

COVID-19: Trinity Health continues to keep our staff, patients, families, and community safe. Please visit trinityhealth.org/coronavirus for vaccine, testing, treatment, and other current information.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

PPD: When Welcoming a Baby Leads to Depression

Optometrist Joins Trinity Regional Eyecare – Minot Center

Trinity Health Auxiliary Presents Elton John and Billy Joel the Tribute

Join Our Team in Nutrition Services

Ophthalmologist Joins Trinity Regional Eyecare – Western Dakota

In Recognition and Thanks From Trinity Health Foundation

Plant-Based Foods a Good Choice for Managing Cholesterol

Trinity Health Replaces Surgical Robot with State-of-the-Art System

Community Calendar



Students and Heavy Backpacks

Gym shoes? Check. Books? Check. Binder? Check. Folder and notebooks? Check and check.

Now that you know your child has everything he or she needs in their backpack, have you checked its weight?

Backpack Injuries

According to the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons, backpacks that are too heavy or are worn incorrectly can cause problems for children and teenagers. These problems frequently result in a trip to a doctor’s office.

Diana Peterson, MD, a pediatrician at Trinity Health, says she frequently sees patients with such problems. “Parents worry that a heavy backpack can cause scoliosis, but that’s not the case. It can cause back, neck, and shoulder pain, however.”

Over time, a child’s posture can also be affected as they try to compensate for the backpack’s heaviness. Additionally, a heavy backpack can increase the risk of falling, particularly on stairs or other places where the backpack puts the wearer off balance.

The problem of students carrying backpacks that are too heavy for their weight isn’t new, but it was exacerbated last school year during the COVID-19 pandemic. In many places, students weren’t allowed access to lockers for health and safety reasons; instead, they had to carry an entire day’s worth of school supplies in their backpack. Outside of the pandemic, students carry too much stuff in their backpacks for a multitude of reasons, including time constraints in between classes, class locations, or the overall layout of the school campus.

Injury Prevention

Doctors recommend that children should not carry more than 10 to 15 percent of their body weight in their backpacks. For example, the maximum backpack weight for a 60-pound student is nine pounds, and the maximum weight for an 80-pound student is 12 pounds.

Dr. Peterson offers the following tips to students:

- Wear backpack on both shoulders to distribute the weight.
- Distribute the weight evenly throughout the backpack; for example, use all the pockets and, if necessary, carry some items in your arms.
- Have good padding on the backpack straps.
- If you have access to a locker, leave the books you aren’t using at that time in your locker.
- If there are extra books, have two sets so one set can be left at home and one at school.
- When and where possible, use a rolling backpack.
- Teachers frequently only assign homework out of the books and don’t use them in class. If that’s the case, leave your book(s) for that class at home or in your locker.

According to Dr. Peterson, there is no one-size-fits-all solution. “If an individual is having problems, they should address it with the school and brainstorm [a solution].”



Diana Peterson, MD



Facts About COVID-19 Vaccines

COVID-19 vaccines are held to the same safety standards as all vaccines.

Two types of COVID-19 vaccines have been authorized and recommended for use in the United States: messenger RNA (mRNA) vaccines and a viral vector vaccine. Both types deliver genetic material to cells to begin building protection against the virus, working with the body’s natural defenses to safely develop immunity.

The CDC reports that these vaccines have undergone the most intensive safety monitoring in U.S. history, including studies in children 12 years and older. Evaluated in tens of thousands of participants in clinical trials, the vaccines met the FDA’s rigorous scientific standards for safety, effectiveness, and manufacturing quality needed to support EUA.

The FDA and CDC continue to monitor vaccine safety and side effects. Results show that some people have no side effects. Others have reported common side effects after COVID-19 vaccination, such as swelling, redness, and pain at injection site; fever; headache; tiredness; muscle pain; chills; or nausea. So far, safety monitoring has found only two serious types of health problems after vaccination, both of which are rare.

continued on page 2



PPD: When Welcoming a Baby Leads to Depression

Welcoming a new baby is a momentous time in one’s life, marked with a wide range of emotions: excitement and joy, fear and anxiety, and, occasionally, depression. While most new mothers experience postpartum “baby blues,” some experience a more severe, long-lasting form of depression known as postpartum depression (PPD).

Baby Blues

According to the American Pregnancy Association, approx. 70–80% of all new mothers experience some negative feelings or mood swings after the birth of their child. This is commonly referred to as “baby blues.”

