

WINTER 2008

NEW LOOK!

# HealthyLiving

A PUBLICATION OF WOMEN  
& CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

When it comes  
to babies,  
WCH delivers!

Meet our  
new director

A faster,  
gentler surgery

Boost your  
bone health

Reclaim  
your energy

**Women & Children's**

HOSPITAL

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# Minimally invasive surgery

Less pain, faster recovery

**M**inimally invasive surgery (MIS) is the buzzword in healthcare right now. And with good reason.

With advancing technology and surgical techniques, patients now have the benefit of undergoing procedures that require just a few small incisions. In years past, those same procedures would have required large cuts and left equally large scars.

## HOW IT WORKS

MIS—sometimes referred to as laparoscopic surgery—mirrors the techniques of traditional surgery but decreases the patient's surgical trauma. Because surgeons using MIS lose some visibility with smaller incisions, they have to create a larger workspace. They do this by making a small cut in the skin, then gently expanding the body cavity with a gas (such as carbon dioxide). A small camera (laparoscope) is then inserted through the incision and into the newly expanded space to help surgeons see where to operate.

While MIS isn't suited for all types of surgery, it has been used for such procedures as appendectomies, hernia repair, gallbladder surgery, hysterectomies, brain tumors, herniated spinal discs, knee and hip replacements, sinus surgery and certain types of heart procedures.

## MINIMAL TRAUMA, MAXIMUM BENEFITS

The goal of MIS is to treat patients with the least amount of trauma. In addition to minimized scarring, this type of surgery also:

- **Minimizes bleeding.** Decreased blood loss means a decreased chance of blood transfusion.



- **Lessens pain.** Small incisions reduce trauma to the skin and underlying muscles, meaning less postoperative pain.
- **Reduces infections.** Unlike a traditional operation, where the body is wide open, tissue isn't exposed to the air for extended periods during MIS.
- **Shortens hospital stays.** Reducing bleeding, pain and the chance for infection means you'll get to walk out of the hospital sooner.
- **Hastens recovery.** MIS can dramatically reduce recuperation time—in some cases, by half.

## Other minimally invasive procedures

**E**ndoscopic surgery is similar to laparoscopic surgery because it also requires a small camera. However, the equipment (endoscope) passes through an existing opening such as the mouth, anus or urethra.

Robotic laparoscopic surgery uses techniques identical to laparoscopic surgery but allows surgeons to use robotic arms to perform the procedure.

Ablation targets and destroys diseases, such as kidney and prostate cancer, with high-frequency energy, leaving normal tissue nearby intact. It's also been used to correct benign heart arrhythmias.

## WAITING TO INHALE

# Breathing problems you shouldn't ignore

**T**ake a deep breath." The command sounds easy, but for some people it's not so simple.

Being unable to breathe deeply or feeling short of breath may be a sign of a serious condition.

If you have any of the following symptoms, get them checked out by a physician:

- inability to take a deep breath
- shortness of breath without exertion
- shortness of breath after mild exertion, such as climbing a short flight of stairs
- wheezing
- tightness in the chest
- pain or discomfort when inhaling and exhaling
- a chronic cough or clearing of the throat
- difficulty breathing when you lie down
- a lack of energy
- coughing up blood or mucus

Difficulty breathing shouldn't be taken lightly. Lung disease is the number three killer in the United States.

It takes on many forms, including:

- **Asthma**, a chronic disease in which the passages that

carry air in and out of your lungs become sore and swollen. Asthma is characterized by wheezing, coughing, chest tightness and trouble speaking.

- **Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)**, which includes emphysema and chronic bronchitis. In COPD, your airways and air sacs lose their shape and become floppy, like a stretched-out rubber band. Coughing up mucus is often a first sign of this disease. COPD is typically caused by cigarette smoking.

- **Pneumonia**, an inflammation of the lungs, usually caused by an infection. It's normally accompanied by shortness of breath and a cough or a fever.

- **Lung cancer**, which can take years to develop. If it's diagnosed early, before it spreads, the survival rate is almost 50 percent.

Breathing difficulties can also be a sign of heart disease or a heart disorder, such as congestive heart failure, heart arrhythmia or pulmonary hypertension.

In these or any other case of breathing distress, your physician can help you find the source of the problem with a thorough physical exam.



