



the *Connection*

An online publication of CUMC

February 17, 2010

Creighton University Medical Center is proud to present *The Connection*. We hope you'll enjoy the new format, layout and detailed stories. *The Connection* will now be delivered in a bi-weekly format so that we can provide better information.

Enjoy!

Spotlight

No Two Hearts Are Alike; Surgery Shouldn't Be Either

"Every heart is distinct and special. Ali Khoynezhad, M.D., can remember the details of a person's heart before he remembers the patient's face. He says each heart has specific attributes that make it unique.

People First: Employee of the Month

Congratulations to Nhung Nguyen, Creighton University Medical Center's January Employee of the Month.

Leader's Voice: Nursing Mission

A message from CNO Mary Anne McCrea

Patient Focus: CUMC Pilot Project Focuses on Improving Care Transition for Patients

Creighton University Medical Center launched a pilot project in September 2009, which focused on improving the care transition between our hospital and other healthcare settings.

News & Announcements

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- CUMC Celebrates *Go Red for Women Day*
- Heart Healthy Tips from the Creighton Cardiac Center
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No Two Hearts Are Alike; Surgery Shouldn't Be Either

"Every heart is distinct and special. There is no heart that looks like any other."



Ali Khoynzhad, M.D., can remember the details of a person's heart before he remembers the patient's face. He says each heart has specific attributes that make it unique. When meeting with a patient, he remembers the shape of a patient's heart, blockage that may have been there, where he made repairs, and even fatty tissue surrounding the heart surface.

"That underscores the importance of offering different versions of surgery for different hearts," said Dr. Khoynzhad from his office, on the third floor of Creighton University's Surgery Department.

Dr. Khoynzhad thinks it is important for a surgeon to address individual patient needs. Some patients are better served with minimally invasive approaches, while others need a more extensive surgical procedure.

Besides cardiovascular surgery, Dr. Khoynzhad is also specialized in endovascular surgery. Only one percent of heart surgeons are trained in endovascular procedures like Dr. Khoynzhad. His specialty procedures range from beating heart bypass surgery, minimal-access valve operations and complex aortic surgery, to minimally invasive operations and endovascular repair of the aorta and peripheral vessels.

"Being trained in both specialties, allows me to tailor the operation to an individual patient and thereby reduce complications, hospital stay and recovery time," explained Dr. Khoynzhad. "Cardiac and endovascular surgery were spearheaded through technological advances. Practitioners in these fields have to be committed to lifelong acquisition of novel and high-tech approaches to improve patient outcomes."

That's why Dr. Khoynzhad also chose to work in academic medicine, because it provided him the opportunity to be in a learning environment with research and technology at his fingertips. A Creighton University faculty member for more than two years, Dr. Khoynzhad decided to join Creighton Medical Associates because of Creighton University



Medical Center's endovascular suite and translational research opportunities. He said, "The endovascular suite offers the ability to perform endovascular procedures and open procedures in the same setting."

Right now, his newest project is an innovative procedure, using a minimally invasive approach to repair one of the most common valve diseases, aortic valve stenosis. Dr. Khoynezhad says he hopes to bring the new procedure to the hospital in 2011.

Early medical training in Germany and the United States under leading experts in the field of cardiovascular surgery led Dr. Khoynezhad to pursue a career as a cardiovascular and endovascular surgeon. He said the ability to change someone's life inspired him. "I always like how someone could heal so dramatically. You can see your impact on a patient's outcome in a matter of days."

As an associate professor of surgery and biomedical science, Dr. Khoynezhad embraces his role as a teacher to medical students and residents. He enjoys watching students learn and advance. "You see them grow in knowledge and surgical dexterity. I found myself proud of my residents like a father is proud of his child."

More about Dr. Khoynezhad:



Dr. Khoynezhad is board certified by both the American Board of Surgery and American Board of Thoracic Surgery. He completed training at North Shore University-Long Island Jewish Medical Center, and Cardiovascular and Thoracic Surgery residency at Montefiore Medical Center, Albert Einstein College of Medicine, both in New York. Dr. Khoynezhad is fellowship trained in Endovascular and Vascular surgery from Harbor-UCLA Medical Center in Los Angeles and Cardiac Surgery from Charite University Medical Center, Berlin, Germany.

