Shorter Wait Times at Stewart Memorial’s Emergency Room

When you or a loved one has an emergency medical condition, seconds count and minutes matter. You don’t want to spend hours waiting, and that’s why Stewart Memorial Community Hospital is continually taking steps to streamline processes and improve patient flow in our emergency department.

**Efficient and Effective**

Our emergency department helps reduce wait times with:

- **Improved door-to-doc time.** Our triage process begins when you arrive and a health professional assesses the critical nature of your condition. Patients with the most life-threatening conditions are treated first.

- **Cutting-edge equipment.** From taking your temperature to having a CT or MRI scan, we offer technology that provides faster results and greater detail. This helps speed your diagnosis and gets you to appropriate treatment sooner.

- **Faster laboratory services.** We have systems in place to quickly deliver specimens to our laboratory, and new technology helps speed processing of test results.

- **Skilled staff.** Our emergency doctors and nurses are specially trained to collaborate quickly to make important decisions and provide the best care for you.

“**Our ER staff works diligently to reduce the amount of time patients have to spend in our ER. For the first quarter of 2011, the average time patients spent in our ER, from the time they arrived until they were able to go home or be admitted to the hospital, was one hour and 10 minutes.**”

— Shirley Ellis, R.N., Emergency Room Director

continued on page 3
Are Your Child’s Immunizations Up-to-Date?

Immunization against diseases such as varicella (chickenpox), measles and polio has been a rousing success. Many childhood diseases that once often resulted in serious illness, disability or death are largely preventable through immunization and are rarely seen in American children.

However, that doesn’t mean that parents can stop being vigilant. These diseases have not disappeared. They are being controlled through immunization. For example, 90% of American children were vaccinated against measles in 2009, and there were no measles-related deaths reported. Prior to the development of the measles vaccine in the 1960s, there were an average of 450 measles deaths each year.*

Since immunizations help protect your children against dangerous diseases, it is vitally important that vaccinations are kept up-to-date.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, 2.1 million U.S. children 19 to 35 months of age are not fully immunized. Should these children come in contact with an infectious individual, perhaps on a trip abroad or through contact with an overseas visitor to the United States, there is a serious risk that the child could contract a dangerous disease.

Are There Risks Involved?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the United States currently has the safest, most effective vaccine supply in history. In very rare cases, children may experience a serious side effect, such as an allergic reaction. In most cases, vaccines are effective and either cause no side effects or result in a mild fever or soreness at the injection site. However, not immunizing a child involves a much greater risk.

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Whooping Cough Outbreak in the U.S.

Outbreaks of pertussis (whooping cough) sickened thousands of people and caused at least 10 infant deaths in the U.S. in 2010.*

The vaccine for pertussis is not 100% effective, so having the majority of the population vaccinated is important to minimizing the number of cases. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), fewer than 85% of children are fully immunized against pertussis.

The key to fighting this highly contagious disease is to get children and adults vaccinated. The vaccine’s protection wears off with time, so adults who were vaccinated in childhood run the risk of catching and/or spreading pertussis. That’s why the pertussis vaccine was added to the tetanus shot beginning in 2006. The CDC recommends getting this booster shot every 10 years.

Pertussis can be life-threatening for infants and cause 10 weeks or more of coughing in children and adults. Talk to your doctor about getting vaccinated.

* Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, www.cdc.gov.

“Immunizations are a great way to protect your children and keep them healthy.”

— Susan Hornback, D.O.
Help Us Help You

At Stewart Memorial, we want you to receive the treatment you need in a timely manner. We understand that you may not be thinking clearly when faced with an emergency, but the following steps can help us help you if you need quick care.

- **Have a list of your medications.** Include prescriptions and over-the-counter medications, including dosages and frequency. It's a good idea to keep this list in your wallet so it's always with you.
- **Be honest.** If you've used drugs or alcohol, your doctor needs to know to prevent harmful interactions.
- **Keep us informed.** If possible, call ahead to let us know you are coming to the ER (call before driving, or have a friend or loved one drive you). Even if the waiting room is empty, our doctors may be busy tending to a trauma or seriously ill patient. Check in with us if your symptoms get worse.