“Baby blues is a normal and anticipated response to several coinciding changes following birth, including but not limited to the major, rapid decrease in hormones, acute sleep deprivation, and transition from the hospital to the home,” said Robyn Hardie, PsyD, PMH-C, a licensed clinical psychologist and perinatal mental health provider with Trinity Health’s Behavioral Health team.

Symptoms of baby blues include:

- Mood swings
- Anxiety
- Sadness
- Irritability
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Tearfulness
- Reduced concentration
- Appetite problems
- Trouble sleeping
- Fatigue

These symptoms typically last only a few days to a week or two after delivery and usually resolve without intervention or treatment.

Postpartum Depression

Unlike the baby blues, postpartum depression is not a regular or expected part of being a new mother.

The American Pregnancy Association says that approximately 15% of new mothers will experience postpartum depression. PPD may be mistaken for baby blues at first — but the signs and symptoms are more intense and last longer, and may eventually interfere with your ability to care for your baby and handle other daily tasks.

“Baby blues can be confused with PPD as many symptoms overlap. Severity, timing, and duration of symptoms help us distinguish between baby blues and PPD,” said Dr. Hardie.

Postpartum depression signs and symptoms may include a combination of the following:

- Feeling sad, hopeless, and/or overwhelmed
- Trouble sleeping and eating
- Feelings of guilt and worthlessness
- Agitation
- Restlessness
- Anxiety
- Rage
- Increased somatic symptoms (headaches, GI distress, back pain, etc.)
- Poor concentration
- Indecisiveness
- Losing interest in things that you used to enjoy
- Isolation
- Withdrawing from family and friends
- No interest in your baby
- Thoughts of hurting yourself or your baby
- Recurrent thoughts of death or suicide
- Thoughts that the baby would be better off without you or with someone else

(It’s important to note that you don’t have to experience every one of these symptoms to have PPD.)



Robyn Hardie
PsyD, PMH-C



continued on page 4

Vaccines continued from page 1

COVID-19 vaccines will not alter your DNA.

The mRNA and viral vector COVID-19 vaccines deliver genetic material to cells, but the material never enters the nucleus of the cell where DNA is located. This means the genetic material in the vaccines cannot affect or interact with DNA in any way.

COVID-19 vaccines will not give you COVID-19.

COVID-19 vaccines do not contain live virus and cannot give anyone COVID-19. The vaccines teach the immune system how to recognize and fight the virus. Sometimes this process can cause symptoms, such as fever, which are normal signs that the body is building protection against the virus. Because it takes a few weeks for the body to build immunity after vaccination, it’s possible a person could be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 just before or just after vaccination. At that point the vaccine would not have had enough time to provide protection.

If you already had COVID-19, you should still get vaccinated.

Although antibodies are produced after a person has been infected with COVID-19, experts do not yet know how long protection from the previous infection lasts. Studies have shown that vaccination provides a strong boost in protection in people who have recovered from COVID-19. The CDC notes the importance of adding vaccine-induced immunity to lower the chance of reinfection as much as possible.

Casmir Nwaigwe, MD, infectious disease specialist at Trinity Health, explained, “Whether you have been infected or think you may have been infected, we recommend getting the vaccine. If you look at second and third waves of infection in other parts of the world, the thought process was that because infection went through the population, herd immunity was achieved. But second and third waves came and more people were sick and dying, which means that previous infection levels did not provide protection. If previous infection offered herd immunity, the next wave would not have happened. I would not rely on protection from previous infection.”

You can receive the COVID-19 vaccine if you are pregnant or plan to have children.

Terry Altringer, PharmD, pharmacy clinical supervisor at Trinity Health, stated, “Although we have more data with non-pregnant adults than we do in pregnant individuals, so far there isn’t any signal to suggest greater risk of adverse outcomes with the vaccines that have been tested in pregnant women.” The CDC coronavirus web page reports there is currently no evidence that COVID-19 vaccination causes any problems with pregnancy, including the development of the placenta. There is also no evidence that fertility problems are a side effect of COVID-19 vaccines.

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recommends that COVID-19 vaccines be available and administered to pregnant individuals, particularly due to the increased risk in this group for more severe illness compared with nonpregnant peers.

It is safe for children age 12 and older to get the COVID-19 vaccine.

COVID-19 vaccination can help protect children from getting COVID-19. Although fewer children have been sick with COVID-19 compared to adults, they can become infected, get sick, and spread the virus to others.

Currently, only the Pfizer vaccine is approved for children 12 years and older. Studies so far show the COVID-19 vaccines to be safe and effective in this age group. Side effects are similar to those that adults experience. Reactions tend to be more common with the second dose, but are generally not severe and resolve relatively quickly with general supportive care. Children cannot get COVID-19 from any COVID-19 vaccine.

