

The Madonna Independent, an employee newsletter of Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital, is published every other Friday by the Marketing and Public Relations department. To submit a story idea, news item, announcement or recognition information, contact Tami Rudder, editor, at 486-8606.

All story ideas, news items, announcements or recognition information must be submitted the Friday before the Independent is printed. **The deadline for the next issue is Friday, April 24.**

**The Independent can be viewed online at www.Madonna.org*

Former patient urges teens to "ThinkFirst"



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Therapy sessions in the remodeled kitchen



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Muscle changes after brain injury: occupational therapy's role

By Jennifer Sylvan, MOT, OTR/L and Lynn Dolezal, OTR/L

In the last issue of *The Independent*, we discussed the role of occupational therapy in treating brain injury patients. In further defining the role of the occupational therapist (OT), this article will examine using tone management with casting and splinting.

Damage to certain areas of the brain result in changes in muscle tone, especially when injury occurs in the area that controls voluntary muscle movement. Abnormal tone inhibits a person from using their extremities altogether or makes the movements jerky and slow.

When a person has tone, the affected extremity may remain in an uncomfortable, tight position—for example, the elbow in a flexed position or hands tightly fist for an extended period. Due to the abnormal positioning of joints, muscles may shorten and lose function. Over time, this will inhibit a person's ability to use their arms.

For treatment of tone, OTs may utilize splinting and casting. Therapists apply a temporary cast to the tight joint to provide an

oppositional force and slow, gradual stretch to the tight muscle. This cast is removable and is used for 8-12 hours per day to maximize arm function. Splints are often used for positioning of smaller joints, such as the hand and wrist, in order to provide a prolonged stretch to maintain the motion needed to perform functional tasks.

Along with creating splints and casts for patients, OTs use the following techniques to decrease tone:

- Heat or ice
- Family training
- Electrical stimulation
- Daily stretching program
- Assessing muscle tone for potential use of Botox®
- Consulting with psychiatrist for tone management medications
- Use standardized measurements to monitor changes in muscle tone
- Incorporate extremity into functional tasks, such as eating, face washing or typing

A variety of creative, individualized techniques are employed by Madonna's OTs during rehabilitation with brain injury patients. The ultimate goal of the OT is to assist patients with a brain injury reach the highest degree of recovery and regain their independence.



Shana Bryant's right arm was placed in a temporary cast following a recent stroke that compromised her muscle tone. The cast provides an oppositional force and gradually stretches the tight muscle. Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant Sue Houchens works with Shana on using her left hand for daily tasks like brushing her hair.

Determined young man back in the hunt following car accident

It's turkey season and nothing is going to stop Tyler Hockett from getting his limit. Despite having to adapt to his new wheelchair, he'll still bag his bird.

On Feb. 7, 2009, Tyler said his world was turned upside down. It was a beautiful winter day and Tyler, 17, was riding in a pickup on a gravel road in his hometown of Smith Center, Kan., along with his girlfriend, Courtney, and two high school friends. Courtney, the driver, hit a pothole, overcorrected and the Ford Ranger fishtailed sideways, blowing the tires out and landing in a ditch. Upon impact, Tyler and Courtney hit their heads on the windshield and were ejected out of the vehicle. Their two friends escaped serious injury and called 911.

Tyler and Courtney were taken to Good Samaritan Hospital in Kearney, Neb., where they learned Courtney had sustained a mild traumatic brain injury and Tyler had suffered a spinal cord injury. The whole ordeal was surreal to Tyler. "I kept telling my dad 'I can't move, I can't walk,'" recalled Tyler. Tyler had damaged the cervical segments of his spine that included C-5, C-6 and C-7. It took seven hours of surgery to fuse bone from his hip into his neck.

After two weeks, the young teens transitioned to Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital. Courtney was discharged after a few weeks of therapy, but Tyler would call Room 132 "home" for the next two months.

"I was basically helpless when I got to Madonna," said Tyler. His positivity kicked in and goals were set, including regaining his independence and walking. Initially, it was a struggle for Tyler to give his

mother a simple hug. He was determined to give 110 percent in his therapy sessions. "Having the support of my family and Courtney has really helped my recovery," said Tyler. His days soon filled with physical, occupational and recreational therapy.

