

Health Connection

CARING PEOPLE...CARING FOR PEOPLE

Visiting Surgeons Bring

Surgical Care Close to Home

The prospect of having surgery can summon feelings of fear and uncertainty. Traveling out of town for the procedure – far from the support of friends and family – can add to the anxiety. Thanks to the visiting surgeon program at Redwood Area Hospital, residents can have the surgery they need close to home. Scheduling the procedure locally, with the doctors you know and trust, can help ease emotions and set the stage for a calm and successful procedure.

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“We offer a variety of surgeries at a convenient location, with people you know,” explains Julie Salmon, RN, surgery manager at Redwood Area Hospital. “If you are hospitalized here for your surgery, it’s close enough for friends and family to visit.”

The Redwood Area Hospital Surgery department performs a variety of general procedures, including appendectomies, tonsillectomies, carpal tunnel surgery, Caesarean sections, mastectomies and colon resections. The hospital provides visiting surgeons with the latest technology, such as high-definition, narrow-band imaging, to treat patients quickly and effectively.

Here When You Need Them

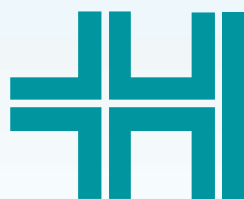
The care you need is never far away. Visiting surgeons come to Redwood Falls on scheduled days throughout the week to meet with patients and perform surgeries. Robert Kruger, MD, general surgeon, and Edwin Harrington, MD, orthopedist, see patients once a week. The following outreach physicians come to Redwood Falls on a regular basis: Charles Ulrich, MD, gastroenterologist; Martin Janning, MD, and Jennifer Pesola, DO, ear, nose and throat specialists; Michael Border, MD, ophthalmologist; and Paul Matson, MD, orthopedist.

To schedule an appointment with Drs. Kruger, Ulrich,



The Olympus brand endoscopy equipment that features HDTV and narrow-band imaging.

Pesola or Border, call Affiliated Community Medical Center at 507-637-2985. For Drs. Harrington, Matson and Janning, call 507-637-4631.



Redwood Area Hospital
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Ophthalmologist Michael Border, MD

After practicing ophthalmology in Massachusetts for 22 years, Michael Border, MD, set his sights on Minnesota. He brought his eye care expertise to Willmar and joined the Affiliated Community Medical Center (ACMC) in September 2007. Dr. Border also travels to Redwood

Falls to see patients one to two days a month – typically one day for office visits and one day for surgical procedures.

As a board-certified ophthalmologic physician and surgeon, Dr. Border

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General Surgeon Robert Kruger, MD

When Redwood Falls surgeon John Lundblad, MD, relocated last August, a new general surgeon gladly stepped in to help fill the void. Robert Kruger, MD, travels once a week from Willmar to provide a full range of general surgery services to Redwood Falls area residents, including abdominal, laparoscopic, cancer and trauma surgeries.

Dr. Kruger is no stranger to Minnesota. He attended the University of Minnesota Medical School, completed his residency at the Marshfield Clinic and has practiced medicine for the past 21 years at Affiliated Community Medical Center (ACMC) in Willmar. Bringing his services to the Redwood Falls area was a natural move.

“I enjoy providing service to the people of this area, without having them travel far from home,” Dr. Kruger says. “They are appreciative of good care, close to where they live. And the Redwood Area Hospital staff takes great care of its patients.”

Certified by the American Board of Surgery, Dr. Kruger stays involved with a variety of professional associations, such as the American Medical Association and American College of Surgeons. But it’s his practice that keeps him at the top of his game.

“I perform all types of general surgery, including carpal tunnel surgery,” he explains. “Most of my practice in Willmar is vascular or blood vessel surgery: aneurysms, angioplasty and noncardiac bypass. I also treat varicose veins, treat gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) and install pacemakers.”

For a General Surgery Appointment

Dr. Kruger sees patients at the Affiliated Community Medical Center (ACMC) in Redwood Falls and performs surgical procedures at Redwood Area Hospital once a week, usually Thursday or Friday. For more information or to make an appointment with Dr. Kruger, call ACMC at 507-637-2985.



