

HEALTH NEWS *from*

FALL 2019

st. mary's

REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER



Back on the go after back surgery

Thomas Combs-Francis
shares his experience

Also inside:

SCREENING FOR DENSE BREASTS

New technology
comes to St. Mary's

30 YEARS OF REHAB CARE!

Celebrating a
special milestone

Compliments of



St. Mary's
REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER



Preventive care can play a key role in staying healthy, and for many women this includes keeping up with regular screening mammograms. As part of the comprehensive women's health services at St. Mary's Regional Medical Center, we are pleased to now offer an ultrasound system that can support earlier detection for women with

dense breasts who may benefit from supplemental screening. Having access to this technology and other advanced services can enable more proactive care and greater peace of mind. Our team understands that screening and other testing procedures can be stressful, and we're here to support you every step of the way.

St. Mary's staff and providers focus on optimizing the patient experience in all of the services at the hospital. This can be seen in our Rehabilitation Institute, which recently celebrated an amazing 30 years of helping people get back to greater functionality and independence. It can also be found in our advanced surgical services, where specialized procedures like spinal fusion are helping to improve patients' lives.

As medical advances continue, we will continue to work hard to bring innovative technology and treatments to our community so that you can get the high-quality care you need right here, close to home. We know that you have options when it comes to your healthcare, and we thank you for choosing St. Mary's.



Krista Roberts
Chief Executive Officer

IN THIS ISSUE

4 ARE YOU SLEEPING TIGHT?
Five tips to help you wake up more refreshed

5 KEEPING CARE IN THE COMMUNITY
Celebrating 30 years of inpatient rehab

6 "NO FEAR" ABOUT BACK SURGERY
Thomas Combs-Francis tells his story



The St. Mary's Volunteer Program at work: *Learn how you can join!*

It was checkup time in September at St. Mary's ... for car seats! During a special Car Seat Checkup Event organized by the hospital's volunteers, parents learned how to install their child's car seat or booster seat, and when it's time for a change. The volunteers partnered with Safe Kids Oklahoma to offer this free event. Also, car seats were donated on a first-come, first-served basis to support area families in need. *St. Mary's welcomes individuals who are over age 18 to join the Volunteer Program!*

To learn more and apply online, visit stmarysregional.com/join.

NOW AVAILABLE: SPECIALIZED SCREENING FOR DENSE BREASTS



If you're like 40 percent of U.S. women with dense breast tissue, you may need more screening in addition to a mammogram. The Invenia™ ABUS 2.0 is specifically developed for this purpose and is clinically proven to increase cancer detection by 35.7 percent.* St. Mary's is the first facility in Northwest Oklahoma to offer this technology.

Breast density is determined by the radiologist who reads your mammogram and is broken out into four categories: A, B, C and D. Categories C or D are considered dense, which means breasts have more tissue than fat. Having dense breasts may increase the risk of developing cancer 4 to 6 times.** It can also make cancer harder to detect because cancer and breast tissue both appear white on a mammogram. With ABUS ultrasound testing, however, masses appear black against a white background, making them easier to see.

The Invenia ABUS 2.0 is the only ultrasound technology FDA-approved for breast cancer detection in women with dense breast tissue.

The exam involves no radiation because it is an ultrasound test, says St. Mary's Director of Radiology Bob Brice, BS, CNMT, ARRT(N).

Brice notes that earlier in 2019, a national law was passed mandating that the FDA update mammography reporting so that women be notified if their breasts are dense. Here in Oklahoma, this kind of notification has already been in place in accordance with a 2016 state law.

As awareness about breast density grows, ABUS screening empowers patients, Brice says. Knowing that they can have this exam along with their mammogram can provide an important tool for earlier detection and peace of mind. ■

Along with breast health services, St. Mary's Women's Imaging Center offers bone density tests, also known as DEXA scans, that can assess your bone health. Your risk of osteoporosis increases as you get older, and while anyone may be affected, women are more at risk than men. Ask your doctor about your risk of osteoporosis and whether you should be tested.

To make an appointment or to learn more about comprehensive imaging services, including 2D and 3D digital mammography, call 580-249-3770 or visit stmarysregional.com/imaging.

Most insurance companies cover ABUS screening, but it is recommended to check with your insurer about your specific coverage.

