

# LiveWell



**IOWA HEALTH**  
DES MOINES

Methodist • Lutheran • Blank

## Oh, Baby!

Renovations Improve  
Iowa Lutheran Hospital's  
Maternity Center

## Diabetes Management

What You Need to Know

## Overcoming Breast Cancer

Can Genetic Testing Help?

Michelle Sherzan  
Breast Cancer Survivor





## Make Every Visit Count


Going to the doctor can seem like a whirlwind at times, so it's important to maximize the efficiency of your visit. Before you head to your healthcare provider's office, take some time to prepare by keeping the following tips in mind:

**Medications** — Be sure to bring an updated list of all medications you're currently taking. Using a medication card is a good way to do this.

**Take Notes** — Make a list of any concerns or symptoms you may have so you don't forget to tell your healthcare provider.

**Buddy System** — Bring a trusted friend or relative who can listen and ask questions.

**Fear Not** — Don't be afraid to ask questions about any aspect of your treatment or health.

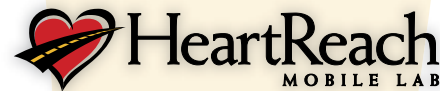
 **For more information about Iowa Health Physicians and Clinics or to request a free medication record card, call My Nurse at (800) IA-HEALTH (424-3258).**




## The Wheels Are in Motion for Your Heart Health

With HeartReach Mobile Lab, our business is your good heart health. An innovative service of Iowa Methodist Medical Center and Iowa Lutheran Hospital, the HeartReach Mobile Lab visits local businesses and organizations within the community and across the state to screen for heart disease and stroke. A variety of screening services are available from \$20 to \$135, including the following:

- blood pressure tests
- body composition tests
- electrocardiogram (EKG) analysis
- heart risk assessments
- lipid and blood sugar tests
- vascular screenings



 **Sign up for your heart screening by calling (866) 935-5432. Visit [www.iowahealth.org/heartreach](http://www.iowahealth.org/heartreach) to download a coupon for a discounted HeartReach screening or to find out when HeartReach Mobile Lab is coming to your neighborhood.**

## A Fighting Shot Against Flu

With flu season right around the corner, it's never too early to protect yourself with a flu vaccine. While you shouldn't get a flu shot if you're allergic to eggs or have had a reaction to a flu shot in the past, the vaccine is recommended for most people, including young children, pregnant women and older adults.

Fortunately for residents of central Iowa, a number of health clinics offer flu shots throughout the community. By getting a flu shot today, you can avoid or reduce the fever, aches and pains associated with the flu virus.

 **To schedule your flu shot, contact your local Iowa Health Physicians and Clinics or the Blank Children's Health Center office.**

# Help Along the Road to Recovery

Whether you're trying to get back to your life after an injury, illness or surgery, the experienced therapists at Iowa Health – Des Moines Outpatient Therapy Services are dedicated to helping you regain functionality and independence.

Iowa Health offers outpatient physical, occupational and speech therapy services at seven sites throughout the Greater Des Moines area, making it easy to find a center close to your home or office. The therapists at Iowa Health have advanced certifications and a strong network with area physicians, which helps in maintaining communication about patients' conditions and progress.

“Our therapists strive for successful outcomes one patient at a time and create a warm, positive environment for patients,” says Denise Behrends, OTR/L, manager of therapy services for Iowa Health, which has more than 25 certification programs for therapists. “Even though the names and faces of therapists vary from location to location, patients can expect the same great level of care and high-quality standards associated with our organization.”



Mike Wall, physical therapist at Iowa Health's East Outpatient Therapy in Altoona, works with Scott Parsons to rehabilitate his shoulder.

**If you need help along the road to recovery, call Outpatient Therapy Services at Iowa Health at (515) 241-4499 to schedule a consultation. Check with your insurance company to see whether you need a physician's referral.**

## Diabetes Management: What You Need to Know

Diabetes affects 20.8 million American children and adults—including approximately 200,000 in Iowa—yet many people do not know the symptoms and risk factors associated with the condition.

Diabetes is a chronic illness in which a person's body does not produce or use insulin properly. Insulin is the hormone used to break down glucose, starches and sugars in foods, and it is essential for the body to function.

This condition can strike with little or no warning, but often there are common symptoms that many people experience, including:

- blurred vision;
- frequent urination;
- extreme hunger or thirst;
- very dry skin;
- sluggishness/tiredness; and/or
- unexplained weight loss or gain.