Myocarditis and pericarditis – inflammation of the heart muscle and lining outside the heart – have recently been associated with the two mRNA vaccines. Reported more often in adolescents and young children, the number of events so far has been low.

continued on page 3

Minot Optometrist Joins Regional Eyecare's Minot Center

Trinity Health is pleased to announce that Sierra Unruh, OD, has joined Trinity Health's team of providers at Trinity Regional Eyecare – Minot Center. Dr. Unruh is a board-certified optometrist, dedicated to providing comprehensive, high-quality vision care to people of all ages.



Sierra Unruh, OD

Working with Trinity's team of eye care specialists, she offers diagnosis, treatment, and referral for the full range of eye diseases, including cataract, age-related macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, and glaucoma. Her expertise includes diagnosing and managing complex eye conditions. She also provides routine eye care exams and is skilled at prescribing glasses and contacts.

Born and raised in Bismarck, Dr. Unruh completed her undergraduate education with a Bachelor of Science in Biology from the University of North Dakota. She received her optometric education and training at the Illinois College of Optometry in Chicago in 2015, followed by a post-doctorate residency at the Memphis VA Medical Center.

Following residency, Dr. Unruh established an optometric care clinic for veterans in Aberdeen, SD, working in unison with ophthalmologists and primary care providers. She has served patients in the Minot area for the past several years, helping to improve the quality of life through enhanced vision. In 2018, she achieved fellowship with the American Academy of Optometry.

Eagle Awards



Deanne Johnson
Case Management

The Eagle Award is given by the Minot Area Chamber of Commerce to members of the community who exemplify excellent customer service. For more information or to make a nomination, visit: www.minotchamber.org/about/chamberawards/



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Vaccines continued from page 2

"As with all individual circumstances, it is entirely reasonable for each person and family to come to a decision that works for them in conjunction with their pediatrician or healthcare provider," Terry Altringer said. "However, the evidence so far shows that the vaccine is safe and effective in most children who have been vaccinated. Certainly, more data from clinical studies will continue to become available in the future."

Patients should talk with their doctor about COVID-19 treatments they've received, medical conditions they have, or other questions about getting the vaccine. More information about safety and side effects is available at www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/. Call 701-857-2515 for a vaccine appointment.

Trinity Health Auxiliary
Hearts Club

A fundraiser for the new Trinity Health Regional Healthcare Campus and Medical District



TWO SHOWS: September 24 & September 25

6:30 p.m. Dinner • 7:30 p.m. Show
Clarion Hotel, Minot

Reserved Table of 8 - \$600

Walt Wise will be performing a tribute to Elton John and Billy Joel. Walt will be performing the Piano Man and the Rocketman's greatest hits LIVE onstage. Sing and dance along with favorites like Crocodile Rock, Big Shot, You May Be Right, and many more. Our goal is to bring you the most authentic impersonators; Walt Wise has performed all over the United States including Las Vegas and Disney World. This tribute show is not to be missed! The tribute show will be held on two nights, that will not only include a fantastic show, but a wonderful dinner prepared by Homesteaders Restaurant.

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Trinity Hospital Gift Shop or
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Depression continued from page 2

Postpartum depression will often have an onset between one and three months postpartum, although symptoms can occur as early as a few days after delivery or sometimes as late as a year after. These symptoms last at least two weeks, but if left untreated, can last for many months or longer.

Risk Factors for Postpartum Depression

“Postpartum depression does not discriminate,” said Dr. Hardie, “However, some women are at higher risk for developing the condition.”

Risk factors for PPD include:

- History of depression or previous postpartum depression
- Bipolar disorder
- Family history of mental illness
- Diabetes or thyroid issues
- History of sexual trauma or abuse
- Traumatic pregnancy or delivery
- Unplanned or unwanted pregnancy
- Birth of multiples
- Pregnancy or infant loss
- Financial struggles
- Single or teen mother
- Relationship problems
- Breastfeeding difficulties
- Weak support system



Although any woman can develop PPD, there are certain ways to help minimize the risk of developing the condition.

“Creating a postpartum coping and support plan can help. This care plan can include things such as identifying where baby will sleep, who will care for baby at night, family and friends that can help, and who will take care of cleaning, laundry, meals, grocery shopping, etc.,” said Dr. Hardie.