*FDA
**pubmed.gov



St. Mary's Regional Medical Center

Five tips for a good night's sleep



Seth Switzer, MD

Evaluate your environment

Remove distractions in your bedroom such as TVs and cell phones. Also, choose an alarm clock with red numbers. "Blue and green lights inhibit the production of melatonin, a hormone that aids in falling asleep," says

family medicine physician Seth Switzer, MD. Also, consider the temperature. Many sleep experts say that a cool room makes for the best sleep.*

Develop a sleep schedule

Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day, even on weekends. Sleeping in on a Saturday doesn't make up for rest lost during the week. It can also make waking up early on Monday more difficult.

Regulate eating, drinking and exercising

Restrict late-night eating to light snacks, since digestion after a large meal can interrupt sleep. Avoid anything containing caffeine such as coffee, cola and chocolate. Caffeine is a stimulant and can take as long as eight hours to wear off. Exercising within three hours of bedtime can also stimulate your system and impair sleep.

Check your medicines

Some medications, including over-the-counter treatments for colds and allergies, can interfere with sleep patterns. Discuss any concerns with your healthcare provider. "Your doctor may also recommend a sleep study, which can detect underlying problems," says Dr. Switzer.

Put light in your life

Your natural (circadian) rhythms have a lot to do with how well you sleep. Doctors recommend exposure to natural sunlight for at least 30 minutes a day. They also say that if you have trouble falling asleep, go outside for an hour of morning sunlight and dim the lights at least an hour before bedtime. ■

*National Sleep Foundation®

The Sleep Disorders Center at St. Mary's provides sleep studies and other services to diagnose and treat sleep disorders such as sleep apnea, insomnia and others. Equipment for a home study is also available.



To learn more, visit stmarysregional.com/sleepwell.

HOW MUCH SLEEP VS. AGE: In collaboration with the National Sleep Foundation®, the American Academy of Sleep Medicine™ and Sleep Research Society®, the CDC recommends the sleep guidelines below.

AGE GROUP		RECOMMENDED HOURS OF SLEEP PER DAY
Newborn	0-3 months	14-17 hours ¹
Infant	4-12 months	12-16 hours per 24 hours (including naps) ²
Toddler	1-2 years	11-14 hours per 24 hours (including naps) ²
Preschool	3-5 years	10-13 hours per 24 hours (including naps) ²
School age	6-12 years	9-12 hours per 24 hours ²
Teen	13-18 years	8-10 hours per 24 hours ²
Adult	18-60 years	7 or more hours per night ³
	61-64 years	7-9 hours ¹
	65 years and older	7-8 hours ¹

¹The National Sleep Foundation; ²American Academy of Sleep Medicine; ³American Academy of Sleep Medicine and Sleep Research Society

Life-changing physical rehabilitation ...

Celebrating 30 years

In the late 1980s, when residents of Enid had to travel outside of the area for inpatient rehabilitation, a doctor in the community had an interesting idea. Why not open a rehab facility at St. Mary's Regional Medical Center, where patients could get skilled inpatient therapy right here close to home?

That doctor is neurologist Joseph Knapik, MD, the medical director of the Rehabilitation Institute at St. Mary's. The inpatient rehab unit he envisioned recently celebrated 30 years of service. "It's nice because we're in a community where everybody knows everybody else," Dr. Knapik says. "We've all had family up here; we all like to see them go home and do well. To see a patient who can be critically ill then go back in the community independent again, that's very satisfying."

The Rehabilitation Institute has grown over the years from a 10-bed unit to a 22-bed facility, with all-private rooms and bathrooms, and a multidisciplinary team of therapists, rehab-certified nurses, dietitians, wound care specialists, social workers and case managers. Patients receive intensive physical, occupational and speech therapy to help restore their independence for conditions ranging from stroke, brain injury and spinal cord disorders to cardiac conditions, respiratory failure and orthopedic injuries.



Dr. Knapik received a special keepsake from hospital staff in honor of the 30th anniversary celebration.

Program Director and speech therapist Brittney Buller, MS, CCC-SLP, says the staff keeps the mood upbeat with activities like yoga and morning stretch, and opportunities to participate in fundraising events that the rehab team sponsors. Since the Rehabilitation Institute opened, it has cared for approximately 14,000 patients. "I just love watching patients get better, go home, and then come back and see us," says Buller. ■

To learn more, visit stmarysregional.com/rehabhere.

Making the grade

Earlier this year, St. Mary's was pleased to share the grades it received for inpatient rehab on a report card from the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF®). St. Mary's well exceeded the average 2018 goal for functional gain, which measures patients' functional improvement during their program. It also received high marks for helping patients return home. "When you have an average 80 percent return to home ... that's what sets us apart," says Buller.



Faith in his **MEDICAL TEAM**

Thomas Combs-Francis looks forward to being active in his retirement, thanks to back surgery from a doctor and hospital he trusts.



