

# LiveWell

*With Iowa Health – Des Moines*

Spring 2010

Giving the  
Gift of Life

The Special Needs of  
a Woman's Heart

Generations of Care for  
Iowa's Littlest Ones



**IOWA HEALTH**

DES MOINES

Methodist • Lutheran • Blank



## A Word From Our President and CEO

As we move forward into a new year—and a new decade—what better time is there to focus on your health?

Maybe your resolutions for 2010 included a goal to exercise more often, eat a more healthful diet or improve your health overall. Many women, in particular, take care of their loved ones and friends and put their own health on the backburner.

We're here to help—Iowa Health – Des Moines has the resources you need to put your health first. In this issue of *LiveWell*, you can read about a number of the specialized technologies, expertise and programs we offer to patients at each of our facilities.

On page 3, you can learn about Steven Elg, MD, a new gynecologic oncologist at The Iowa Clinic and John Stoddard Cancer Center who is helping meet the needs of women in central Iowa battling gynecologic cancers. Pages 4 and 5 tell the story of two generations of one Iowa family who were nurtured to good health in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at Blank Children's Hospital.

If your heart or body weight is a concern, learn your risk factors for heart disease—and how to lower your risk—on page 7, and turn to page 8 for an overview of bariatric (weight-loss) offerings at Iowa Health.

We hope this issue of *LiveWell* inspires you to take steps toward better health, and we're here to provide any assistance and encouragement you might need on your journey.

Sincerely,

Eric Crowell, president & CEO

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# A Gold-Medal Performance for Iowa's Kids

She has many titles: Olympic gold medalist, West Des Moines native, former champion of ABC's "Dancing with the Stars." And now Shawn Johnson has another title she's proud to add to her list: philanthropist.

Featured as a celebrity guest on the 10th anniversary edition of "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire," Shawn was presented with the opportunity to win \$50,000 to donate to the charity of her choice. She had to answer a single question correctly to gain the prize and did so with flying colors.

Shawn chose to donate her winnings to Blank Children's Hospital, where she received routine care during her childhood.



(left to right) David Stark, president of Blank Children's Hospital; Julie Pedigo, Child Life specialist; and Shawn Johnson, Olympic gold medalist

**To donate to Blank Children's or another part of Iowa Health – Des Moines, contact the Iowa Health Foundation at (515) 241-6304 or visit [iowahealth.org](http://iowahealth.org) and click "Ways to Give."**

## Cutting-Edge Technology Close to Home

As part of a commitment to excellence in patient care, John Stoddard Cancer Center at Iowa Methodist Medical Center is pleased to offer RapidArc™ radiotherapy.

"RapidArc is the most advanced radiation therapy available for cancer patients," says Robert Goebel, MD, medical director of John Stoddard Radiation Oncology. "By rotating at a continuous 360-degree arc around patients, RapidArc is able to target tumors with greater precision and accuracy while dramatically reducing radiation exposure and treatment time—from 20 minutes to two minutes."

RapidArc causes fewer side effects by sparing normal tissue, and shorter procedure times result in more flexible scheduling options for patients and physicians.

John Stoddard is the first cancer center in Iowa to use RapidArc radiotherapy.

**To learn more about RapidArc or other services at John Stoddard, visit [johnstoddardcancer.org](http://johnstoddardcancer.org).**



# Delivering More than Just Babies

Iowa Health – Des Moines offers personalized deliveries for new families in three locations.

Iowa Health provides an array of services to fit the needs of expectant parents and their newest family member.

“At Iowa Methodist Medical Center, family practice physicians, obstetricians and midwives attend births that range from uncomplicated to very high risk,” says Peggy Black, BSN, RN, NE-BC, manager of Maternity Services and Maternity Support Services at Iowa Health. “Iowa Lutheran Hospital and Methodist West Hospital both provide maternity services for low-risk deliveries, and neonatal nurse practitioners are onsite at Methodist West 24/7.”

## Caring for Families

In order to help prepare families for their new addition, Iowa Health offers a range of classes including:

- Baby Care
- Baby Finance 101
- Breastfeeding
- Childbirth Preparation
- Dads

“Our classes tend to fill up very quickly, so we advise people to call and sign up by the time they are 20 weeks pregnant,” says Black. “Beyond the breastfeeding class, we also provide comprehensive lactation support for our new mothers.”

Lactation consultants are available to provide help and support in the hospital and outpatient services after a baby's birth.

📍 Visit [iowahealth.org/maternity](http://iowahealth.org/maternity) or call (515) 263-BABY (2229) to schedule a tour of one of our maternity centers or to sign up for childbirth education classes.

Iowa Health – Des Moines • [iowahealth.org](http://iowahealth.org)

**Oh, Baby!**  
is coming up in April.  
Be sure to register online at [iowahealth.org/livewell](http://iowahealth.org/livewell).