Allowing and accepting help, rest, proper nutrition, staying hydrated, avoiding alcohol, limiting caffeine and sugar, movement/exercise, and personal time can also help minimize the risk.

Reaching Out for Help

“There are so many assumptions and myths surrounding pregnancy, childbirth, and parenting. We may downplay our feelings, tell ourselves it will get better and that other people have it worse,” said Dr. Hardie, adding that social media “frequently fuels images and unrealistic expectations about motherhood/parenthood.”

Some women don’t tell anyone about their symptoms. They may feel embarrassed, ashamed, or guilty about feeling depressed when they are “supposed to be happy.”

It’s important to remember that any woman can become depressed during pregnancy or after having a baby. It doesn’t mean you are a bad mom, you are not to blame, and there is help.

“Trust your gut,” said Dr. Hardie. “If you feel it will not go away and think, ‘This doesn’t feel like me,’ do not hesitate to talk to someone.”

If you’re struggling with symptoms of PPD, call your provider, or reach out to any healthcare professional who has contact with pregnant or postpartum women, such as your Ob/Gyn or midwife, or your child’s pediatrician. Pharmacists, therapists, nurses, doulas, lactation consultants, and childbirth educators also can assist in getting you the help you need.

“Ask for help. Do not suffer in silence. Let someone know you are struggling.”

If you have thoughts of harming yourself or your baby, immediately seek help and call 911 or go the Emergency Room.

Supporting New Mothers

“It is important to maintain ongoing support [to new moms] throughout the postpartum period. Often support is available the first month after birth and then slowly dwindles,” said Dr. Hardie. “Weekly check-ins, a quick text message or phone call, helping with household tasks, encouraging activities outside the home, etc. Facilitating the mother’s ability to engage in self-care activities is of great help.”

Additionally, family and friends should be aware of the signs and symptoms of postpartum depression, as people struggling with the condition may not recognize or acknowledge that they’re depressed. Loved ones may be the first to recognize that a woman is experiencing PPD.

If you suspect that a friend or loved one has PPD, help them seek medical attention immediately.

About Dr. Hardie

Dr. Hardie is a licensed clinical psychologist and perinatal mental health provider. As a member of Trinity Health’s Behavioral Health team, she is dedicated to helping adults of all ages overcome behavioral health conditions such as depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress, with an emphasis on treating the whole person. Her office is located at Health Center – Riverside, 1900 8th Ave SE, Minot. She can be reached at 701-857-5998.

Postpartum Support International

Postpartum Support International (PSI) is an organization dedicated to increasing awareness among public and professional communities about the emotional changes that women experience during pregnancy and postpartum. They offer more than 14 online support groups and provide a list of local resources in every state and more than 40 countries. PSI can help with referrals to local providers and professionals with advanced knowledge of perinatal disorders. For more information, visit their webpage www.postpartum.net, or call the PSI helpline at 1-800-944-4PPD (4773). Please note, this is not a crisis hotline and does not handle emergencies. In case of an emergency or crisis, call 911 or the National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

Ophthalmologist Brings Special Skills

Trinity Health welcomes Jewel Sandy, MD, to the eye care team at Trinity Regional Eyecare – Western Dakota in Williston. A board-certified ophthalmologist, Dr. Sandy is fellowship trained in Ophthalmic Plastic, Orbital, and Reconstructive Surgery. She provides high-quality medical and surgical care to patients for the full range of eye conditions and is specially trained to perform reconstructive and cosmetic surgery of the eyelids, eye socket, and face.



Jewel Sandy, MD

A graduate of Loma Linda University School of Medicine, she completed her ophthalmology residency at UAB Callahan Eye Hospital at the University of Alabama Birmingham. She spent an additional two years of advanced fellowship training at Dean McGee Eye Institute in Oklahoma and Allegheny Ophthalmic & Orbital Associates, PC, in Pittsburgh, focused on Global Eye Care and Orbital/Ophthalmic Plastic Surgery, respectively. Prior to joining Trinity Health, Dr. Sandy served as Assistant Professor at Loma Linda University School of Medicine Ophthalmology Department.

In addition to being recognized for her academic achievement, Dr. Sandy has been an advocate for improving patient access to quality eye care, pioneering domestic and international medical missions and outreach. A member of the American Academy of Ophthalmology and American Medical Association, she enjoys hiking, reading, and international cuisine. For an appointment, please call 701-572-7641.