Areas of Expertise

Cardiovascular Surgeries

- Coronary artery bypass including off-pump and small incision operations
- Valve repair and replacement (including small-incision operations)
- Maze procedure for atrial fibrillation
- Complex aortic surgery
- Minimally-invasive operations (partial or no sternotomy)

Endovascular Surgeries

- Endovascular repair of abdominal and thoracic aorta
- Renal and carotid artery stenting
- Iliac and femoral artery stenting
- Vena Cava filter placement and endovascular thrombectomy

People First: Employee of the Month



You may have seen her spending her lunch breaks fundraising for the American Heart Association outside the cafeteria or perhaps participating in the Employee Program Committee. One thing is for sure, if you see Nhung Nguyen, she has a smile on her face.

Nhung has worked at Creighton University Medical Center for 14 years. As a member of CUMC's fiscal services team, Nhung plays part in the monthly hospital close process. She oversees labor reports, files sales tax returns and assists departments with financial questions.

Nhung projects a positive image for CUMC. She is fun, personable, dedicated, efficient, versatile and skilled in her work. She is known for going the extra mile for CUMC employees who come to the fiscal department looking for help, even for issues outside of her job functions.

"Frequently employees will come to the Fiscal Department in search of payroll assistance after Payroll closed and the staff gone for the day. Nhung will assist the employee and do her best to resolve their problems so they don't have to return a second time," said Mark Lust, who nominated Nhung for the award.

Nhung's co-workers appreciate her hard work and dedication. But most off all they say she brings something special to Fiscal Services.

"Sadly, many accounting departments are stereotyped as bland and boring, but thanks to Nhung's sparkling personality that is not likely to happen at CUMC. She is CUMC through and through, and she is a truly wonderful co-worker," said Mark Lust.



For Nhung, it's second nature. "Fiscal Services employees are my second family and we have great support for one another," says Nhung.

Nhung is a member of the CUMC Service League board, American Heart Association fundraising committee and the Employee Programs committee. She is an active member in the Omaha's Vietnamese community and is dedicated to her family.

Leader's Voice: Nursing Mission

A message from CNO Mary Anne McCrea.



I recently celebrated my one year anniversary at Creighton University Medical Center. It has been a year of learning, relationship building and development of intense pride for being a part of CUMC nursing services. We implemented our Versant RN Residency program which has given many new nurses the opportunity to successfully transition into their nursing careers. We have improved our quality nurse sensitive outcome indicators from 83% to 96% compliance. Intense work was done to reduce our Hospital Acquired Infection rates during the year. Our Physician and Patient Satisfaction with nursing service increased from 97% to 107% of target. Additionally nursing vacancies and turnover were reduced significantly.

As the hospital refocused on building a stronger relationship with the University and our community, our nursing leaders wanted to emphasize the important role nurses play in our hospital's success. In November 2009, our nurse leaders put our heads together to develop a nursing mission.

Many great organizations use mission statements to provide direction for the future or to outline a set of goals for employees to follow. Our mission was developed around quality and leadership based on initiatives that we felt can make Creighton University Medical Center a nationally recognized leader in quality patient care.

Our goals include a strong presence of our nursing leadership, national recognition for our quality patient care and for CUMC nurses to become innovative leaders in quality patient care outcomes.

From these goals we created our mission:

"Creighton University Medical Center nurses will achieve quality patient outcomes; demonstrate a local presence and national influence on the profession of nursing."

Over the past year I have witnessed amazing stories of patient care, passionate nursing care, strong professional and personal relationships and I look forward to working with you to create our future.

CREIGHTON UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER
NURSING

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demonstrate a local presence and national influence on the profession of nursing*

Patient Focus: CUMC Pilot Project Focuses on Improving Care Transition for Patients



Creighton University Medical Center launched a pilot project in September 2009 focused on improving the care transition between our hospital and other healthcare settings. The pilot was implemented first on Unit 4600, specifically for the purpose of improving the care transition of heart failure patients to the next level of care.

