

My St. Francis

Here for you



Need surgery?

CHOOSE ST. FRANCIS FOR HIGH-TECH, HIGH-TOUCH CARE

MELISSA FINGERSON loves her job. A registered nurse, Fingerson works in the operating room at St. Francis Healthcare Campus.

"I love OR nursing because there are always new advancements, new procedures, new equipment," says Fingerson, just one of the skilled surgery professionals caring for patients at St. Francis.

It's easy to think that a smaller,

rural hospital couldn't possibly have the latest advancements when it comes to surgery. But think again.

MINIMALLY INVASIVE TECHNIQUES

Laparoscopic surgery is just one of the modern surgical techniques performed at St. Francis. This technology allows surgeons to operate through very small incisions, resulting in less blood loss, less

READY TO SERVE: Here are just a few of the smiling faces you will find in the operating room at St. Francis Healthcare Campus.

postoperative pain and faster recovery than traditional surgery.

Many surgical procedures that used to require a hospital stay now can be done on an outpatient basis.

Here at St. Francis, surgeons perform many procedures, including:

- Surgery of the abdomen, such as gallbladder removal and hernia repair

- Female reproductive surgery,

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HIGH-TECH CARE: Emily Kuehl, LPN, assists with a procedure at St. Francis using endoscopic equipment.

ENDOSCOPY

A telling peek inside

DOCTORS HAVE A number of tools for seeing inside our bodies. For a direct view of a particular area, doctors often turn to endoscopy.

Maybe you've heard of someone having an "upper GI" or going to the hospital for laparoscopy. Both of these procedures involve endoscopy. An endoscopy is a procedure in which a thin, flexible or rigid tube—an endoscope—is inserted into the body so a doctor can examine organs, joints and other internal areas.

An endoscope has a camera at one end connected to an eyepiece at the other. Depending on the type of procedure, a person might be given general anesthesia or a sedative for comfort.

A versatile tool. One of the benefits of an endoscopy is that it allows your doctor to closely examine organs and take tissue samples

without making large incisions. The endoscope can be inserted through a natural opening in the body, such as the mouth, or in some cases, through a small incision.

Another important benefit of endoscopy is that if a problem is found, treatment can sometimes occur right away. A good example of this is when polyps are found during

colonoscopy, which examines the large intestine. These potentially cancerous growths can often be removed during the procedure.

Many valuable uses. There are endoscopes made for different parts

of the body. They're used for procedures that include:

- Upper endoscopy, to view the upper part of the gastrointestinal (GI) tract. This includes the esophagus, stomach and the first part of the small intestine.
- Laparoscopy, to examine or work in the abdominal cavity through a small incision.
- Arthroscopy, to examine and treat joints, such as the knee.

Other areas that can be viewed with an endoscope include the upper airways, lungs and bladder.

Advanced equipment at St. Francis. Some of the most advanced endoscopic equipment can be found at St. Francis. Introduced to the U.S. just two years ago, the technology used at St. Francis combines high-definition television with a new image-processing technique, producing remarkably clear views of tissues inside the body. ❖

Endoscopy allows doctors to examine areas without making large incisions.

Outpatient care: Same-day service

Sometimes when you check into the hospital, there's no need for an overnight bag. Today, many surgeries or procedures can be done on an outpatient basis.

An outpatient procedure is one in which the patient is not admitted for a stay in the hospital. If it's for surgery, it might be referred to as same-day surgery, because you generally return home on the same day the surgery is done.

Some common outpatient procedures include biopsies; tonsil and adenoid removal; hernia and hemorrhoid repair; cyst removal; and endoscopic surgeries and procedures, such as laparoscopy, arthroscopy and colonoscopy.

If you are having a procedure, follow your doctor's instructions for preparation. For example, you may be instructed not to eat or drink beforehand. Or you may need to arrange to have someone take you home afterward. Being an outpatient is not necessarily appropriate for everyone. Some people may need to stay for observation or further treatment. Your doctor can decide if it's right for you.

Sources: American Medical Association; American Society of Anesthesiologists

Sources: American Cancer Society; American College of Physicians; American Medical Association

Preparing for surgery

STEPS TO HELP EASE THE WAY

WHEN YOU'RE going to have surgery, it's understandable to be a little nervous. Even outpatient surgery, which doesn't require a hospital stay, can cause some anxiety.

But there are some steps you can take to ease your worries. Understanding the process and planning ahead a bit can help pave the way for a smoother time and a faster recovery.

For starters, be sure to ask your doctor about anything you don't understand. Your doctor will want you to have your questions answered before your surgery.

TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

Giving yourself a little extra care now can help prepare your body to handle surgery. Get plenty of rest and eat a well-balanced diet. Your doctor may suggest a daily multivitamin as well.

Some additional steps from leading health authorities:

- If you are a smoker, you can do yourself a favor by quitting—or at least cutting back—before surgery. Smoking delays healing.
- Ask your doctor if you should stop taking aspirin or other medications before surgery. Tell your doctor about any prescription and over-the-counter medicines or dietary supplements you use.