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Check it out for yourself with our live cameras at trinityhealth.org



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Trinity Health Foundation is proud to list the names of individuals, organizations, and businesses whose gifts were received from April 1 to June 30, 2021. These contributions illustrate a generous and caring community, striving to bring the highest quality care to those we serve. We want to thank those contributors for their generous support of Trinity Health's mission: "To excel at meeting the needs of the whole person through the provision of quality healthcare and health related services." For more information on honoring the memory of a loved one through philanthropic giving, contact Trinity Health Foundation at 701-857-5432.

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 Denise & Lynn Billadeau

In memory of Edwin E. Land
 Arleen Becker

In memory of Eugene Field
 Betty Field

In memory of Fern Brilz
 David & April Demaree

In memory of Florence Steffen
 Jerry Steffen

In memory of Garnet Bloms
 Glen & Lynnette Cunningham

In memory of Gary Eriksmoen
 Louise Eriksmoen

In memory of Gary Ledoux
 Kenny & Glenda Tofteland

In memory of Harley Wittmayer
 Harvey & Diane Wittmayer

In memory of Irvin Hunsaid
 Anna Mae Hunsaid

In memory of Jayne Lancaster
 Crystal & Marty Grenier

In memory of Jim & Helen Rice
 Judith Rice

In memory of Joe & Elsie Black
 Cynthia Black-Neuharth

In memory of John Niemitalo
 Carl & Michelle Kannianen

In memory of Julie DeSaye
 Greg DeSaye

In memory of Larry Luna
 Troy & Margaret Kendall

In memory of Laurence Thompson
 Opal Thompson

In memory of Madonna Harmon
 Cassandra Harmon

In memory of Maureen Gwen Parrish
 Richard Parrish

In memory of Phyllis Gordon
 Alfred & Betty Frey

In memory of Shirley Nitz
 Marla & Rick Erickson

In memory of Terry Hoff
 Mike & Pam Uran

In memory of Wendy Bentz
 Eldora Bentz

In memory of Wesley Tossett
 Glen & Lynnette Cunningham

In honor of all the great doctors & nurses & all the ambulance workers
 Patrick & Kathy Streich

In honor of Donald Young
 Terri & Clifford Nelson

In honor of Charles Swenson, MD
 Lanny & Linda Wade

In honor of Imelda Naranja, MD
 Joanne & Darrel Quale

In honor of the heart department
 Sandy & Arley Larson

In honor of the New Town Ambulance Crew
 Larsen Service Drug, Inc.

MENTAL/BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
 BNSF Railway Foundation

MICHELLE KELLER RAD TECH ENDOWMENT
In memory of Ruben Buechler
 Lila & Chet Reich

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 North Dakota Department of Health

NEW TOWN COMMUNITY CLINIC
 Slawson Exploration Company, Inc.

NURSING SCHOLARSHIP ENDOWMENT
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 Tiffany Frederick

In memory of Alec Zorn
 Stephen & Ann Ashley

In memory of Bennie & Marian Schimmelpfenning
 Judith Rice

In memory of Clayton Thom
 Lila & Chet Reich

In memory of Courtney DeGree
 G & P Commercial Sales Inc

In memory of Fern Brilz
 David & April Demaree

In memory of Hazel Stromberg
 Stanley Stromberg

In memory of Helen Garnaas, RN
 Lloyd & Jacqueline Freeman

In memory of Jack Pennington
 Robert & Janell Gorder

In memory of Jerry Dobrovolny
 Jane Dobrovolny

In memory of Joe & Elsie Black
 Cynthia Black-Neuharth

In memory of Laurence Thompson
 Opal Thompson

In memory of Mary Smith
 Marilyn Scott

In memory of Mildred Roberts
 Marilyn Scott

In memory of Ronald Roberts
 Lila & Chet Reich

In memory of Verla Reichenberger
 Lila & Chet Reich

In memory of Wendy Bentz
 Eldora Bentz

In memory of Wesley Tossett
 Judith Rice

In honor of Imelda Naranja, MD
 Joanne & Darrel Quale

In honor of past graduates of THSN
 Orlan & Laurie Honadel

In honor of Rosamond Schan
 Mary Klein

In recognition of care given by Michael Van Bibber, MD
 Lowell & Ann Latimer

PASTORAL CARE
 Connie Hagen

In memory of Terry Hoff
 Randy & Lynn Schwan

SHIPLEY ENDOWMENT
 Frank Shipley, MD

STOP THE BLEED
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TRINITY HEALTH FOUNDATION FUND
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 Sharon Rollman

In honor of the Fyllesvold & Fournier Families
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TRINITY HOMES
In memory of Betty Palmer
 Anonymous Contributions