In an emergency situation, go with your gut feeling about the type of care you or a loved one may need. Call 911 for symptoms such as persistent chest pain or changes in vision, extreme injuries and bleeding, loss of consciousness, poisoning or overdose, paralysis of an arm or leg, or inability to breathe.
Emergency Room Campaign Update

More than 200 times each month, a patient needs immediate medical attention and comes to the Emergency Room at Stewart Memorial Community Hospital in Lake City for treatment. The care patients need ranges from minor irritations like a bug bite to more serious situations like a heart attack or stroke. The ER medical staff is prepared to handle any medical emergency that comes through the door. With modern technology at their fingertips, they can offer even better care.

Upgrading Key Equipment for You
Through donations, Stewart Memorial Community Hospital plans to upgrade three pieces of key emergency room equipment.

The first is a vital signs monitor. This machine is used on virtually every patient in the ER and gives medical staff the first snapshot of a patient’s health condition. The vital signs monitor delivers quick and accurate results of a patient’s pulse, blood pressure, oxygen level, respirations and temperature. The new monitor will replace the existing 11-year-old monitor.

The second piece of equipment is a monitor defibrillator, which is needed an average of 20 times each month for patients suffering from a variety of cardiac-related problems. By replacing the 10-year-old defibrillator currently being used, patients will realize many benefits, including decreased time in getting vital test results. Another life-saving advantage of the new defibrillator is the complete vital signs monitoring capabilities. In an instant, ER staff will know a patient’s heart rate and rhythm, pulse, blood pressure, oxygen, carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide levels. Patients in need of a pacemaker also benefit from the new equipment because it will be capable of functioning as a temporary pacemaker until a permanent one can be implanted.

The third piece of equipment is the rapid infuser, which delivers life-saving fluids to patients. Whether it’s a trauma that caused blood loss, blood loss from intestinal bleeding, having a baby, a complicated surgery or a case of hypothermia, the rapid infuser can make the difference between life and death. Our current equipment, the manual pressure bag, allows 750 milliliters of fluid in a 10- to 45-minute window. The rapid infuser can deliver the same amount of fluid in less than one minute.

Staff and Community Support Lead the Way
The total cost of purchasing the three pieces of equipment is $47,000 and Stewart Memorial is currently raising funds to cover the cost. “We strive to give our patients the best care and part of that commitment is providing the latest in medical technology,” says Leah Marxen, CEO.

SMCH employees have raised more than $10,000 toward the project and community support is growing. “As an ER nurse, I’m thrilled to see such wonderful support for this campaign. Our patients will benefit greatly from the generosity of others,” says Shirley Ellis, R.N., ER Director.

Can You Help?
If you would like to make a gift in support of the ER equipment campaign, please use the attached envelope to send your gift. Please mail your gift to: Stewart Memorial Community Hospital, c/o ER Campaign, 1301 W Main St, Lake City, IA 51449. Any questions regarding the campaign may be directed to Mary Ludwig, Director of Development, and she can be reached at 712-464-4117.
Marty Woerdehoff, Orthopaedic Patient

Anterior Cervical Diskectomy and Fusion Relieves Pain

On any given day of the week, Marty Woerdehoff is up before the sun, starting his busy day on the farm. On a cool morning in early March, his routine was abruptly interrupted with sharp pain. “The pain started in my neck and radiated down my left arm. I couldn't do anything. I couldn't put my shoes on because the pain was so intense,” Woerdehoff recalls.

His wife, Sherry, didn't waste any time getting medical help. “We didn't know if it was my heart, or what was going on, so we went to the emergency room,” Woerdehoff says. They left their home in Wall Lake and headed to Stewart Memorial Community Hospital in Lake City.

Uncovering the Cause of His Pain

Woerdehoff’s pain was unbearable and he was admitted to the hospital. Standard treatments did not decrease his pain, so additional tests were ordered. An MRI showed Woerdehoff had a disk in his neck that had deteriorated and was now pinching a nerve. The pinched nerve was causing the pain in his neck and arm. He was referred to Lee Hieb, M.D., orthopaedic surgeon at Stewart Memorial Community Hospital.