Colleen Spellman, occupational therapist, pegs Tyler as extremely diligent and willing to try any technique to reach his goals. "Ty has a great sense of humor that has made the difficult, and often frustrating part of relearning his self-care a positive experience," said Colleen.

Tyler felt the turning point in therapy was when he could transfer independently to and from the wheelchair. Physical Therapist Kristi Britten had been assisting Tyler and then urged him to try the transfer himself.



Tyler Hockett listens as Occupational Therapist Colleen Spellman gives him a tip for easing into his prom tuxedo pants.

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Former patient urges teens to “ThinkFirst”



Jesse Gidea still loves motocross – even though the sport almost cost him his life. On June 1, 2006, he hit a jump,

flew off his bike and landed flat on his back. Jesse, then 18, suffered a T-4 spinal cord injury that left him paralyzed. “The good news is that I had full gear on, including my helmet, or I wouldn’t be here today,” remarked Jesse, speaking to a packed room of young teens from Cedars Youth Services on March 24 at DaVinici’s Restaurant in Lincoln, Neb.

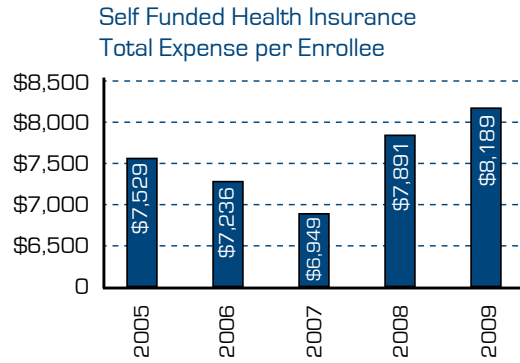
Jesse shared his recovery story as a member of ThinkFirst Iowa, a national program that aims to educate young people about making safe choices to avoid brain and spinal cord injuries. The Des Moines, Iowa, resident stated that 15-21 year-olds are the highest risk age group for injury, due in part because they are highly active. He stressed that many injuries can be prevented if teens think before they act.

Following his accident, Jesse spent nearly a month at Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital. “I had to learn a different way to do almost everything,” said Jesse. He talked frankly about how the accident changed his life. A quick trip to the convenience store now takes much longer because he must transfer himself from the wheelchair to the car. He has no bladder sensation and must catheterize himself before outings with friends.

Jesse credits Madonna with helping him regain independence and introducing him to adaptive sports and recreation. An active young man, Jesse is now able to enjoy his passion utilizing an adaptive motocross bike.

The accident changed the way Jesse looked at life. “Life is very positive for me now. I’ve got a good job with Principal Financial and just bought a house,” said Jesse. He joined ThinkFirst five months after discharging from Madonna. His testimonial is titled “Use Your Mind to Protect Your Body,” and he hopes teens take the message to heart.

Madonna’s health plan costs



It is no secret that health care costs are rising—faster than they ever have before. There are a number of factors that contribute to these increasing costs. The cost to insure the health of Madonna’s employees and their dependents is a huge expense at Madonna. The average annual expense incurred per enrollee in the health plan for 2008/2009 plan year is \$8,189. **The plan will pay out more than \$5 million in total health claims for all enrollees during this year alone.**

Expenses, and therefore claim costs, continue to rise for health plans based on the following biggest contributors:

- Chronic care (treatment for chronic conditions account for 78 percent of health care spending)
- New, expensive medical technology (new devices and treatments account for one-half to two-thirds of the growth in medical spending)
- Increasing pharmaceutical use (prescriptions drug increases continue to be in the double digits each year)
- Specialists
- National health care spending
- Aging of the population
- Increase in consumer demand
- Broader managed care networks

We all have to take part in controlling health care expenses. Stay tuned to *The Independent* for next month’s article on what you can do to help reduce this cost.



Friday, May 3, 1-4 p.m.
SouthPointe Pavilions

Raising Safe Kids: One Stage at a Time

- Fire safety house
- Bike helmets for \$12
- Educational displays
- Hands-on demos
- Live remote with B107.3

Prizes given away throughout the event.

Bring your family and enjoy an evening of fun, food and prizes! Join Safe Kids Lincoln-Lancaster County to learn how to keep your family safe this summer.