Dr. Robert Kruger; Larry Rhines, CRNA; and Bev Jensen, LPN, during a surgical procedure on a patient in the Redwood Area Hospital operating room.

Gastroenterologist Charles Ulrich, MD

“It’s great to be back in Minnesota,” says Charles Ulrich, MD, gastroenterologist. He returned to Willmar – his hometown – in July 2007 after doing medical research and practicing medicine in Cincinnati, Ohio, and Dallas, Texas, for the past 14 years.

A Fellow of the American College of Physicians and the American College of Gastroenterology, Dr. Ulrich brings his years of gastrointestinal (digestive system) experience to Redwood Falls two days a month to care for “the terrific people of Minnesota.”

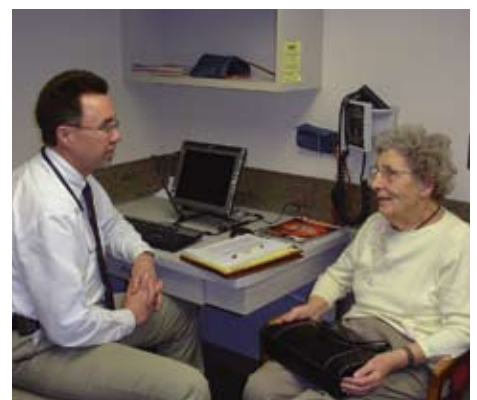
“I help people with a variety of conditions, including those of the esophagus, stomach, small intestine, colon, pancreas, gallbladder and liver,” Dr. Ulrich says. “I also provide endoscopic procedures such as upper GI endoscopy and colonoscopy.”

Dr. Ulrich enjoys traveling to Redwood Falls so his patients don’t have to be the ones traveling to receive quality care. “Having local gastroenterology services means the people I care for don’t have to leave town. This is especially convenient for patients who need follow-up visits for a chronic condition or elderly patients who may have trouble getting a ride.

“I love the Redwood Falls area,” Dr. Ulrich adds. “The medical facilities are committed to moving forward by upgrading equipment and providing state-of-the-art care for patients. The people at the hospital are wonderful to work with, too.”

For a Gastroenterology Appointment

Dr. Ulrich sees patients at the Affiliated Community Medical Center (ACMC) in Redwood Falls every other Tuesday. He is available for office visits as well as surgical



Dr. Charles Ulrich consulting with patient Mildred Arends from Wabasso.

procedures, which are performed at Redwood Area Hospital. For more information or to make an appointment with Dr. Ulrich, call ACMC at 507-637-2985.

RT Department Offers New Diagnostic Tool

The Respiratory Therapy (RT) department at Redwood Area Hospital recently acquired a state-of-the-art complete pulmonary (lung) function testing system. The new testing system is a Medgraphics Elite DL Body Plethysmograph. The system is usually seen in large metropolitan areas and is rare in small-town hospitals. The new test will introduce a more advanced way of providing diagnostic tests for our patients.

Past vs. Present

In the past, patients experiencing shortness of breath received a basic test that studied how well the lungs can inhale and exhale. However, the test could not fully evaluate abnormally low lung volumes. Now, with the new system, our respiratory therapists can assess voluntary lung volumes, total lung capacity and respiratory muscle strength, as well as estimate how efficiently the lungs transfer oxygen from the air into the bloodstream. “We can determine if the patient has a truly restrictive disease or another process that causes voluntary lung volumes to be unusually low. This is the goal of the new system,” says Lance Lothert, RT manager, registered respiratory therapist and certified pulmonary function technologist at Redwood Area Hospital.

Who Might Benefit

The new system is designed to find defects and abnormalities of the respiratory system. Anyone who is experiencing shortness of breath, has a chronic cough or a known disease may benefit from the test, performed only by physician order. “By completing a full pulmonary function test, we can assess for respiratory abnormalities due to a variety of different diseases. We

can also assess their progress and how they respond to certain pharmacological therapies,” Lothert says.

Pulmonary function measurements provide valuable clinical information for physicians and help answer questions such as:

- How badly impaired are my lungs?
- Do I have air flow obstruction?
- Am I experiencing problems with impaired oxygen exchange?
- Is my shortness of breath caused by cardiac or pulmonary dysfunction?
- Is obesity affecting my lung function?