If your baby needs special attention after birth, Iowa Health – Des Moines can provide the care he or she needs. For information about the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) at Blank Children's Hospital, turn to page 4.

# Welcome, Dr. Elg

When Steven Elg, MD, PhD, gynecologic oncologist at The Iowa Clinic and John Stoddard Cancer Center, was growing up in Salmon, Idaho, he admired the ability of his Boy Scout leader, a family practitioner, to help people by practicing medicine.

Today, Dr. Elg's scout leader would be proud to know his former charge is helping women of central Iowa by providing specialized care for cancers of the female reproductive system.

Dr. Elg received his undergraduate degree from the University of Idaho and enlisted in the Army to help pay for medical school at the University of Washington. Dr. Elg did a fellowship and earned his PhD in pharmacology from the University of Minnesota. He arrived in Iowa in October 2009 after completing his Army service and spending nine years in Chattanooga, Tenn.

## Filling a Niche

“I was attracted to practicing here in part by the shortage of gynecologic oncologists in central Iowa,” says Dr. Elg. “I perform surgeries and treat patients with chemotherapy. For a disease like ovarian cancer, it's been shown that a woman's first surgery is her most important, and women treated by a specialist from the beginning have better outcomes and survival rates.”

Many types of gynecologic cancers can be treated with laparoscopic or minimally invasive robotic surgery, allowing patients shorter recovery times and the possibility of improved quality of life. Dr. Elg also is able to perform single-port (one-incision) surgery through the belly button that leaves minimal scarring.

📍 To find a physician at Iowa Health, call 1-800-IA-Health (1-800-424-3258).

**Steven Elg, MD, PhD,**  
gynecologic oncologist





# Caring for Generations of the Littlest Ones

For Corey and Tonya Lindsey, finding out their baby had health complications was a frightening experience. However, confidence in the experienced nursing staff of Blank Children’s Variety Club Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) helped ease the worries that came with the arrivals of their second and third children.

Four days after the Lindseys’ second child, Maizee, was born on July 24, 2002, it was determined that she had high levels of bilirubin in her blood. If left untreated, elevated bilirubin can cause a number of health complications, including brain damage, hearing loss, physical abnormalities, problems with the muscles that move the eyes or even death.

In an effort to normalize her bilirubin levels, Maizee was transported by ambulance to the Blank Children’s Variety Club NICU, where she underwent phototherapy.

“Physicians and nurses initially thought Maizee would need a blood transfusion,” says Tonya. “I don’t know how to explain what we were feeling—it was unknown territory. From the minute we were admitted, however, the staff gave us all the facts. They weren’t trying to scare us, but they let us know what was happening, what could happen and what they would do if further complications arose.”

## Making an Interesting Discovery

Having been a Blank Children’s Variety Club NICU baby himself, Corey had heard throughout his life of the wonderful nurse who cared for him during his 37-day stay in the unit in 1976. When Corey asked whether or not “Linda Smith” still worked at the NICU, Linda Carter happened to overhear her maiden name.

“She came around the corner and said, ‘I’m Linda Smith,’” says Corey. “When Linda began caring for Maizee, I didn’t worry as much anymore. I knew that she took very good care of me, so I knew that would carry over with my daughter. It significantly eased my stress level.”

## Getting Maizee Home to Stay

Maizee spent six days in the NICU at Blank Children’s under a bili light—a device used to deliver phototherapy treatments. Phototherapy with a bili light exposes an infant’s bare skin to fluorescent light, which helps break



Corey, Maizee and Macson Lindsey with their NICU nurse Linda Carter.

Corey Lindsey at Blank Children’s Variety NICU in 1976

## 1976

Then

When Corey Lindsey was born in 1976, staff at Blank Children’s Hospital’s Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) worked in a large-room open concept. The unit was much smaller and had less technology and equipment.

## 2010

Now

The NICU was one of the first Level III NICUs in the world to provide its patients with all-private rooms. Whereas a Level II NICU provides just stabilization and short-term or follow-up care, at a Level III NICU, physicians and staff make available 24-hour, long-term support and care with access to the most advanced equipment and support services.





**Mary, Macson and Maizee Lindsey**

  
Women delivering at any of Iowa Health's hospitals—*Iowa Methodist Medical Center, Iowa Lutheran Hospital and Methodist West Hospital*—can feel confident knowing that neonatal intensive care services are available nearby at *Blank Children's Hospital*.



bilirubin down into a nontoxic form that can then exit the body.

“My biggest fear was that having Maizee under the bili light so frequently would keep her from wanting to be cuddled,” says Tonya. “Even though her time out of the bili light was limited, we were encouraged to touch and cuddle her as often as we could.”