“To alleviate the pain, we performed an anterior cervical diskectomy and fusion,” says Dr. Hieb, who has performed more than 400 of the surgeries in her 20-year career as an orthopaedic surgeon. Most hospitals still use cadaver bone, a plate and screws for this operation. At Stewart Memorial, we perform a minimally invasive surgery which involves making a small incision in the neck, removing the disk that’s causing the pain, and adding a small spacer in place of the disk. By using this particular technique, cadaver bone is not needed and the surgery time is much shorter.

Woerdehoff was able to go home the next day, and his pain had decreased greatly. “In addition to the benefit of eliminating the pain, most patients return home the following day. Patients are also able to resume most activities in just a few days,” Dr. Hieb notes.

Neck Pain Is on the Rise

Dr. Hieb says the number of patients needing this surgery has increased in recent years as more and more people spend time looking down at electronic screens, whether it's a smartphone or a computer screen not set at the proper height. “Over the course of time, if you have a habit of tilting your head down to look at a computer monitor or other screen, or sitting in an overstuffed recliner that pushes the head forward, you will eventually aggravate the disks in your neck,” Dr. Hieb says.

To help avoid neck pain, Dr. Hieb recommends keeping your head well-balanced above your chest and not forward. Avoiding pillows and recliners that push the head forward is also helpful. If you suffer an injury that causes neck pain, Dr. Hieb says to seek medical help immediately.

To Learn More

If you have ongoing neck pain, consult with your primary care physician and find out if an evaluation by Dr. Hieb is needed. To learn more about Dr. Hieb and the Orthopaedic Surgery Services offered at Stewart Memorial Community Hospital, call 800-560-7500 or log on to our website at www.stewartmemorial.org.
Dr. Paul Knouf Recognized as Physician of the Year

In 1979, Paul Knouf, M.D., began his medical practice in Rockwell City with Stewart Memorial Community Hospital. In March of this year, the family practice physician was recognized by his colleagues as Physician of the Year. “I had no idea about the award. I was very surprised,” says Dr. Knouf. “I really appreciate that the people I work with believe I do a good job.”

In the 32 years that Dr. Knouf has practiced, he says medicine has changed a lot. “Ninety percent or more of the prescriptions available today weren’t around when I first started practicing medicine,” Dr. Knouf says. “There were a handful of antibiotics and a dozen blood pressure medications. The pharmaceutical market has exploded in the last several years.” Dr. Knouf notes his career has been a constant learning process.

Dr. Knouf came to Rockwell City after he earned his medical degree from the University of Iowa in Iowa City and completed his residency in family practice at Iowa Lutheran Hospital in Des Moines. Even though Dr. Knouf got firsthand experience at life in a big city, caring for patients in a small community near his hometown of Lake City was his desire. “When I was finishing residency, Dr. Christensen, Dr. Comstock and Dr. Ferguson talked to me about setting up a practice back home,” Dr. Knouf says. “It was a great choice.”

Thirty-plus years later, hundreds of patients and dozens of co-workers are glad Dr. Knouf chose Rockwell City to start his medical practice. They showed their appreciation by recognizing him as Physician of the Year at the first Stewart Memorial Community Hospital Reward and Recognition Banquet, where he received a standing ovation.

In June, Dr. Knouf announced his retirement from medical practice. He was thanked for his years of service during a retirement party held June 10, 2011.

“I had no idea about the award. I was very surprised,” says Dr. Knouf. “I really appreciate that the people I work with believe I do a good job.”

– Dr. Paul Knouf
Visit Stewart Memorial Community Hospital from Home!

With the ease of today’s technology, you can learn a lot about Stewart Memorial Community Hospital from the comfort of your own home.

If you’re still in your slippers, but need to find a doctor to take care of your sore throat, just go online to www.stewartmemorial.org. We’ve organized an easy reference list of all of our medical staff. You can see their photos, learn about their qualifications and even find out what their hobbies are.

If you are planning to grow your family, take a tour of our beautiful labor and delivery suites at any time of day with our online video tour. This short video highlights many of the great features of our OB facility where hundreds of mothers have entrusted Stewart Memorial Community Hospital with the delivery of their newborns.

