

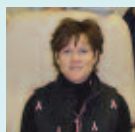
# Health Connection

CARING PEOPLE...CARING FOR PEOPLE

## Right Care, at the Right Time, at the Right Place, Saves Paralysis Patient

It's not often a quick trip to the grocery store turns into a life-threatening event. But that's exactly what happened to Harry Davis on March 13, 2005, when he accidentally drove his vehicle into a parking lot light pole. The angle of the impact and the sudden jar snapped his neck, resulting in total paralysis.

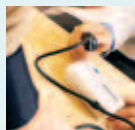
### INSIDE:



**2**  
State-of-the-Art  
Cancer Treatments



**3**  
Bringing the Hospital  
to Your Doorstep



**4**  
Calendar of Events

### First Right Care

"I immediately knew something was terribly wrong," Davis admits. "I couldn't move anything. A friend of mine from the Redwood Fire Department happened to witness the accident and called for emergency help. I never lost consciousness as the ambulance crew stabilized me for the trip to the Redwood Area Hospital's Emergency Room."

### Second Right Care

X-rays and a CT scan determined that Davis, 44 at the time, had a broken neck and damaged spinal cord. He also suffered from spinal stenosis, a narrowing of the lumbar spinal column that produces pressure on the nerve roots between vertebrae. Many people live with this condition all their lives without knowing it – unless a traumatic event triggers damage to the spinal cord.

"I was lucky to be in a place where I could receive medical attention right away," Davis says. "The Emergency Room physicians at the Redwood Area Hospital saved my life with their quick action." Steroids were given to Davis to minimize the swelling in his spinal cord and because his diaphragm was damaged, oxygen was pumped into his lungs.

### Third Right Care

Sometimes the **right care**, at the **right time**, at the **right place**, involves care at more than one location. Should the need arise for a patient to continue receiving the right care, at the right time, at an additional place, the Redwood Area Hospital works as a team with North

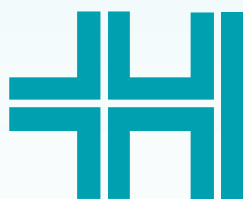


Harry Davis tackles a therapy arch under the guidance of Sheila Rubendall, occupational therapist at the Redwood Area Hospital.

Memorial Ambulance and North Memorial Air Care (located in Redwood Falls) to provide safe and timely transport. In this case, Davis was transferred to North Memorial Medical Center in the Twin Cities.

The next few weeks were critical for Davis. He was secured in a continuously rotating bed to help with circulation and breathing. Neck surgery to stabilize Davis was successfully performed on April 27. Respiratory therapy included daily exercises with an incentive spirometer to help him learn how to breathe again. Special braces were made for his hands and feet to keep them from curling. Additional surgery fused together four vertebrae plates within Davis's spine. From there, it was months of physical and occupational therapy.

...continued on page 3



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# State-of-the-Art Cancer Treatments Close to Home

Family time is a high priority for Shelly Wotschke. Attending her children's many sporting events and dance recitals is not just a way of life – it is life.

That's why having her ongoing breast cancer treatments close to home, at times that are convenient to her busy family's schedule, is so important. Just as important as the **right place** and **right time** for treatments is the **right care**. Being a recipient of the most recent technological advances in fighting cancer offers the best possible prognosis.

At the Redwood Area Hospital, Wotschke receives the latest in treatment expertise conveniently close to home.

## Self-Exams Are Crucial

In April 2004, Wotschke – only 35 years old at the time – discovered a lump in her right breast. With almost no family history of breast cancer and being so young, Wotschke was surprised to find the lump. (To this day, she is vocal about the importance of conducting monthly breast self-exams.)

A family member highly recommended and referred her to Dr. William Shimp, consulting oncologist for the outpatient chemotherapy

services at the Redwood Area Hospital. Wotschke was diagnosed with HER-2-positive invasive breast cancer in its middle stages. Surgery was necessary, including a mastectomy and removal of several lymph nodes. Wotschke's surgery took place at Unity Hospital in Fridley, Minnesota.

A series of ongoing chemotherapy treatments started in May 2004 at the Redwood Area Hospital and concluded in October. "It was important to me that my treatments take place close to home," says Wotschke. "I didn't want to miss any of my children's activities, so scheduling treatments needed to fit my life – not the other way around. The Redwood Area Hospital was perfect."

In May 2005, Dr. Shimp called Wotschke with exciting news.

## "You're a candidate"

News of the recent FDA approval of Herceptin had just come across Dr. Shimp's



Cindy Moldan, RN, OCN, Cancer Care Coordinator; Terri Tabor, RN; and Colleen Peyerl, RN, provide Shelly Wotschke (seated) with compassionate care during her treatments. Not pictured: Mary Angstman, RN, OCN.

computer. Herceptin is a new cancer treatment drug that helps prevent breast cancer recurrence in HER-2-positive women (see accompanying article). Dr. Shimp had discussed this treatment possibility with Wotschke earlier, during the drug's clinical trials at the Mayo Clinic. Because HER-2-positive breast cancers tend to be more aggressive than other types of breast cancer, Dr. Shimp recommended this cutting-edge treatment for Wotschke.

Wotschke began a year of weekly intravenous Herceptin treatments at the Redwood Area Hospital. Each session lasts one hour and 15 minutes, and treatment will be completed this May. The treatments may reduce the chance of her cancer recurring by 50 percent.

"I feel so confident in the knowledgeable, expert care

that Dr. Shimp and the Redwood Area Hospital staff provide," Wotschke says. "Proof of this professional care came with Dr. Shimp's phone call."