In memory of Clara Harvey
 Lorraine & Bradley Boschee

In memory of Eva Brandt
 Theresa & Steven Glascock

In memory of Wesley Tossett
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VERHEY CRITICAL CARE ENDOWMENT
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In memory of Dorothy Bjertness
 Dr. Jeffrey & Janelle Verhey

In memory of Harlis "Bud" Sem
 Dr. Jeffrey & Janelle Verhey

In memory of Jeanette Schaefer
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In memory of Linda Seibert
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In memory of Mary Smith
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In memory of Rick Held
 Dr. Jeffrey & Janelle Verhey

In memory of William Schriock, Jr.
 Dr. Jeffrey & Janelle Verhey

In honor of Dr. Jeffrey & Janelle Verhey
 Heidi & Jamie Bender
 Western Dakota Community Clinic
 Oasis Petroleum

Root Beer Floats and Classic Cars



Residents of Trinity Homes enjoyed root beer floats and classic cars on August 12, thanks to the Magic City Antique Car Club and Dakota Cruisers. Tom Carson's 1927 Model T Hot Rod was voted first place by the residents.



Plant-Based Foods a Good Choice for Managing Cholesterol

Americans have been told for years that high cholesterol can lead to heart disease and stroke. But are we getting the message?

A report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says the prevalence of American adults with high cholesterol actually did decline between 2000 and 2016. However, about one in every six adults in the U.S. still has a cholesterol problem – in other words, their total cholesterol level is higher than 240 mg/dL.

That's too many people, according to Ira Paul Michaelson, MD, a board-certified gastroenterologist with Trinity Health. "The average blood cholesterol level is at such a high level that a large percentage of the population is at risk for heart disease," he noted.

In addition to providing advanced gastroenterology care, Dr. Michaelson has an interest in non-invasive treatments, including Dr. Caldwell Esselstyn's work at the Cleveland Clinic in the area of plant-based diets and their effect on cancer and heart disease.

"When I do an educational presentation on cholesterol, I talk about it in terms of the old Clint Eastwood movie, 'The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly.' The good is HDL or good cholesterol; the bad is LDL or bad cholesterol; and the ugly is remnant cholesterol, which is often listed as triglycerides."

Among Dr. Michaelson's key points is that what we eat has a profound effect on our risk factors for a variety of diseases, including cardiovascular disease. "A typical western diet includes a dietary intake of 200-300 mgs of cholesterol per day or, in some cases, even higher. For people on a plant-based diet, their cholesterol intake is zero. You only get dietary cholesterol from animal sources; plants don't have it," he explained.

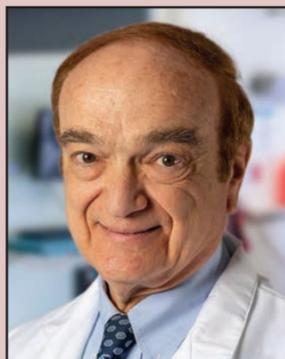
Cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance that the body needs to build cells. However, when you have too much in your blood, it can build up on the walls of your arteries, leading to cardiovascular illnesses such as heart disease and stroke.

There are two types of cholesterol – serum cholesterol, which is the substance produced by the liver to help in the digestion of fatty foods and various other functions, and dietary cholesterol, an ingredient found in animal foods such as egg yolks, fatty meats, and cheeses.

The body produces all the cholesterol it needs, so when we add dietary cholesterol to the naturally produced substance, problems result in the form of plaques that build up inside the blood vessels – a condition called atherosclerosis.

Some risk factors for cardiovascular disease are beyond our control, including age, gender, and heredity. But other factors are controllable such as being overweight, not getting enough exercise, and eating an unhealthy diet.

"One can lower cholesterol through diet by avoiding trans fats and saturated fats, and cutting back on animal proteins," Dr. Michaelson said. "If you reduce saturated fat and replace it with refined carbohydrates, LDL goes down, HDL goes down, and insulin resistance goes up."



Ira Paul Michaelson, MD

continued on page 8



Trinity Health Replaces Surgical Robot with State-of- the-Art System

If you've ever traded in an older vehicle for the latest model, you understand why Trinity Health's surgical teams have a new bounce in their step.

Trinity Health recently upgraded its robotic surgery system, replacing its da Vinci Si with the more advanced da Vinci Xi – the latest edition of surgical robots designed by Intuitive Surgical, Inc., a global leader in minimally invasive and robotic-assisted surgery.