Looking for Dr. Right? Visit www.sfcare.org and click "Physicians" for a list of surgeons.

DEALING WITH DETAILS

Before your surgery, you'll be given any special instructions—they will likely include not eating or drinking anything after the previous midnight.

Other general advice:

- Ask your doctor about home health care if your recovery may be extensive.
- Consider having someone help with household tasks while you recover.
- Arrange for transportation to and from the hospital.
- Leave any valuables at home.

GETTING BETTER

To help your recovery, a nurse or other medical professional will help you start walking as soon as possible after surgery—walking aids healing. Pain medication may help you feel more comfortable.

Once you are home, you can help speed your recovery by following your discharge instructions,

which give advice about your diet, activities and symptoms to watch for. And as always, don't hesitate to call your doctor if you have questions. ♦

A few questions worth asking

If you are scheduled for surgery weeks or days in advance, take advantage of this time by asking your doctor any questions you have.

Some good questions:

- Why do I need this surgery?
- What are the risks and benefits?
- Are there alternatives—medicines or other treatments that can help?
- Should I get a second opinion?
- What will happen during surgery?
- What will happen if I don't have the operation?
- What kind of anesthesia will I be given?
- How long will I be in the hospital, and what can I expect during recovery?

Source: American Medical Association

Sleeping well for your heart

Good nutrition and exercise are essential for heart health. But so, it appears, is a good night's sleep.

An ongoing sleep shortage can contribute to heart problems by boosting blood pressure, increasing stress hormone levels and causing unhealthy changes in blood sugar.

Sleep apnea, a condition in which a person frequently stops breathing while sleeping, can also have serious consequences for the heart. It deprives major organs of oxygen. It strains the lungs and heart, raises your blood pressure and, over time, can weaken the heart. Sleep apnea raises a person's risk of heart failure, heart attack and stroke, according to the American College of Physicians.

The good news, of course, is that most sleep problems can be resolved with proper diagnosis and treatment. If you are having any sleep problems, talk to your doctor.

Seeking sweet slumber

BRENDA KOPPELMAN was tired of being tired. "I could sleep 12 hours and feel like I'd not slept at all," remembers the Breckenridge resident.

When a friend told her how much better he'd felt following a diagnosis and treatment for a sleep disorder, Koppelman was intrigued.

"Wow," she thought. "I wonder how well I would feel if I could get a good night's sleep?"

Within weeks she was settling down for the night at St. Francis for a sleep observation. Come morning, she was told that she had woken up 27 times and not once entered the

deepest stage of sleep. She was diagnosed with sleep apnea, a condition in which a person frequently stops breathing while sleeping.

A QUEST FOR REST

Koppelman isn't alone. Roughly three-quarters of U.S. adults have trouble sleeping at least a few nights per week, according to the National Sleep Foundation.

During Koppelman's second sleep study, she tried continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) therapy, using a special machine to help her breathe easily.

"In just one night, I noticed a major difference. I felt so much more rested," says Koppelman, who plans to obtain her own CPAP machine to use at home.

A SLEEP STUDY SERVICE

Most sleep disorders are treatable. For a complete and proper diagnosis, you may need to visit St. Francis for a sleep study.



DREAMING OF BETTER NIGHTS: Brenda Koppelman had a sleep study at St. Francis and now looks forward to a well rested future.

FOUNDATION

Thank you for your support in 2007

Thank you to the many donors who opened their hearts and wallets to benefit the Healthcare & Wellness Foundation of St. Francis last year. Many of you took time during the busy holiday season to make a year-end donation for income tax purposes. We thank all of you for your generous support.

Hospice Tree of Lights 2007. Hundreds of donors supported the Foundation last December by purchasing a light in memory or in honor of a loved one. Thank you to all who donated or volunteered to make the Hospice Tree of Lights a magical event for everyone involved.

2007 St. Francis Gala. The Foundation's largest fundraiser of the year took place Dec. 7 at the Wahpeton Eagles Club. We're grateful to the many donors who purchased tickets and auction items or who sponsored the event.

In addition to the silent auction, guests at the Gala played casino games, enjoyed the "mashed potato martini bar" and listened to live music by the Shakers. Thank you to all the volunteers who helped make the Gala a success.

CaringBridge helps patients and families keep in touch. Because of the Gala's success, the Foundation is



able to fund CaringBridge, a service that offers free personalized

websites that allow people to stay in touch with family and friends during a health crisis, treatment and recovery. The goal of the service is to ease the burden of keeping friends and family updated, while also providing a way for them to send their love, support and encouragement.

For more information, please visit www.CaringBridge.org.

Questions? If you have any questions about Foundation activities or events, please feel free to stop by or call the Foundation office at 218-643-0410. Becky Ruthenbeck, executive director, will be happy to visit with you and answer your questions. ❖

Bringing top doctors to the community

The quality of life in any community is enhanced by the availability of quality medical care. Here at St. Francis Healthcare Campus, we pride ourselves on our ability to provide such care.