## Compassionate Care

"Because my children were young (ages 13, 11 and 7) when I was first diagnosed with cancer, I wanted to make sure their fears were alleviated as much as possible," Wotschke says. "Bringing them – on occasion – to my cancer treatments has helped them understand the process and know that I'm not in any pain. The nursing staff in the Cancer Care Department at the Redwood Area Hospital has been so accommodating and sensitive to my family. In addition to tending to my needs, they help make my children feel comfortable and answer their questions. The staff is simply wonderful!"

## More on Herceptin

Herceptin is a monoclonal antibody, which belongs to the general class of man-made substances called biologic response modifiers. It is used to treat breast cancer. Herceptin is a protein that fits like a lock and key with a protein on certain breast cancer cells. The protein (antigen) on the breast cancer cells is the Epidermal Growth Factor Receptor, called HER-2. Once it attaches to the cells, it brings other immune cells to help kill the cancer cells.

Source: American Cancer Society

New ProTime® Microcoagulation System

## Bringing the Hospital to Your Doorstep

If you are currently taking anti-coagulation medication, imagine what it would be like to virtually eliminate trips to the clinic or hospital to have your blood tested. This is the genius of the new ProTime Microcoagulation System\* offered by the Home Care Department at the Redwood Area Hospital.

According to Caryn Bommersbach, RNC, home care manager, "New technology is allowing qualified nurses to test your protime levels at home instead of going into the clinic or physician's office." The ProTime Microcoagulation System uses a single drop of blood to test clot forming time (PT) and International Normalized Ratio (INR). A small laboratory device called a cuvette is placed in the machine and helps clot the blood sample. After the blood clots, the ProTime System determines PT and INR levels. "The testing is accurate," says Bommersbach, "because the ProTime System has in-line controls that ensure the test procedure was performed correctly."

"What's great about this new system," Bommersbach says, "is that it provides immediate results for the client and increases efficiency while keeping quality care the focus." Clients learn the results of their tests in a matter of minutes, resulting in a higher level of satisfaction. "The system also contributes to increased efficiency," Bommersbach explains, "because the results of the test are called in to the physician or anti-coagulation clinic and the necessary medication changes are made right in the client's home."

When asked how the ProTime System has been received by clients, Bommersbach responded, "Clients really like it. We're not drawing blood from their arms anymore. We're just poking their fingers. There's less pain, and it's quick."

Clients have appreciated the convenience of the ProTime System, which Bommersbach describes as "a portable lab that can be taken to clients' homes." Because the system is used



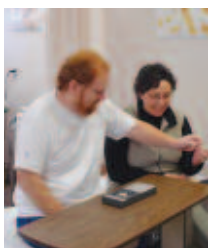
Sue Nelson, RN

within the comfort of a client's home, the hassle and anxiety of having to travel to the clinic or hospital is eliminated.

The ProTime System has been a successful addition to the resources provided by the Home Care Department. As Bommersbach concludes, "It provides state-of-the-art services to those who want more from their local rural health care providers."

\* The ProTime System is covered under Medicare for qualified individuals. Other payment options may be available for non-covered individuals interested in at-home testing.

## ...Right Care, at the Right Time *(continued from page 1)*



### Skyrocketing to Recovery

"The highlight of my physical therapy was the day I walked again," Davis laughs. "How many people can say they

remember their first step? As soon as I could put weight on my legs, my recovery started to skyrocket."

Meeting other people with serious injuries in rehab, sharing experiences and cheering each other on helps pave the road to recovery. Davis also attributes

his recuperation to the emotional support he received from his wife, Cheryl; brother, Jim; and other family members.

"I learned a lot about paralysis during those rehabilitation days," Davis admits. "I learned there are no free rides to recovery. You have to work hard, trust your therapists and keep a good attitude."

### Teamwork Continues

Continuing the **right care**, at the **right time**, at the **right place**, can also involve a return to the local hospital. Now that Davis is back home, his rehabilitation continues at the Redwood Area Hospital

five days a week. "The rehabilitation staff does an outstanding job," shares Davis. "Andy Schotzko, Nancy Nelson-Bock and Heidi Irlbeck are my physical therapists. Annie Albrecht and Sheila Rubendall work with me on occupational therapy. These caring, skilled individuals are making the difference for an awful lot of people."

Staff at the Redwood Area Hospital takes pride in assisting with coordination of services so they can help assure each patient receives the **right care**, at the **right time**, at the **right place**, whether it is at the local hospital or beyond.

# 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. Contact Maydra Maas, RN, CNS, at 507-637-4562.

### *Adult Grief Support Group*

Offers support, friendship, information and an opportunity to talk or listen with other people who are grieving. Support group dates: Feb. 14, 21, 28 and March 7 and 14 from 5-7 p.m. To register, contact Joleen Johnson, LSW, at 507-637-4616.

### *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: April 1 from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. in the Redwood Area Hospital Education Room. To register, contact Joleen Johnson, LSW, at 507-637-4616.

### *Partners in Caregiving*

Meets the second Tuesday of the month (February-May) from 2-3:30 p.m. in the Redwood Area Hospital Education Room. Contact Lynn Buckley, LPN, at 507-637-4508.

### *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.

### *Childbirth Preparation Classes*

This series of six sessions meets Mondays and Wednesdays from 7-9 p.m. in the Redwood Area Hospital Education Room. Sessions run Feb. 6-22 or May 1-17. Session fee: \$15 per couple. To register, contact the OB Department at 507-637-4627.

### *Childbirth Refresher Classes*

This session is designed to offer information to expectant parents who may or may not have taken childbirth classes for a previous birth. Session date: March 11 from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. in the Redwood Area Hospital Education Room. Refresher fee: \$10 per couple. To register, contact the OB Department at 507-637-4627.

### *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.

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](http://www.redwoodareahospital.org).

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