“The test alone, however, cannot be expected to lead to a clinical diagnosis. Test results must be evaluated in light of the patient’s history, physical examination, chest radiography and pertinent laboratory data,” Lothert explains.

Interpreting the Test

Redwood Area Hospital has partnered with Immanuel St. Joseph’s in Mankato (part of the Mayo Health System) to interpret the tests and provide results. The two pulmonologists from Mankato who will read the tests and send them back to Redwood are Mazen Alakhras, MD, and



Lance Lothert, RRT, CPFT, explains the pulmonary function test to a patient.

Melynn Youngblood, MD. “By using this new system, we can help keep patients local and provide them with an extremely high quality test – a combination that can’t be beat,” Lothert says.

To learn more about the Redwood Area Hospital’s new testing capabilities, please call **507-637-4614**.

Michael Border, MD ... continued from page 1

provides a full range of medical and surgical treatments for eye diseases and disorders. “I care for patients of all ages, from cataract and eyelid surgery to glaucoma procedures,” Dr. Border says. He also treats strabismus (cross-eyes) and diabetic retinopathy.

One of the reasons Dr. Border chose to practice in Redwood Falls is that he was impressed with the medical facilities.

“Performing surgery at the hospital works really well – it’s a good setup,” Dr. Border says. It’s an environment that is ideal for him to perform state-of-the-art laser treatments right here in Redwood Falls. “If demand for specialized eye care increases, it’s likely services will be expanded,” Dr. Border notes. Best of all, patients who need quality eye procedures don’t have to travel far – they can set their sights on Redwood Area Hospital.

For an Ophthalmology Appointment

Dr. Border sees patients at the Affiliated Community Medical Center (ACMC) in Redwood Falls the fourth Thursday of each month. He performs surgical procedures at Redwood Area Hospital. To make an appointment with Dr. Border, call ACMC at **507-637-2985**.

CALENDAR OF Events



Arthritis/Fibromyalgia Support Group

Provides information on arthritis and fibromyalgia, as well as fellowship and friendship. The support group meets the second Tuesday of the month (February-May) from 2-3:30 p.m. in the Redwood Area Hospital Education Room.

Adult Grief Support Group

Offers support, friendship and information for people grieving the loss of a loved one. Support group dates: Feb. 5, 12, 19, 26, and March 4 and 11 from 5-7 p.m. at the Redwood Area Hospital. To register, visit our Web site or contact Joleen Johnson, LSW, at 507-637-4616.

Alzheimer's Caregivers Group (NEW!)

Offers support for caregivers of those with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. Respite care is offered so caregivers can attend the support group. Meeting dates: Feb. 25, March 20, April 17 and May 15 from 2-3:30 p.m. at the Redwood Area Hospital. For information, contact Lynn Buckley, LPN, at 507-637-4508.

Bridging the Gap

Gives kids grades K-12, who have experienced the death of someone special, the opportunity to connect with others "who have been there." Meeting date: March 29 from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Redwood Area Hospital. To register, visit our Web site or contact Joleen Johnson, LSW, at 507-637-4616.

Childbirth Preparation Class

Our next one-day session is scheduled April 12 from 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Register online at www.redwoodareahospital.org. Session fee: \$15 per couple.

CPR and First Aid Training

CPR and First Aid classes are offered at the Redwood Area Hospital throughout the year. To register for a class or to arrange for training for your business or group, contact Shelly Pauling at 507-637-4527.

Diabetes Basics Classes

This series of four class sessions is scheduled over a six-month period for people newly diagnosed with diabetes. Contact Dorie Oja at 507-637-4518.

Hospice Spring Luncheon

The 2nd Annual Hospice Spring Luncheon will be held on Saturday, May 3, from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at Gloria Dei Church in Redwood Falls. Tickets are just \$15 with proceeds going to the Hospice program. For tickets, contact Char Hennen, volunteer assistant, at 507-637-4548.

For more details on this information as well as other services provided by the Redwood Area Hospital, log on to our Web site at www.redwoodareahospital.org.

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