“Currently there is no cure for diabetes. However, there is treatment that can help individuals maintain healthy lives,” says Sue Freeman,

RN, BSN, CDE, diabetes coordinator and educator for Iowa Health – Des Moines. “Our physicians and nurses at Iowa Health offer the education, information and support that people need in order to manage their diabetes.”

### Knowledge Is Power

In addition to diabetes self-management classes, Iowa Health offers a monthly support group called Dialogue on Diabetes and a pre-diabetes class called Small Steps, Big Rewards.

“Our Small Steps, Big Rewards program encourages people to take charge of their health by modifying their diets and exercise regimens to lessen their risk of developing diabetes,” says Freeman. “By offering

practical tips and advice, we can help many people enhance their health.”

**For more information on diabetes prevention and treatment, visit [www.iowahealth.org](http://www.iowahealth.org) or call the Diabetes Education Center at (515) 241-5074.**

### For Your Little Ones

The Endocrinology Clinic at Blank Children's Hospital cares for infants, children and adolescents with diabetes. The Clinic is staffed with pediatric endocrinologists, pediatric nurse practitioners specializing in endocrinology, registered nurses, diabetes educators and registered dietitians.

**For more information or to schedule an appointment, call (515) 241-6500.**

# One Woman's Story of Overcoming Breast Cancer



At the age of 34, Michelle Sherzan never thought she would be diagnosed with breast cancer. Thanks to a recommendation on the part of her family physician, however, Michelle not only learned that she had Stage I breast cancer, but that she had inherited the BRCA1 gene that increases the risk for the disease.

**A**s a newly married couple, Michelle and her husband, Gary, were excited about the prospects of having children together. So Michelle, then 34, went to see her family physician for a preconception check-up.

“Because my paternal grandmother had breast cancer, and because



I was almost 35 years old and had not yet been pregnant, my family practice physician, Kathryn J. Lindgren, DO, at Urbandale Family Physicians, recommended that I go ahead and get a mammogram,” Michelle says.

“I almost blew it off, but my husband encouraged me to follow the doctor’s suggestion. I’m so glad that I did.”

## **Coping with the News**

In late March of 2006, Michelle went to Iowa Radiology for her baseline mammogram. When she was called back for a repeat mammogram the next week, Michelle was terrified.

“I took my husband with me for the mammogram, and the radiologist explained that I had calcium deposits in my breast and would need a needle biopsy performed right away,” Michelle remembers. “I was very scared, but I had the biopsy and went home.”

The next day—April 5—is a day Michelle will remember for the rest of her life. On that day, the radiologist who performed the needle biopsy, Jill S. Westercamp, MD, called and told Michelle the news she never wanted to hear: She had breast cancer.

“I handed the phone to my husband and totally shut down,” Michelle remembers. “Even though the cancer was in its earliest stages and totally treatable, I lost it. I was overwhelmed with emotions, and I was numb and in denial. I didn’t know what to do.”

On April 10, Michelle had her first appointment with Daniel Kollmorgen, MD, surgical oncologist with The Iowa Clinic, who told her she probably wouldn’t need any chemotherapy or radiation because the cancer was in its earliest stages. However, during her surgery at Iowa Methodist to remove the calcium deposits, Dr. Kollmorgen found a popcorn kernel-sized cancerous lump that hadn’t shown up on Michelle’s mammogram. That lump was removed a few days later, and Michelle opted for six weeks of radiation therapy as a precaution. Since that time, Michelle has been cancer free.

## **Is It Genetic?**

Though Michelle had heard about genetic testing for cancer, she never considered having the blood test performed until her surgeon told her about it. Michelle decided to meet with Pati Berger, RN, BSN, OCN, oncology research coordinator for the John Stoddard Cancer Center to learn about her options.

After meeting with Berger, Michelle still wasn’t sure if she wanted to have the test performed, but she went ahead and filled out the paperwork to get it pre-approved by her insurance company, just in case. Her pre-approval

certification came through in June—yet it was almost six months later before she decided to go through with the test.

“I needed time to figure out what I would do if the result came back positive, because I didn’t know how it would influence my decision to have children,” Michelle remembers. “In the end, I decided it was something I needed to know for myself.”

### Learning Her Risk

At John Stoddard, physicians can identify patients who are at high risk for genetic cancer predisposition and refer them for testing and counseling. A simple blood test can distinguish patients who are carriers of the BRCA1 and BRCA2 genetic mutations, which significantly increase that patient’s risk of developing breast or ovarian cancers.