If you're having trouble catching your breath, it's time to see your doctor.

### When cough drops don't do the trick

**A** chronic cough—one that lasts more than three weeks—may be your body's way of telling you a problem exists. Your cough could be the result of:

- allergies, particularly postnasal drip, which often triggers coughing
- asthma
- heartburn, where acid from your stomach backs up into your throat
- medicines, including beta-blockers for high blood pressure, migraines and glaucoma and ACE inhibitors



**Bill Willis**  
Chief Executive Officer

## Dear friends,

**W**ith a new year upon us, I want to share my continued commitment to lead Women & Children's Hospital (WCH) in its quest to provide quality family healthcare. Over the past 23 years, we've touched the lives of thousands of men, women and children in our community. From our caring staff to our advanced technology, we'll continue to provide

advanced care for you and your loved ones this year and for many years to come.

### **BETTER HEALTHCARE BEGINS WITH ME**

I'm excited that everyone at WCH is dedicated to building and sustaining a culture of service and

operational advances. In addition to many changes that have occurred, WCH has incorporated a new philosophy: "Community Cares: Better Healthcare Begins With Me," a focus on increased customer satisfaction and high employee retention and satisfaction, with effective leadership.

As always, we continue to boast a talented and distinguished medical staff. The medical staff provides advanced care in obstetrics, gynecology, bariatrics, urology, neonatology, general surgery, pediatrics, ENT, orthopedics and emergency services.

Remember, we're always here to serve you. Best wishes for a healthy and prosperous new year.

Yours in good health,

**BILL WILLIS**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Women & Children's Hospital

# Meet our new director



**Dianna Anders**  
Business Office Director

**W**omen & Children's Hospital (WCH) is committed to providing quality care and compassionate customer service to meet the area's healthcare needs. With our continued commitment to offering a caring and well-rounded team, WCH is pleased to announce the addition of Dianna Anders as business office director.

Anders will be responsible for all business office functions, including hospital billing and collection. She'll also oversee hospital admitting processes and procedures to help ensure best practices for our patients and their families.

In 2002, Anders received her bachelor's degree from Indiana University in Fort Wayne, Ind. She's a member of the American

Association of Healthcare Administrative Management, the premier professional organization in healthcare administrative management. Anders began her healthcare career in 2000 at Kosciusko Community Hospital in Warsaw, Ind.

# When it comes to babies, WCH delivers!

**N**ot all hospitals are created equal. Some are created with that little something extra that lets you know you're more than just another number. At Women & Children's Hospital (WCH), we are family-friendly, and we boast advanced obstetrical facilities, specialize in high-risk pregnancies and house a level III neonatal intensive care unit. When choosing the hospital with the birth environment that's right for you, it's important to visit the facility, meet the nurses and ask questions to have a smooth delivery experience.

## COMPREHENSIVE FEATURES

WCH provides the necessary medical advances that mother and baby need. We have 10 labor and delivery rooms and three Caesarean-section suites in a safe, family-oriented environment.

Over the past year, WCH has introduced family-centered mother/baby nursing into our labor-and-delivery plans, allowing you to labor, deliver and receive initial care of the new baby in the same room. You come first at WCH, and helping you execute the birth experience you want is just as important to our nurses and physicians.

## THE RIGHT EXPERIENCE FOR YOU

After delivery, you'll be moved to our postpartum care area with your infant, unless it's medically necessary to separate mother and child. Our dedicated postpartum nurses will provide skilled care for your recuperation. The nurses in our well-baby nursery also provide an opportunity for you to recuperate and rest knowing your baby is in experienced hands. Mom, baby and family receive the care that

makes each experience right for them.

We provide the services and specialties to meet your specific medical needs, as well as the staff to make your birth experience—whether it's your first

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Ann Nettles, R.N., one of our skilled nurses, provides loving newborn care.



Kim Duplechain, R.N., provides personalized, compassionate care for new babies.

**!** We're here for you!

**F**or more information about maternity services at WCH, call (337) 475-4116.

child or your fourth—a memorable occasion. The staff is friendly, knowledgeable and willing to answer your questions. Whether you have questions about natural childbirth, breastfeeding or swaddling, we're ready to help you learn how to care for your newborn.

## HEALTHWISE QUIZ

### How much do you know about **sleep disorders**?

Take this quiz to find out.

