored.”

In addition to the Heartland families, Salina Regional employees also adopt employee families who are experiencing hard times. “A lot of families are really trying to make it and just don’t have the extra for Christmas. It’s really nice to see firsthand how caring our employees are,” Davis says.

Heartland gave the health center employees the option of delivering the gifts straight to their adopted families this year, rather than being delivered by Heartland employees. Fifty percent of the departments chose to deliver the gifts themselves.

“It just means so much more when you can see their sweet faces firsthand and know how happy we’ve made them. It’s just so much more personal,” Nickel says. —By *Beth Vinson*





Congressman Jerry Moran and Learn and Grow Depot Director Jill Nusbaum cut the ribbon during the child care center's open house.

# New Facilities Serve Young and Old

Memorial Health System in Abilene held a public open house and ribbon-cutting ceremonies in November for two new facilities.

The Learn and Grow Depot is the health system's new child care facility licensed to care for 100 children ages 6 weeks to 12 years. More than two years ago, the project was evaluated to offer services strictly to employees, but surveys showed a communitywide need.

Village Manor, the health system's long-term care facility, also completed a \$2.5 million renovation that was showcased during the event. The facility was remodeled to transition the care center into neighborhoods that offer more resident-centered care.

## NEW CONSTRUCTION UNDER WAY IN ELLSWORTH

Ellsworth County Medical Center is in the midst of a six-month remodeling project, which should be complete this summer. The hospital's administration, financial services, community outreach and human resources departments have been moved to the newly acquired Century Manufacturing building directly north of the hospital.

Space vacated with this initial move is being remodeled to enhance an outpatient services area, which will improve access to specialty clinics and endoscopy services.

The hospital's main entrance has shifted to the east entrance of the main hospital complex for the duration of the project. Those needing access will enter and exit through the east doors and follow signage to the hospital lobby area.

Patients and family members who have questions should call the hospital by dialing **785-472-3111** for more information.



Richard Bergling

## Herington welcomes new CEO

Richard Bergling began duties as the new chief executive officer at Herington Municipal Hospital in January.

Bergling brings nearly 20 years of healthcare experience to the position, including 15 years' experience in hospital administration. Bergling had been CEO at Ness County Hospital for the last three years. His wife, Susan, also accepted a position at the hospital as a surgical nurse. Bergling said there was reason for optimism in Herington Municipal Hospital's future.

"Fort Riley has a bunch of people moving into the area and there should be a great opportunity for growth in the community," he said. "We're looking to recruit another physician or two and try to improve the hospital's financial outlook."



# What does “the good life” mean to women?

Lorraine Weis Meyer  
Madison Meyer  
Wilma Weis

## Specialized healthcare for women of all ages.

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