“When a mutation is present in the BRCA1 or BRCA2 gene, women have an 87 percent chance of developing breast cancer during their lifetimes, as compared to a 12 percent risk for women without the mutation,” Berger says. “That’s why it’s so important that genetic counseling is performed before and after the test. We can talk to the patient and help her understand

**“I feel blessed that I was diagnosed so early, and I’ve tried to share the message about early detection with friends, family and even total strangers. If one person hears my story, gets her mammogram early and learns she has cancer when it’s at its most treatable stage, then it’s all been worth it”**

—Michelle Sherzan,  
*breast cancer survivor*

exactly what ramifications this gene mutation could have for family members.”

While genetic testing certainly isn’t required for all breast cancer patients, patients should consider meeting with the oncology research coordinator and learning about genetic testing options if they have several close relatives diagnosed with ovarian cancer or breast cancer before age 50 or if men in their family are diagnosed with breast or prostate cancer.


“By identifying mutations on BRCA1 and BRCA2, physicians can give those carriers a realistic outlook on their risk of cancer,” Berger says. “They can then work closely with their doctors to develop more intense screening programs and discuss preventive measures that could begin years earlier than is necessary for the general population.”

### Living Life to the Fullest

After learning that she does carry the BRCA1 genetic mutation, Michelle met with her oncologist and discussed her options. Her oncologist told her there was no reason she shouldn’t have children. Michelle’s decision to get screened allowed her to be aware

of the situation so she—and her future children—could be more closely monitored.

“Carrying the BRCA1 gene means that I have a 20 percent chance of having breast cancer again within five years, so I have a mammogram every six months,” Michelle says. “Learning that I carry this gene is scary, but it’s put my life in perspective, and I try to be healthier and have a more positive outlook on life.”

 **For more information about genetic testing or the John Stoddard Cancer Center at Iowa Methodist, call (515) 241-4141.**



## Break the Silence

Every year an estimated 22,000 women are diagnosed with ovarian cancer and 15,000 will die from the deadly disease. However, women diagnosed in Stage I of the disease have a 90 percent chance of being cured; therefore, the medical community has finally come to a consensus on the symptoms of ovarian cancer, which was once dubbed as the “silent killer.”

The symptoms include:

- bloating
- pelvic or abdominal pain

- difficulty eating or feeling full quickly
- urinary symptoms (urgency or frequency)

If you experience any of these symptoms on a daily basis for a few weeks, contact your healthcare provider. For more information on cancer prevention and symptoms, visit the John Stoddard Cancer Center website at [www.johnstoddardcancer.org](http://www.johnstoddardcancer.org) or call (515) 241-4141.



◀ (left) Dana Riley with sons Joseph and William; (right) Laura Martin with sons Andrew and Jacob and daughter Hannah

# It's a Twin Thing

When twins Dana Riley and Laura Martin gave birth within days of each other at Iowa Lutheran Hospital, the nursing staff thought they were seeing double...again.

Growing up was fun for Dana and Laura, residents of the greater Des Moines area. As twins, they shared clothes, secrets and graduations. Now, for the second time, they shared pregnancies.

"Laura and I had a lot of fun sharing our first pregnancy together, and we each gave birth to a healthy baby boy

in June 2004," says Dana. "We never imagined that we'd share another pregnancy together."

Yet, in February 2007, Dana and Laura once again gave birth to beautiful babies just days apart of each other at Iowa Lutheran Hospital.

### Why We Chose Iowa Lutheran

"We love Iowa Lutheran Hospital," says Laura. "My sister and I have given birth to all of our children here. The nurses are friendly and treat us like family. When Dana delivered in early February, I went to visit and was comforted that the nurses recognized me and looked forward to seeing me again in a few days to give birth to my first little girl."

In addition to the friendliness of the nursing staff, Dana and Laura also enjoyed the comforts of the newly remodeled rooms during their births. The rooms, which are equipped with amenities like a whirlpool tub and seating for visitors, allowed each woman to deliver, recover and receive post-partum care in one place.



"The room is more like a hotel than a hospital room," says Laura. "It was very comforting to have my own room where my husband and I could begin to bond with our baby without disturbing others."

Before leaving the hospital, Dana and Laura also enjoyed the one-on-one instructions from the nursing staff on topics ranging from breastfeeding to diet to infant care. Now, Dana's baby boy, Joseph, and Laura's baby girl, Hannah, are thriving on the compassionate care they receive from their families.

**To learn more about maternity services and childbirth education at Iowa Health - Des Moines, call (515) 263-BABY or take a virtual tour of our facilities by visiting [www.iowahealth.org](http://www.iowahealth.org).**

**"Iowa Lutheran Hospital is a special place to give birth. It's small and feels like home. The nurses are more like friends than medical staff. They are patient, knowledgeable and compassionate, and always made me feel like my birth was as important as if it were their own child."**

*—Dana Riley, resident of Des Moines who has delivered three children at Iowa Lutheran*

# Menopause 101

Menopause brings many changes in a woman's body. By understanding the cause of these changes and how they can be managed, the next chapter in life can be your best.