Barry Pollard, MD

Like many people, Thomas Combs-Francis' back troubles began later in life. "I had a pain and it was starting to radiate down my left leg," he says. When his doctor advised him to find a neurosurgeon, he knew just who to call. "I've known Dr. Pollard since 1995 when I was working as an ER tech," he says of neurosurgeon Barry Pollard, MD. "He really cares about his patients ... I had no fear of him working on me." >

After meeting with Combs-Francis and looking at the results of his MRI, Dr. Pollard found that he had classic symptoms of lumbar stenosis, which happens when nerves running through the lower back into the legs are compressed. Along with pain, this can cause leg weakness and make it difficult for people to walk even short distances without having to sit down. The MRI results also revealed disc herniation, which happens when the content of one of the discs (or cushions) between the vertebrae pushes out and often times pushes on a nerve. In Thomas' case, this was contributing to weakness in his foot. "His leg and foot weakness was a big part of why he needed surgery," Dr. Pollard says. Being active is important to Combs-Francis, and he didn't want to spend his retirement years "hobbling around."

Less than a week after meeting with Dr. Pollard, he had surgery at St. Mary's, and everything went well. "St. Mary's provides fantastic care," he says. "If I needed anything, they got it for me ... On the floors, the nurses were fantastic."

While he was recuperating, he felt a sudden discomfort on his other side (his right side) and went to see to Dr. Pollard. It turns out that he'd developed a cyst out of one of the

joints in his back related to arthritis. "That was going to require further surgery - fusion of his back - to stabilize his back and keep him from having recurrent pain," Dr. Pollard says. The treatment entailed joining two vertebrae together using rods and screws to hold them in place while they healed. To support this process, he wore a bone stimulator, which uses electrical stimulation to promote bone growth.

Recovery this time was tougher than the first surgery, but he pushed through it with support from his medical team, gradually gaining confidence on the stairs in his home and getting back to his routine. While he no longer does certain things like heavy lifting, he's doing well and staying active. One of his main interests is being a minister at two community churches, which he really enjoys. "When somebody calls you in the middle of the night, they sometimes need you then and there," he says. "You need to be physically able to go see them."

For Combs-Francis, surgery was the right choice to keep up with his active lifestyle. "I counted myself fortunate that I knew a very good surgeon, an outstanding one actually, and that's why I went to get it done." ■

If you have back pain ...

Most of the time back problems can be treated without surgical intervention, but when pain and weakness start to move to the legs, that may be a sign of a more serious problem requiring evaluation from a neurosurgery specialist. An MRI scan may be performed to look inside the spine and see what's wrong. If surgery is needed, patients at St. Mary's can benefit from advanced tools and technology that continue to improve care and outcomes.



For a referral to a neurosurgeon or other specialist, visit stmarysregional.com/find.

First in the State, Third in the Nation Advanced Cardiac Imaging Technology

The Canon® Medical Systems Alphenix™ angiography system was just cleared for use by the Food and Drug Administration in December 2018. St. Mary's is the first hospital in Oklahoma to install this technology.

What does this mean for you?

When you require stent placement in our cardiac catheterization/interventional radiology suite, you have access to enhanced technology with exceptionally sharp images. The process may be safer, faster and more accurate than with traditional technology.

We are dedicated to your health and well-being, which includes offering new technologies for better patient care.



See our services at stmarysregional.com

Individual results may vary.

*Connect
WITH US!*

Find us on     YouTube

English: stmarysregional.com | Español: stmarysregional.com/es
580-233-6100

HEALTH NEWS FROM ST. MARY'S REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

Krista Roberts, FACHE
Chief Executive Officer

David Jamin, FACHE
Chief Financial Officer

Lori A. Boyd
Director of Marketing

Anthony Rodebush, FACHE
Chief Operating Officer

Rachelle Burleson, DNP, APRN-CNS
Chief Nursing Officer

Information in *Health News* comes from a wide range of medical experts. If you have any concerns or questions about specific content that may affect your health, please contact your healthcare provider. Models may be used in photos or illustrations. Any opinions expressed by an author whose article appears in this publication are solely the opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of St. Mary's Regional Medical Center or Universal Health Services, Inc. With limited exceptions, physicians are independent practitioners who are not employees or agents of St. Mary's Regional Medical Center. The hospital shall not be liable for actions or treatments provided by physicians. For language assistance, disability accommodations and the non-discrimination notice, visit our website. ©2019. All rights reserved. Printed in the U.S.A.