If surgery is in your future, or you are curious about our state-of-the-art facility, take a photo tour of the recently renovated surgical department by clicking on “surgery” in the services tab.

These are just a few of the features you will find on the Stewart Memorial Community Hospital website, which is located at www.stewartmemorial.org. Check it out today!

Have You Seen Our New Baby Billboard?

Cantaloupe Salsa

Preparation Time: 25 minutes
Number of Servings: 4

Ingredients

- 1/2 large ripe cantaloupe
- 3/4 cup finely diced red bell pepper
- 1/4 cup finely chopped cilantro
- 3 tablespoons finely chopped scallions
- Juice of 1 lime
- Pinch of salt and hot pepper flakes

Directions

Remove seeds and rind from cantaloupe. Chop cantaloupe into very small pieces, put into a bowl. Add diced red pepper, cilantro, scallions and lime juice. Stir. Add pinch of salt and pepper flakes. Chill. Serve with grilled chicken, fish or steaks.

Stewart Memorial Community Hospital offers a wide range of outpatient clinics to meet the varying needs of the people in our communities. Appointments for the outpatient clinics can be made by calling 712-464-7907 or 1-800-560-7500.

 Audiology
  John W. Reis, Au.D.

 Cardiology
  Mark Berry, D.O.
  Anne Schwarte, ARNP
  Iowa Heart Center

 Dermatology
  Scott Green, M.D.

 Ear, Nose and Throat
  Vivian Chance, ARNP
  Tracey Wellendorf, M.D.

 General Surgery
  Ronald Cheney, D.O.
  Marc Miller, D.O.
  Josh Smith, D.O.

 Hematology & Oncology
  Robert Behrens, M.D.

 Neurology
  Aamer Habib, M.D.

 Ophthalmology
  Wolfe Eye Clinic

 Orthopaedics
  Lee Hieb, M.D.

 Podiatry
  Mark Hartman, D.P.M.
  Eric Jensen, D.P.M.

 Pulmonologist
  James Meyer, D.O.

 Urology
  Stephen L. Piercy, M.D.

Stewart Memorial Community Hospital Calendar of Events

Auxiliary Meetings

All meetings held in the SMCH Conference Center. No registration necessary. Everyone is welcome!

Maple Syrup by Arlin Sigmon, Tuesday, Sept. 6, 9:30 a.m.

The Elements Trip, Wednesday, Sept. 14, Depart at 4:30 p.m., Pre-registration required.

Table-A-Fare, Saturday, Sept. 17, Noon, Opportunity Living

Weaving a Hobby by Kathy Anderson, Tuesday, Oct. 11, 9:30 a.m.

Quilt Auction, Saturday, Nov. 5, Social Hour 5 p.m., Meal 6 p.m., Auction 7 p.m., Lake City Community Building

Diabetes Support Group

The Diabetes Support Group meets the following Tuesdays: July 26, Aug. 23, Sept. 27 and Oct. 25.

New time and location: 5 to 6 p.m. in the SMCH Private Dining Room, next to the Junction Cafeteria. For more information, please call Maurine Thieszen or Marcia Schaefer at 712-464-3171.

Stewart Memorial Community Hospital

Outpatient Clinics at Stewart Memorial Community Hospital

Stewart Memorial Community Hospital

For comments, questions or more information, call SMCH at 712-464-3171 or go to www.stewartmemorial.org

Health care providers at Stewart Memorial Community Hospital and McCrary-Rost Clinics

 Pablo Amador, M.D.
 Ronald Cheney, D.O.
 Thomas Dulaney, M.D.
 Derek Duncan, D.O.
 Nancy Flink, PA-C
 David Frate, D.O.
 Rochelle Guess, ARNP
 Lee Hieb, M.D.
 Susan Hornback, D.O.
 Marc Miller, D.O.
 Mark Mogensen, PA-C
 Christopher Nelson, D.O.
 Josh Smith, D.O.
 Adam Swisher, D.O.
 Kari Swisher, ARNP
 Elsie Verbik, M.D.
 Barbara Weber, ARNP