If you're a woman between the ages of 45 and 55, you might be experiencing menopause—when your body slows the production of the hormones estrogen and progesterone and your menstrual cycle stops. As a result, you may experience some common symptoms, including:

- hot flashes
- tenderness in the breasts
- absence of monthly periods
- trouble sleeping
- vaginal dryness
- mood swings
- trouble focusing
- thinning hair or hair loss


“Each woman will experience symptoms of menopause in different ways, with some only noting the loss of monthly periods,” says Curtis Hoegh, MD, OB/GYN at Methodist Plaza OB/GYN. “Although some symptoms can be inconvenient, there are ways to manage them.”

## Managing Menopause

Many menopausal women utilize hormone replacement therapy (HRT) to deal with the more difficult symptoms, including vaginal dryness and hot flashes. For women who prefer natural treatments, the U.S. Department of Health and Human

Services recommends exercise and adding soy products—which contain phytoestrogens (symptom-fighting chemicals)—to your diet.

“There are many choices for managing menopause, and more advancements are being made regularly,” says Dr. Hoegh. “Women need to speak with their healthcare providers to learn all their options and to plan the best course of action.”

 **For more information on menopause, talk to your primary healthcare provider or call My Nurse at (800) IA-HEALTH (424-3258).**



# Because Kids Count

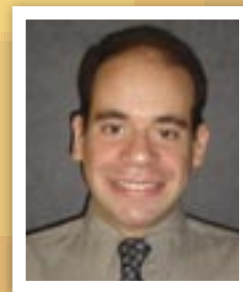
Blank Children's Hospital is excited to welcome to their staff the only full-time pediatric nephrologist in the state of Iowa, Ari Auron, MD.

To help ensure that children are accurately diagnosed and receive the most effective treatment possible, the medical staff at Blank Children's includes more than 40 pediatric specialists who cover a broad range of childhood healthcare needs. By bringing in a pediatric nephrologist—

a physician who specializes in diseases of the kidney in children—Blank Children's furthers its commitment to providing the best care to the children of central Iowa.

Dr. Auron will treat everything from bladder control and infections to renal failure, kidney disease and complications from other chronic conditions, such as cerebral palsy.

“There is a tremendous need for pediatric nephrologists throughout the country, and we feel very fortunate to have Dr. Auron's expertise to complement the comprehensive



Ari Auron, MD  
Pediatric Nephrologist

care we provide our patients,” says Steve Stephenson, MD, executive vice president and medical director

of Blank Children's. “Dr. Auron is a great addition to our team, and we couldn't be more excited to have him on board.”

 **To learn more about all the pediatric specialties available at Blank Children's Hospital, visit [www.blankchildrens.org](http://www.blankchildrens.org) or call (515) 241-KIDS (5437).**

# LiveWell

*With Iowa Health – Des Moines*



Obtaining and maintaining good health is about more than medical care. At Iowa Health, we realize this. That's why we strive to be a leader in community health education through LiveWell with Iowa Health.

With the LiveWell program, we carry out our mission of healing, caring and teaching every day. LiveWell brings health and wellness events close to home, based on the community's needs. Here are a few of the upcoming events that will help you live a healthier life.

**Cancer, Courage & Chocolate**  
*Thursday, September 20, 5–8 p.m.*

**Couples Workshop**  
*Thursday, October 18, 5–8 p.m.*

All events take place in the Kelley Conference Room in the Education and Research Center at Iowa Methodist Medical Center. For more information about these events, call (515) 241-6302 or visit [www.iowahealth.org/livewell](http://www.iowahealth.org/livewell).

**Oh, Baby!**  
*Saturday, October 20, 9 a.m.–2 p.m.*

**Joy of Life**  
*Thursday, November 1, 5–8 p.m.*

**KCCI**  
NEWSCHANNEL **8**

**FIRST NEWS  
AT FIVE**

**Want advice on how you can LiveWell? Tune in to KCCI NewsChannel 8's "First News at Five" on Thursdays to get the scoop from physicians with Iowa Health – Des Moines. If you miss a report, watch it online at KCCI.com.**



**Kurtis Gertz, Cynthia Fodor and Steve Karlin**

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 [www.iowahealth.org](http://www.iowahealth.org). To be removed from our mailing list, please call (515) 241-6302.



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