Trinity's first procedure using the new system was performed June 24 by urologist Michael Van Bibber, MD. Since then, a growing number of surgeons have taken the robot for a proverbial "spin" to try out the system's new bells and whistles. Obstetrician/Gynecologist David Amsbury, DO, says after completing just a few cases on the new Xi, he is sold.

"The Xi is a newer generation of a robot which was already an amazing enhancement in minimally invasive surgery," he said. "I noticed after just a handful of cases that the new robot was making procedures go faster and smoother because of the improvements in instrumentation. That's the beauty of technology – you do something over time and realize how it can be improved and made more efficient. That's what Intuitive has done."

Timothy Bedell, MD, an Ob/Gyn who chairs Trinity's robotic surgery committee, says the da Vinci Xi has intuitive features that make it ideal for choreographing procedures that involve moving from one side of the body to the other. "The table and the surgical robot are synchronized," he explained. "After the table is repositioned, the system adjusts all of the surgical instruments to maintain the orientation to the patient's anatomy."

Such design improvements let general surgeons like Jerel Brandt, DO, perform more complex surgical cases using less-invasive techniques. "Because of the better range of arm movement, we'll be able to do more complex abdominal wall hernia surgeries," Dr. Brandt said. "Right now, we tend to perform these as open procedures, and patients have to deal with a large incision. Now we'll be able to move toward using a more minimally invasive approach."

Dr. Brandt cites two additional innovations that will greatly enhance surgical performance and patient outcomes. One is Firefly Fluorescence Imaging, a supportive feature of the da Vinci Xi, that involves injecting dye into a surgical site to enhance visualization during robotic surgery. "With Firefly, we can visualize the common bile duct during a cholecystectomy to protect it when we remove the gallbladder," he said. "It also comes in handy during colon resections – after we've removed part of the colon, Firefly lets us visualize the blood vessels in the bowel to make sure we reconnect them properly as we rejoin portions of the intestine. That's an important point because you need to have good blood supply to heal and prevent surgical site infection."

Robotic colon resections typically involve a shorter hospital stay than open resections, according to Dr. Brandt. Research shows that people who undergo an open resection are generally hospitalized five to six days, versus two to four days for patients who have it done robotically. "It's significantly less hospital time and less risk of adverse outcomes," Dr. Brandt added.

The second advancement is smart surgical stapling technology. This gives the surgeon feedback prior to the stapler firing to make sure tissue is being secured under the best conditions. "When we staple a bowel or other tissue, the robot will measure the thickness of tissue. If the tissue is too thick it will let us know and won't fire. It's kind of like stapling 100 pieces of paper together; you want to make sure the staple goes all the way through."

Trinity Health was the first care system in North Dakota to install the original da Vinci Si HD Surgical System in 2010. The recent upgrade fortifies Trinity's standing as a leader in robotic-assisted surgery. (This past year, Trinity's orthopedic surgeons also performed the region's first total knee replacement using a separate robotic technology, the ROSA Knee System.)



David Amsbury, DO



Timothy Bedell, MD



Jerel Brandt, DO



Michael Van Bibber, MD

continued on page 8

Components of *da Vinci Xi™* System



Surgical Robot continued from page 7

The new Xi will have broader capabilities than prior generations of the da Vinci. It will be used across a wide spectrum of minimally invasive surgeries in the areas of gynecology, general surgery, urology, and cardiothoracic surgery. Dr. Bedell notes that having the da Vinci sometimes can mean the difference between an open surgery and one done using a minimally invasive approach. “In some cases, an exploratory laparotomy can be performed robotically; otherwise it would be an open surgery, which makes a big difference in terms of pain and recovery.”

Like other da Vinci systems, the Xi has three components: a tower that holds suction, cautery, and other instruments; a console where the surgeon sits and controls the joy sticks and foot pedals while viewing the procedure on a high-definition 3D screen with magnification many times that of the naked eye; and the robot itself with arms that hold a miniaturized camera and other surgical tools. Although the system uses advanced robotics, the arms can’t make any type of independent movement or maneuver without the direct input of the surgeon. What the system does do, however, is enhance and refine the surgeon’s movements, making it possible to perform meticulous dissections in tiny, hard to reach areas in the body.

From a patient’s standpoint, a minimally invasive procedure with the da Vinci means shorter anesthesia time, less blood loss, a shorter hospital stay, less post-surgical pain, quicker recovery, and faster return to normal activities. “When robotic surgery was introduced, there was discussion about whether it was worth the investment,” Dr. Amsbury recalls. “I got trained and started using it. Suddenly my hysterectomy patients who were staying overnight were now going home within two to four hours after surgery. We turned it into an outpatient surgery, saving other types of costs and freeing up beds and staff for higher acuity patients. It’s a win, win, win.”