“Heart failure patients tend to be our highest population of readmissions, and we needed to create a smoother transition for them,” said Dianne Hayko, Director of Clinical Informatics and

Process Improvement.

The project is part of a larger movement in the Omaha area to enhance quality patient care. Every year approximately 19,000 Medicare recipients are admitted to hospitals in Douglas and Sarpy Counties. Of those patients, about 17% are rehospitalized within 30 days.

Creighton University Medical Center created a CareTrek team to assess our current processes and to improve the care transition plans for the future. The CareTrek team chose a transition model called Project RED (Re-Engineered Discharge).



Project RED emphasizes the patient transition from the hospital to a skilled nursing facility, nursing home or home health care.

The project emphasizes the patient transition from the hospital to a skilled nursing facility, nursing home or home health care. Nurses set up follow-up appointments and work closely with patients to make sure they know where to go for follow up appointments. Nurses also spent time with their patients, going over prescription information and providing legible, easy-to-follow prescription instructions. Starting this month, the program will also include a follow-up call from a nurse within 24-48 hours of the patient's discharge.



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So far, the program has been a success. Patients are noticing the extra attention to detail and readmission numbers have been down.

“Patients love it. It has been a transition for the nursing staff, but it is going smoothly,” said Hayko.

The focus of the pilot project has been in 4600, but other units have adopted many of the same protocols for patient discharge. Hayko says all other units will be following these discharge protocols by March 2010.

Project RED provides:

- More comprehensive online discharge instruction with follow-up appointments made for the patient;

- A Clinical Nurse Leader to facilitate a smooth transition to the next level of care.
- A new process to provide timely communication related to discharge instruction and medication reconciliation to the PCP and physicians providing follow-up care within 24 to 48 hours post-discharge.

CUMC CareTrek Team

Cathy Jesus
Jean Morton
Laura Peetz-Erkes
Inglis Camero
Dianne Hayko

To learn more about Project RED visit: <http://www.bu.edu/fammed/projectred>

Cardiac Rehabilitation



Lynn Swassing was 48 years old when she suffered her first heart attack.

“I had a lump in my throat, and I just didn’t feel like myself for two days.”

Lynn says it took her a few days to get to the doctor, because she didn’t have any traditional heart attack symptoms. In December 1986 she learned she had suffered a massive heart attack.

“At that time there was only one other women at Creighton who had had a heart attack.”

For 24 years, Lynn has participated in cardiac rehabilitation. After a setback last August, she started coming to the Creighton Cardiac Center every day for morning workouts monitored by the expert staff.

Cardiac rehabilitation has come a long way since its conception in the 1950s. In the 1930s patients were advised to observe six weeks of bedrest. As clinicians began to learn about the benefits of exercise in heart patients, patients moved to chair exercises and daily walking.

In the 1950s Cardiologist Herman Hellerstein, M.D., researched the affect of dietary controls and exercise in restoring the health of cardiac patients. Since then, cardiac rehabilitation has evolved into a professionally supervised program that provides education, counseling, as well as supervised physical fitness.

During Heart Month, cardiac rehabilitation and its medical professionals and patients are recognized during Cardiac Rehabilitation Week, February 14-20. Cardiac rehabilitation plays a major role in the rehabilitation of heart attack and heart surgery patients, helping to reduce future incidence of heart attacks and heart problems.

For more information on cardiac rehabilitation, [click here](#).

¹ Cardiac Rehabilitation. Author: Vibhuti N Singh, MD, MPH, FACC, FSCAI, Director, Suncoast Cardiovascular Center; Chair, Cardiology Division and Cath Labs, Department of Medicine, Bayfront Medical Center. Updated: Sep 19, 2008

² Herman K. Hellerstein, Cardiologists, Dies at 77. New York Times. August 20, 1993.

³ What is Cardiac Rehabilitation? American Heart Association. January, 8, 2009.