Maizee was sent home with a bili blanket used for at-home phototherapy treatments. After testing Maizee’s blood daily for about three weeks, physicians determined her liver was mature enough to control the levels of bilirubin in her body on its own. Today, Maizee is a healthy 7 year old who loves being outside, spending time with her friends and dancing.

### Macson’s Arrival

Throughout her third pregnancy, Tonya made more visits to a specialist than she had while pregnant with Maizee. She is Rh-negative and was sensitized during her pregnancy with Maizee, making her pregnancy with Macson higher risk.

Essentially, this means that Macson’s blood did not match Tonya’s, and her body reacted to his blood in the way it would an allergen—it developed antibodies that attacked Macson’s red blood cells, causing him to be anemic at

the time of his birth on March 9, 2009. Macson also had high bilirubin levels, and his lungs weren’t properly developed.

Knowing that complications could stem from Tonya’s Rh factor, physicians prepared to respond quickly.

“As soon as Macson was delivered, the doctor brought me over to the table and walked me step-by-step through what he was doing,” says Corey. “He explained that Macson was having trouble breathing and that he would be given oxygen. At the same time, the doctor prepared the umbilical cord to be used for blood transfusions.”

After receiving oxygen from a mask blowing on his face, Macson began breathing on his own. He did, however, require blood transfusions—first during his eight-day stay in the NICU and then several days later when he again became anemic and was readmitted.

“Macson was much sicker than his sister,” says Linda. “But because of the trust his parents placed in Blank

Children’s and the NICU, I believe it was easier for them to cope.”


Less than a month shy of a year old, Macson, like his sister, is doing very well.

### Outstanding Communication, Outstanding Care

Throughout both experiences with the Blank Children’s NICU, Corey and Tonya were impressed with how physicians and nurses maintained open communication and kept the family informed.

According to Linda, this is just what the staff strives to do.

“We love babies, and the NICU experience presents challenges that working with healthy newborns usually would not,” says Linda. “We are very protective of our patients and their families and are continually looking for new ways to help them succeed.”

 **For more information about our NICU and Maternity Services, please visit [blankchildrens.org](http://blankchildrens.org) or [iowahealth.org/maternity](http://iowahealth.org/maternity) or call (515) 263-BABY (2229).**

- There were approximately 650 admissions to the Blank Children’s Hospital neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) in 2009.
- The staff at the NICU has a combined 1,289 years of experience.



## Award-Winning Excellence

Iowa Methodist Medical Center was one of 428 hospitals that earned a Medal of Honor for Organ Donation from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) in 2009.

“Since the HHS began its national outreach program in 2003, Iowa Methodist has won the Medal of Honor every year,” says Meg Morris, Iowa Donor Network Donation Services coordinator. “2009 was the first year HHS also awarded a Gold Medal to hospitals. We are the only hospital in Iowa to receive a Gold Medal and one of only 30 in the country. It speaks to the generosity of both the hospital and Iowans.”

To be considered for the Gold Medal, a hospital must achieve and sustain the three national goals set by HHS, including maintaining a donation rate of 75 percent or more of eligible donors at the hospital facility.

# The Gift of **A Better Life**

Organ donation is something many people don't give a second thought to, other than to mark their driver's licenses. But the act of organ donation can help someone live a more fulfilling life—or save a life.

“When a person donates an organ, he or she is providing another person with a lifesaving transplant, whether it's a heart for someone with heart disease or a lung for someone with cystic fibrosis,” says Meg Morris, Iowa Donor Network Donation Services coordinator. “It can be a lifesaver for the recipient.”

While organ donation is a complex and emotional decision, Iowa Health – Des Moines works with the Iowa Donor Network to make sure families have all the information they need before making a decision.

“The organ procurement organization [OPO] works with families during a very difficult time so they understand that brain death is a legal declaration

of death,” says Morris. “Before a person can be considered for organ donation, brain death must be declared by two separate physicians.”

### **One Father's Story**

When Michael and Tara Porche's 9-year-old daughter Emily was critically injured in a car accident and later passed away at Blank Children's Hospital, they decided to donate her organs in the hopes that other parents wouldn't have to experience the loss of a child.

“When Emily passed, we knew it was something we wanted to do,” says Michael. “However, it wasn't until after we made the donation that we realized there was such a huge need.

If there was a way Emily could have been saved through organ donation, I would have wanted her to have the same opportunity.”

Through organ donation, Emily went on to help a number of children, including a little boy who had lost his nose.

“We take things like a nose for granted,” says Michael. “Emily was able to help this child have a normal life.”

Many people might have misconceptions about how organ donation works, including after the donation is made.

“It has been nearly two years since Emily passed, and the OPO still helps us,” says Michael. “If we need anything, we know they will be there for us.”



**For more information about organ donation, visit [iowadonornetwork.org](http://iowadonornetwork.org).**



# Caring for A Woman's Heart

## What's Your Risk?

Are you at high risk for developing heart disease? The American Heart Association offers the following checklist of risk factors.