RECALL ROUNDUP

McDonald’s Restaurants and Safe Kids Lincoln-Lancaster County will provide a \$10 cash reward for the first 50 Recall Roundup items that meet listed criteria. Items sought include: baby walkers, playpens, cribs and baby gates as found on recall list (www.recalls.gov) and car safety seats that are on the recall list, are more than nine years old or were purchased second-hand.

Presented by Safe Kids Lincoln-Lancaster County and its members.

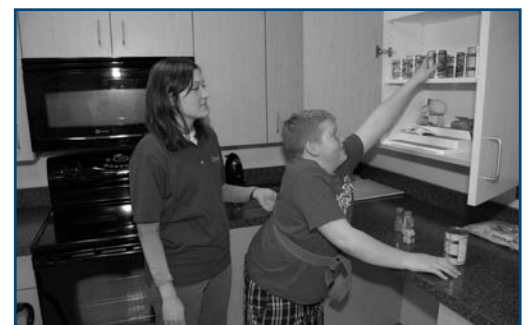


Straight from the hard hat

Madonna’s therapy kitchen has undergone an “Extreme Makeover” during the past month. The expanded area features sleek, Energy Star appliances that use less energy, save money and help protect the environment.

The layout was designed to be wheelchair accessible with options like lowered countertops, easy-to-reach electrical plug-ins and pull-down shelving.

Dan Steinbach, director of facilities management, said Madonna’s kitchen also gives patients some structural ideas if they are faced with modifying their home.



Employee Focus: Fun factoids about Michele



Michele Roy
Memory Care Activity Coordinator
MRH employee for 24 years

- 1 I got engaged on Valentine’s Day.
- 2 I was an only child.
- 3 My favorite movie is *The Wizard of Oz*.
- 4 I was one of the first employee’s to work on St Anthony’s.
- 5 My favorite food is Mexican.

As the activity coordinator at The Arbors, I am responsible for planning all activities, outings and entertainment, as well as participating in all of those.

Stroke: *what you need to know!*

Thursday, April 30
7-8:30 p.m.

Saint Elizabeth Regional
Medical Center
Rose/Franciscan Rooms

- **Stroke: 2009 Updates**
James Bobenhouse, MD
Lincoln Neurology Associates;
Saint Elizabeth & BryanLGH Stroke
Medical Director
- **Atrial Fibrillation and Stroke**
Jeff Dynek Physician Assistant,
Nebraska Heart Institute
- **Transient Ischemic Attack**
Marcia Merboth APRN, CNS BryanLGH
Stroke Program Coordinator
Jen Harre RN, BSN Saint Elizabeth
Stroke Program Coordinator
- **Stroke Rehabilitation**
Amy Goldman, DPT Madonna
Rehabilitation Stroke Program Manager
Bonnie Kreiter, PT, BryanLGH Acute
Inpatient Rehabilitation Unit,
Clinical Supervisor
- **Lincoln Stroke Support Groups**
Marcia Matthies, Nebraska State
Stroke Association

Numerous free stroke resources will be available. Plus a drawing for free Lincoln Saltdogs Strike Out Stroke baseball tickets!

NOTE: This program is also available on the Nebraska Statewide Telehealth Network and can be viewed at your local hospital. Contact your hospital's Telehealth representative.

Lincoln Stroke Partnership Members:

American Stroke Association
BryanLGH Medical Center
Genentech
Lincoln EMS, Inc.
Lincoln Neurology Associates, PC
Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital
Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services
Nebraska Heart Institute
Nebraska State Stroke Association
Neurological and Spinal Surgery, L.L.C.
Saint Elizabeth Regional Medical Center

Open to the public. To reserve your space, call Telephone Line to Care at 402-219-7000.

Tyler Hockett, cont. from page 1

"Honestly, when I completed that first transfer, that's when I realized how far I'd come," said Tyler.

Tyler expressed gratitude to the nurses and therapists for playing a role in his recovery. He also believes in a higher power overseeing his future. "I keep God in my life and my family close," said the young teen.

This weekend Tyler discharges home and is looking forward to taking Courtney to senior prom. And, his dog, Millie is anxious to get her master back in the hunt.

Good Friday presentation offers hope

High school senior and former Madonna patient Danielle Rush from Bendena, Kan., shared a moving and educational presentation about the meaning of suffering on Good Friday, April 10, 2009. As she shared the story of her journey after a car wreck that resulted in a traumatic brain injury, but eventually led to recovery, hope and education, the student became the teacher.