Drs. Amsbury, Brandt, Van Bibber, and Timothy Bedell are among 12 surgeons at Trinity Health who perform robotic procedures using the da Vinci Xi. Others are Ob/Gyns David Billings, MD, Heather Bedell, MD, Jessie Fautleroy, MD, and Jennifer Johnson, MD; general surgeons Robert Guttormson, MD, Dustin Evans, MD, and Nancy Longfors, MD; and cardiothoracic surgeon Michael Savitt, MD.

Visit our website at trinityhealth.org

Cholesterol

continued from page 7

The American Heart Association recommends a three-step approach to managing cholesterol: check your cholesterol levels, change your diet and lifestyle to help lower your levels, and control your cholesterol with help from your doctor, if needed.

The AHA also offers these tips to help improve your cholesterol and make your diet healthier:

- Reduce saturated fat in meat and poultry.
- Eat more fish.
- Eat less meat.
- Cook fresh vegetables the heart-healthy way (in a tiny bit of vegetable oil with a little water added during cooking).
- Use liquid vegetable oils in place of solid fats.
- Reduce dairy fats such as higher-fat milk, cream, and cheeses.
- Remove fat from sauces and gravies.
- Increase fiber and whole grains.

“I would add that we can get all the healthy foods by looking for things produced right here in North Dakota,” Dr. Michaelson added. “Soy beans, for example, is an excellent source of fiber and protein.”

High cholesterol is a silent foe – it doesn’t produce any noticeable symptoms. That’s why it’s important to schedule regular visits with your doctor and to ask about having your cholesterol tested regularly – usually every five years.

Trinity Health Speaker’s Bureau

Call Community
Education at
701-857-5099
for available dates
and topics.

C O M M U N I T Y

CALENDAR

For the latest updates, check online at trinityhealth.org

Events may be postponed or canceled due to COVID-19.

Please watch our calendar at trinityhealth.org/events for up-to-date calendar changes.

Events

September 7—The Keys to Diabetes Success, Back to Basics Class will feature Safety at Home at 5:30 p.m. in the Trinity Health Community Conference Room in Town & Country Center. The event is free and open to the public, but space is limited. Call 857-5268 for more information or to reserve your spot.

September 10—The 4th Annual Fuel the Fight Initiative will be held at Dakota Square Arco. Fuel the Fight helps support the fuel voucher program offered to oncology patients receiving care at the Trinity CancerCare Center. Events are planned throughout the day, including entry into free gas for a year (\$50/week) if you buy eight or more gallons of gas.

Free Assessments for Sports Injuries

Stop by Trinity Health’s Sports Medicine Clinic in Maysa Arena for a free injury assessment (2:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday – Friday). The clinic - located in the lower level of Pepsi Rink - is open to sport and recreation athletes of all ages. No appointment necessary. Call 701-857-3491 for more information.

Masks Required at Trinity Health

Trinity Health complies with all federal laws and health care standards applicable to health care organizations. These include CDC guidelines and Emergency Temporary Standards (ETS) from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

Face masks are required at all of our facilities until further notice. Masks must be worn correctly, covering the nose and mouth.

Thank you for your cooperation as we protect the health of our patients and visitors.

Mobile Mammography

September 1Trinity Community Clinic – Mohall, 756-6841
September 2Trinity Community Clinic – New Town, 627-2990
September 7CHI Clinic – Devils Lake, 662-8662
September 14St. Luke’s Hospital – Crosby, 965-6349
September 15Northland Community Health Ctr – Turtle Lake, 448-9225
September 16Tioga Clinic, 664-3368

Prepared Childbirth Classes

September 11, October 9, November 13, and December 11
Learn about signs of labor, what to expect in labor, comfort measures, postpartum cares, newborn care and routines, and much more! Enrollment is limited. Registration is required. Meets from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Trinity Health Riverside Education Center, 1900 8th Ave SE, Minot.

Breastfeeding Basics

September 9, October 14, November 18, December 9
Learn about all things breastfeeding: positions, latch, skin-to-skin contact, how to know baby is getting enough, and more. Enrollment is limited. Registration is required. Meets from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m., Trinity Health Riverside Education Center, 1900 8th Ave SE, Minot.

These classes are offered free-of-charge as part of Trinity Health’s community benefit mission. If you have questions, please call 701-857-2352. Sign up for classes at: trinityhealth.org/familybirth_registration.