CUMC Celebrates Go Red for Women Day



Creighton University Medical Center employees wore red Friday, February 5, to recognize National *Go Red for Women Day*. The annual event is held to raise awareness about heart disease and emphasize the symptoms women may have that are different from men.



The female cardiologists at the Creighton Cardiac Center wore red in honor of *Go Red for Women Day*.

Heart Health Tips from The Creighton Cardiac Center

Exercise

- Schedule time for exercise. Put it on your calendar like you would any other appointment. Make time to take care of your body if you want it to last.
- Exercise at the same time every day so it becomes a regular part of your lifestyle.
- Help your children develop good physical activity habits at an early age by setting a good example yourself.
- Start making changes today! Begin an exercise program, take the stairs instead of the elevator or park further away from your destination.
- Skip the temptation to call, e-mail or Instant Message your coworkers. Get up and move around your office to get your blood pumping.

Short Term Goals

- Set short-term goals. Recording them in a health journal is a great way to stay motivated. Writing your goals down enables you to visualize what you are working toward and helps you realize when you achieve them.

Eat Healthy



- Healthy eating habits can help you reduce three of the major risk factors for heart attack and stroke: high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol and excess body weight.
- Preserve the nutrients and colors in veggies. Cook then quickly by steaming or stir-frying.
- Eat more whole fruits and vegetables and skip fruit juices, which are packed with sugar and short on fiber.
- Add nuts to your diet by stirring chopped nuts into salads or eating nuts as a snack. The fat in nuts helps lower cholesterol and provides the fiber your body needs. Watch your portions though – keep in mind that one portion of nuts is about the size of your thumb.
- Incorporate at least 2 servings each day of a whole grain product. Choose products which list one of the following whole grains as the FIRST ingredient: whole wheat, whole oats, whole rye, whole corn, brown rice, wild rice, bulgur, whole oats, oatmeal or graham.
- Ban trans fats from your diet. Trans fats increase bad cholesterol and lower good cholesterol levels, so read food labels and try to choose only foods with 0 grams of trans fats.
- Dried fruits make a great heart-healthy snack. They are easy to carry and store, but remember, - 1/4 cup of dried fruits or 2 Tbsp. of raisins equals one fruit serving.
- Try to incorporate at least 2 servings each week of fish rich in the heart healthy omega-fatty acids. These include salmon, herring, lake trout and albacore tuna.
- If you drink cappuccinos or lattes, request that they be made with skim milk to reduce fat and calories by 50-100%!

Lose Weight

- Portion control is the key when trying to lose weight. Use smaller plates to fool your brain into thinking you are eating larger portions.
- The key to weight loss is simple: Consume fewer calories than you burn.
- Cutting out just 500 calories a day can help you lose one pound per week, gradually bringing you closer to a heart healthy weight.

Raise Awareness

- Teach your family the warning signs of heart attack. Every second counts! Call 911 if you or someone around you shows any of these symptoms:
 - Uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes or goes away and comes back.
 - Pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.
 - Shortness of breath along with, or just prior to, chest discomfort.
 - Breaking out in a cold sweat, experiencing sudden nausea or feeling lightheaded

Stop Smoking

- Cigarette smoking is the most preventable cause of premature death in the United States today. Do yourself a favor and quit!
- When you quit tobacco use, the health benefits begin almost immediately. Just 20 minutes after your last cigarette or smokeless tobacco use, blood pressure and pulse rate

drop to normal. Most physical withdraw symptoms disappear after only 1 – 2 weeks.

Know Your Numbers



- Learn your current blood pressure, cholesterol, body mass index or waist circumference, and fasting blood sugar level to help assess your overall heart health.
- Even a small amount of weight loss is beneficial to health. Every pound counts.

Know Your Family History

- Know your family history of heart disease. Family history is one risk factor you cannot alter, so find out if heart disease runs in your family and share this information with your doctor.

Know Your Risks

- People with diabetes are at an increased risk of developing heart disease. It is important for diabetics to control blood sugar levels with diet and exercise or medication.