Danielle thanked Madonna clinicians and staff for all of their efforts to help her recover, whether they were the nurses and therapists who were directly involved with her physical recovery, educators who helped her "get her nose back in the books" or just friendly faces passing her in the hallway. Danielle reminded attendees, mostly comprised of Madonna employees, that they are called beyond their healthcare roles to be like the Good Samaritan. "Because of my accident and rehabilitation experience, I am positive that I want to help people overcome their pain and suffering," Danielle said. "I want to live my life as an example of hope for all brain injury patients. I hope to show brain injury survivors that their injury does not limit who they are or what they are capable of becoming. It is my goal to serve as a Good Samaritan in the lives of all people who know me," she added.

Jerre Rush, Danielle's mother, added during the question and answer portion of the presentation that Danielle's injury and its residual effects took a toll on the family and their relationships with friends. "I think the staff did the best job they could of preparing us to go home," Jerre said, "but at the time,

we were so focused on going home and the excitement that brought, that we didn't hear some of the warnings."

Despite the employees' efforts to help the family prepare for the transition to home, both Jerre and Danielle admitted it was much



Current patient Derek Ruth, who suffered a traumatic brain injury in a September 2008 football accident, works with Madonna Occupational Therapist and Pediatric Program Manager Holly Schifsky (right) to use a letter board to extend his appreciation to Danielle Rush for her presentation, "Finding Meaning in Suffering." In the speech, Danielle relayed her personal journey from despair to hope following a November 2005 car accident that left her with a traumatic brain injury.

more difficult than they expected, in part because they were anxious to be home. When asked how professionals at Madonna could do more to help families like the Rushes, Jerre suggested offering follow-up family counseling services after the family returns home. Jerre explained it wasn't until after the excitement of being home faded that they realized some of Danielle's former abilities would not return to their pre-

accident state. It was yet another leg of the recovery journey. One of the more difficult challenges the Bendena, Kan., family faced was finding adequate family counseling when struggles persisted and depression set in. According to Jerre, their family counseling attempt failed because the counselor wasn't knowledgeable about brain injury and its intricacies.

Today, Danielle is counting down the days until graduation. She is a confident young woman with a bright future. Despite the challenges that come with brain injury, Danielle has earned a 3.971 grade point average and is working hard to earn the role of salutatorian for her high school graduation. She also hopes to use her presentation in other ways to encourage and inspire others who see suffering as an obstacle, rather than an opportunity.



In honor of Earth Day

April 22 is Earth Day. There are many ways you can celebrate:

- When possible, teleconference instead of traveling.
- Ride your bike, walk or carpool to work. Looking for a carpooler? Post it on the Classified Ads, available on Outlook.
- Eliminate unnecessary photocopying and reuse packaging for shipping.
- E-mail when possible, but when paper is necessary, photocopy on both sides and use old letterhead for scratch paper.

- Don't forget that Madonna now offers aluminum and plastic recycling locations throughout the building as well as a site for newspaper and office paper recycling, located in the cafeteria near the vending machines.
- Shut off the TV and lights in the Employee Lounge on your way out if you're the last one in the room.
- Check out the Earth Day specials in the Commons Café, and save some green while living green!"

These tips are brought to you by Madonna's Green Team, a division of the Mission Effectiveness Committee.

> CALENDAR

- April 20** **NEO**
- April 21** **MES: Nursing Ethics:
The Legacy Project**
Dr. Amy Haddad
5:30-6:30 p.m.
Sheridans
1 CH
- April 23** **CPR Certification**
9:30 a.m.
Agee
Call 6550 or 6476 to register
- Multi-Disciplinary Approach
to Pediatric Pulmonary**
Holly Schifsky
4:30-8:30 p.m.
Sheridans
Call 6550, 6476 or 6406
to register
4 CH
- April 24** **Grand Rounds, Medical Ethics**
*Paul Dongilli, Kelli Anderson and
Travis Groft*
Noon-1 p.m.
Sheridans
1 CH
- April 28** **Computer Access Options
for Persons with Minimal
Movement**
Susan Fager
Sheridans
Please call 6550, 6406 or 6476
to register
RESNA approved CEU's for
PT, OT and Speech
3.25 CH
- April 29** **Med Aide Competency Testing**
7:30 a.m.-Noon or 12:30-4:30 p.m.