"Because top-notch medical care is delivered by top-notch providers, we work hard to attract high-quality physicians and other medical professionals to the community," says David Nelson, president and CEO for St. Francis.

In 2007 we collaborated with other local providers to recruit three new physicians to the community, providing family medicine and general surgery to our existing complement of 16 physicians serving and living in the community.

Future growth. Our strategic plans for ongoing medical staff development have been created by a team of representatives from hospital management, the medical staff and the community board. The planning process involves multiple steps, including:

- Identifying the types of physicians and staff that are most needed in the community, based on demographic information
- Identifying the right mix of physicians to help meet community needs
- Defining the types of physicians and staff that can help support needs
- Being sensitive to the needs of



PLANNING AHEAD: St. Francis CEO David Nelson hopes to assist in recruiting three additional family practitioners to the community.

hospital staff, medical staff and the community

■ Setting recruitment goals that are realistic and achievable in the rural marketplace

In 2008 there are plans to assist in recruiting three more family practitioners to serve the future health care needs of the community.

Feel free to call us at 218-643-0405 if you know of a potential physician candidate or if you have questions about our work to help build the resources to serve the community's health care needs. ❖

Find the health care provider you need at St. Francis

There are many physicians and medical providers serving our community, whether employed by St. Francis or by unaffiliated local clinics.* With this list, you can see the number of providers in each speciality:

- 11 family medicine physicians
- 8 emergency medicine physicians
- 5 radiologists
- 3 pathologists
- 3 surgeons
- 2 dentists
- 2 ophthalmologists
- 2 orthopedists

- 1 internal medicine physician
- 1 OB/GYN physician
- 1 oncologist
- 1 oral surgeon
- 1 podiatrist
- 1 psychiatrist
- 1 urologist

Mid-level practitioners

- 2 nurse practitioners
- 2 physician assistants

*This list does not include many visiting providers to the community.



Health care comes home

HOME IS OFTEN the place where people feel most comfortable, which is one reason many people choose to get the medical care they need right there.

Home health care might be an option for you or a family member who needs special care. It includes several doctor-ordered services delivered by a variety of health professionals in your home.

For example, home care might be available while you recover from an illness, an injury or surgery, or the care might be long term for a chronic or serious illness or disability.

St. Francis provides home health services such as skilled nursing; physical, occupational or speech therapy; and help with daily living.

For more information about home health care services provided by St. Francis Healthcare Campus, please call us at 218-643-0467. ♦

Need surgery?

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such as hysterectomy and cesarean section

- Diagnosis and treatment procedures, such as breast biopsy and mastectomy
- Surgery of the throat, such as tonsillectomy and adenoidectomy
- Oral surgery, such as wisdom tooth removal
- Cataract surgery
- Foot surgery, such as bunion removal

SURGICAL CARE TEAM

It takes a team of clinical care professionals to care for each surgi-

cal patient. At St. Francis, board-certified surgeons work closely with surgical technicians, registered nurses and CRNAs (certified registered nurse anesthetists). CRNAs are advanced practice nurses who specialize in anesthesia, having both earned a master's degree in nurse anesthesia and passed a certification exam.

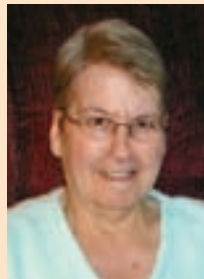
CHOOSE ST. FRANCIS

If your doctor says you need surgery, choose to have your procedure at St. Francis. Our team is ready to serve you!

“OR nursing is very technical, and I love how I’m able to keep learning,” says Fingerson. “I love what I do.” ♦

St. Francis: The right choice

For Daisy Hartleben, of Hankinson, N.D., surgery at St. Francis made the most sense. With a daughter in Breckenridge, Hartleben



Daisy Hartleben

recently opted to undergo a surgical procedure at St. Francis rather than travel twice the distance to Fargo.

Before her surgery, the nurses

made Hartleben feel at ease. “They were very supportive,” she says. “I received very good care.”

After a week’s stay in the hospital, Hartleben received frequent visits at home from one of St. Francis’ home health specialists (see “Health care comes home” at right). This option provides patients with a continual level of care even after they leave the hospital, helping the healing process.

“I highly recommend St. Francis,” Hartleben says.

MY ST. FRANCIS is published as a community service for the friends and patrons of ST. FRANCIS HEALTHCARE CAMPUS, 2400 St. Francis Drive, Breckenridge, MN 56520, telephone 218-643-3000, www.sfcare.org.

David Nelson
President and Chief
Executive Officer

Information in MY ST. FRANCIS comes from a wide range of medical experts. If you have any concerns or questions about specific content that may affect your health, please contact your health care provider.

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ST. FRANCIS HEALTHCARE CAMPUS
2400 St. Francis Drive
Breckenridge, MN 56520

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Permit No. 96

Highway 75 North and 210 West
www.sfcare.org