Manage Stress

- Learn to effectively manage stress. Increased stress levels can lead to poor heart health, so get plenty of sleep, practice deep breathing exercises and avoid overeating or smoking during times of increased stress.

Take Your Medications

- If your doctor has prescribed medications for high blood pressure, high cholesterol or other health problems, it's important that you take these medicines as directed, even if you are feeling fine. Some health problems don't cause you to feel badly until it's too late.

Celebrate with a Checkup

- Let each birthday remind you that it's time for your yearly checkup and a talk with your doctor about how you can reduce your risk for heart disease.

CMA Employee of the Months-Laurie McNeil



The selection criteria to become an Employee of the Month requires that a candidate go above and beyond the duties in their job description. Laurie's nominating party cited many instances wherein Laurie met this criterion. Not only does Laurie project a positive image for Creighton and her department; no matter what is asked of her, she will provide assistance any way she can. For instance, there was a recent request in her division to copy, collate and deliver meeting material in an urgent fashion. Laurie jumped right in and assisted in getting the material together. Then she offered to deliver the package.

There is no task too big or too small for Laurie to manage. For example, she has assisted other employees by moving chairs and computers, helping the employee committee clean up after an event and even crawling under desks to adjust cords. Recently, the elevator was out of order, making it impossible to deliver supplies to upper floors. Laurie made space in her area so the supplies could be stored until the elevator was repaired.

These are just a few examples of how Laurie is always willing to lend a hand and go above and beyond her normal job duties. She makes every attempt to assure our employees are comfortable, content and safe, in addition to her regular job duties.

On behalf of Creighton Medical Associates and the Creighton family as a whole, congratulations to Laurie for being chosen employee of the month!

Your Right to Know

As patient safety and quality care are our top priorities here at Creighton University Medical Center, we want to know any concerns you may have. Those concerns may be shared with your Supervisor, Manager, Director, Patient Safety Officer or any member of the Senior Leadership Team. Your Patient Safety Officer is Laura Peet-Erkes. She can be reached at 449-4833. As a staff member, you also have a right to report any patient safety and quality care concerns to the Joint Commission at 800-994-6610 or complaint@jointcommission.org. Creighton University Medical Center is accredited by the Joint Commission. Our Tenet values and Joint Commission standards prohibit any retaliatory action against you. Remember your concerns are our concerns. We want to know.

For questions, please call or email Cathy Jesus at cathy.jesus@tenethealth.com or 449-5374.

Stay Healthy – Online

Creightonhospital.com is your source for health information. During Heart Month, check out heart healthy recipe tips and blood pressure risk factors.

We are continually updating our website to provide better content for you and our patients.

New to the site:



A pregnancy library for expecting mothers, which includes articles on having a healthy pregnancy as well as links to important information.



Join Senior Partners

Senior Partners goes online! Do you know someone who might be interested in joining our Senior Partners program? The program is for adults 50 years young and older! Look online for all the benefits Senior Partners has to offer. Plus Senior Partners now has a Senior Partners Online Library, full of great tips for aging healthy.

Visit www.creightonhospital.com for news, information and health advice.

USMLE Step 2 Practice Exam Now Available Via Exam Master

Exam Master has added the USMLE Step 2 Practice Exam to its online offerings. You can sit for a full exam or take each block individually as your schedule permits. All blocks include post-exam review and detailed explanations. The USMLE Step 2 Practice Exam features: 8 exam blocks of 44 questions each, for a total of 352 questions - Both Test or Study mode - Correct answers and explanation available in study mode - Detailed score reports. Exam blocks cover the following topics: General Principles, Immunologic Disorders, Diseases of the Blood & Blood-forming Organs, Mental Disorders, Diseases of the Nervous System & Special Senses, Cardiovascular Disorders, Diseases of the Respiratory System, Nutritional & Digestive Disorders, Gynecologic Disorders, Renal, Urinary, & Male Reproductive Systems, Disorders of Pregnancy, Childbirth, & the Puerperium, Disorders of the Skin & Subcutaneous Tissues, Diseases of the Musculoskeletal System & Connective Tissue, and Endocrine & Metabolic Disorders.

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