- ♥ body mass index of 25 or higher
- ♥ diabetes
- ♥ diet high in saturated fats and cholesterol
- ♥ excessive alcohol consumption (more than one drink daily for women, two for men)
- ♥ family history of heart disease
- ♥ high blood pressure
- ♥ high cholesterol
- ♥ physical inactivity
- ♥ tobacco use

**Saima Zafar, MD, Iowa Health Cardiology, assists a patient.**

Though heart disease is most often associated with men, it is the leading cause of death in both genders in the United States. The cardiovascular specialists at Iowa Health Cardiology are here to help combat the disease and provide comprehensive cardiac care for those in need.

One in eight women between ages 45 and 64 will develop symptoms of heart disease, according to the National Institutes of Health, and more women older than 65 die from the disease than from all forms of cancer combined.

“While heart disease can develop as early as the teenage years, a woman’s risk of heart disease increases dramatically at midlife when the body stops producing estrogen,” says Saima Zafar, MD, cardiologist at Iowa Health Cardiology. “If women make lifestyle changes, including eating a healthy diet, exercising regularly and quitting smoking, they can greatly reduce their risk of heart attack.”

### Recognizing Heart Attack

Heart attacks are not always accompanied by severe pain and often go unrecognized. In women especially,

heart attack symptoms are often confused with symptoms of other, less severe conditions.

“Intense chest discomfort is the symptom most commonly associated with heart attacks,” says Dr. Zafar. “Women, however, are more likely to experience other symptoms, including shortness of breath, nausea, vomiting, sweating, lightheadedness, fainting and discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck or even the jaw.”

Some heart attack patients may initially believe they are experiencing heartburn, but unlike a heart attack, heartburn generally occurs after eating and most often is experienced as a burning sensation in the middle of the chest.

### Treating the Disease

Patients suspected to be at risk of heart attack can undergo diagnostic

tests such as lipid analysis, stress tests and treadmill tests to assess the severity of their condition and help determine the most appropriate treatment plan.

“If we suspect a blockage and diagnostic tests indicate its presence as well, a variety of treatment options are available,” says Dr. Zafar. “Risk modification and medication are often effective, but should they not produce desired results, cardiac catheterization also is an option.”

Angioplasty and stenting also are available if a blockage places a patient at high risk for heart attack.



**For more information about cardiovascular services at Iowa Health Cardiology, visit [iowahealth.org/cardiology](http://iowahealth.org/cardiology), or call (515) 263-2400.**



This publication in no way seeks to serve as a substitute for professional medical care. Consult your physician before undertaking any form of medical treatment or adopting any exercise program or dietary guidelines. If you would like to be added to our mailing list, please contact us at (515) 241-6302 or visit [iowahealth.org](http://iowahealth.org). To be removed from our mailing list, please call (515) 241-6302.



**Patient Kara Frizzell with Teresa LaMasters, MD**

## When Diet and Exercise Aren't Enough

Across the country, bariatric (weight-loss) surgery has changed thousands of lives for the better. For women, these surgical options offer a wide range of specific health benefits.

From pregnancy complications to an increased risk for cancer, morbid obesity (defined as a body mass index 40 or higher or 35 or higher with other serious health conditions) can pose a tremendous health risk to women. For women facing these conditions, bariatric surgery may be a welcome solution to gain control over their weight and lifestyle.

“Obese women face a wide range of health issues, including heart disease, Type 2 diabetes and sleep disorders,” explains Teresa LaMasters, MD, FACS, bariatric surgeon on staff at Iowa Health – Des Moines. “Bariatric surgery can drastically improve—if not cure—many of these issues and give our patients a new lease on life.”

Bariatric surgery also can increase a woman’s chances to conceive. According to the American Society of Metabolic & Bariatric Surgery, weight-loss surgery can reduce the effects of polycystic ovarian syndrome and resolve many symptoms of menstrual dysfunction, leading to better fertility.

### A Center of Excellence

The Bariatric Surgery Program is committed to the long-term treatment of morbid obesity and its complications through a multidisciplinary approach. Iowa Health offers

comprehensive care for bariatric patients, including pre-surgery educational seminars, nutrition counseling, exercise consultation and a support group, along with surgical options including Roux-en-Y gastric bypass, Lap-Band® gastric banding and laparoscopic vertical sleeve gastrectomy.



Iowa Health – Des Moines' Bariatric Services program has been named an American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery (ASMBS) Bariatric Surgery Center of Excellence®. The ASMBS's Center of Excellence designation recognizes surgical programs with a demonstrated track record of favorable outcomes in bariatric surgery.



**For more information about bariatric services at Iowa Health, visit [iowahealth.org/bariatrics](http://iowahealth.org/bariatrics) or call (515) 241-2250.**