Chapel Services

Catholic Mass is offered Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday at 4 p.m., Wednesday and Sunday at 10:30 a.m. and Saturday at 4:30 p.m. The Worship Service is Thursday at 10:30 a.m., Hymn/Music Program is Sunday at 3:30 p.m.

- April 19** Nebraska Christian Men's Choir
April 26 Christ Methodist Women's Choir

Do you belong to a group or congregation that hasn't performed at Madonna? We welcome new talent. Contact Steve Werner at ext. 6831 or swerner@madonna.org.



The Urban Cure Drum Group entertained St. Jane de Chantal residents on March 26. The group, comprised of Lakota and Omaha natives, shared a variety of their native dance, songs and drumming with the residents.

ELMER update

- The ELMER project has turned its focus to training. Special thanks are extended to Davie Shutzer-Hill for providing the ELMER team co-chairs with an "Effective Meetings" class on March 30. The Core Clinical Design and Implementation Team (CCDIT), applied those principles with collaborations to derive the CCDIT meeting team agreements (ground rules), decision-making processes and clarity with the vision. Each project team will be defining their team charters.
- Jon Hunt, Eclipsys senior director of operations, will be onsite April 21-22 for co-chair education and the creation of agendas for design sessions. The project team meetings will start on May 18 for the design of the new system.
- Onsite technical configuration training is scheduled for the weeks of April 27-May 4.
- Eclipsys will be onsite to load the Eclipsys software and the Madonna Foundation database on May 6-8.
- A new project training room and project team meeting room is presently in progress. Special thanks to Dan Steinbach for coordinating the planning and construction efforts.

HALL TALK

Psst!

Dr. Paul Dongilli, Vice President and Chief Operations Officer

Q. Why are the handicapped signs at ProActive Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-7 p.m.? Why is there an end time?

A. The time sensitive signs do seem odd, but there is an explanation. Only some of the handicapped parking signs are time sensitive. There are two different activities happening during the day at ProActive that require handicapped parking spots – outpatient therapy at TherapyPlus and medical fitness activities at ProActive. TherapyPlus outpatient therapy ends at 7 p.m. and the need for some handicapped spots is eliminated. These parking spots then become available for ProActive members.

Operating Officer Paul Dongilli wants to address your questions or concerns. Share your operational or employee concerns by e-mailing Paul at pdongilli@madonna.org, calling ext. 6242 or sending a note interoffice. Participants can remain anonymous. Questions will be featured in future issues of The Independent in his column.

Madonna volunteers play pivotal roles

Volunteers play a unique role at Madonna. Patients and families see volunteers throughout the facility who are happy to be of service.

Many volunteers cite their reason for volunteering is the care that they or a family member received at Madonna. Someone recently inquired about a volunteer opportunity and recalled pleasant memories of how her father was treated as a patient at Madonna ten years ago. As the staff positively impacts families, individuals want to become a part of the team.

Last year Madonna received the services of 437 individuals, 36 dogs, one cat and a miniature horse. Combined, volunteers served in 52 different positions, providing nearly 23,000 hours of work with no pay. According to Independent Sector, a national non-profit organization, this amounts to nearly \$463,000 worth of service.

How do volunteers get started at Madonna? Volunteers follow the same process as employees by first completing an application. Filling out the application does not ensure that a person will be a volunteer. The next step is the in-person interview with Madonna's Volunteer Coordinator Jo Ann Druke. The interview process deciphers what skills and talents the applicant can contribute. Most interviews also include a tour of the facility and a discussion of various volunteer options. By the time the tour concludes, a volunteer position that fits that person has been discovered.

Each volunteer is given a handbook to study covering dress code, emergency procedures, confidentiality, infection control and behavior policies. The main points of the handbook are discussed on a subsequent visit.

In the final step, a volunteer signs a confidentiality agreement and completes a questionnaire for employee health. Each volunteer receives a service guideline describing the duties and limitations of the work they will be providing.

In order to staff 52 positions, Jo Ann relies on assistance from 45 Madonna employees who have accepted the additional responsibility of supervising volunteers. Finally, the volunteer is trained for their specific work area and officially becomes part of the Madonna family.

Supervisor Celebration Day

**Wednesday, April 22
9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.**

There will be an open house in the Volunteer Resources office for all employees who supervise volunteers.

Please stop in and enjoy the goodies!