1

**Lack of sleep may put you at a higher risk for:**

- a. type 2 diabetes
- b. low blood pressure
- c. asthma
- d. gastric ulcers

2

**Which of the following changes in your sleep routine may be a result of an underlying heart problem?**

- a. waking up during the night to urinate
- b. waking up during the night due to shortness of breath
- c. not being able to fall asleep
- d. both a and b

3

**Restoring your body with sleep has been shown to:**

- a. improve skin tone
- b. improve red blood-cell count
- c. reduce eye strain
- d. improve reaction time and attention span

4

**Women diagnosed with obstructive sleep apnea often experience these symptoms:**

- a. snoring loudly with periods of gasping or snorting
- b. waking up with a sore throat
- c. waking up with a headache
- d. all of the above

5

**The most common treatment for sleep apnea is:**

- a. antihistamine medication
- b. surgery
- c. a continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) mask worn at night
- d. analgesic medication

ANSWERS: 1. A; 2. D; 3. D; 4. D; 5. C

## WOMEN: Is a heart attack in your future?

**A** heart attack may seem to come out of the blue. Yet your personal risk factors and lifestyle habits may hold clues to your heart's health and what your odds are of suffering from a heart attack.

### LOOK FOR THE SIGNS

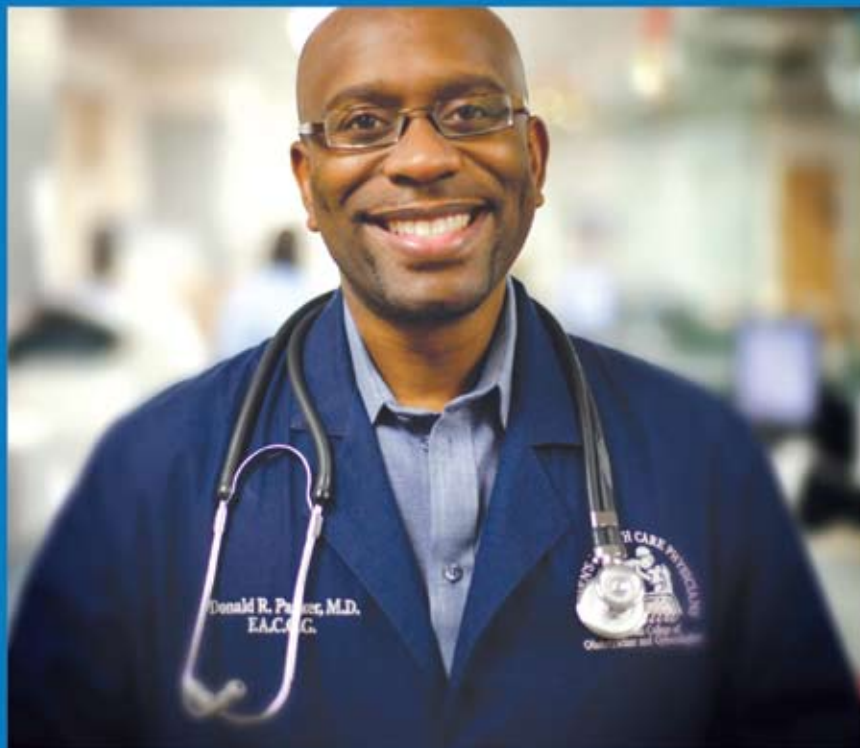
High blood pressure (140/90 mm Hg and above) and high blood cholesterol (240 mg/dL and above) are significant clues that you may be developing heart blockages in the form of plaque. Being postmenopausal and having diabetes or rheumatoid arthritis can also increase heart attack risk.

Talk with your healthcare provider about what risk factors are significant for you. He or she can help you control your blood pressure and cholesterol levels and may also recommend testing for metabolic syndrome. Recent research shows this condition may be useful for detecting signs of heart disease in women who might appear healthy. The signs of metabolic syndrome include a waist size greater than 35 inches, higher-than-normal levels of triglycerides and glucose, and insufficient levels of HDL, or good cholesterol.

Also, be aware of what a heart attack might feel like for a woman, as some symptoms can differ from those of men. Chest pain or pressure; nausea; vomiting; indigestion; cold sweat; shortness of breath; light-headedness; fatigue; or discomfort in the arms, back, neck, jaw or stomach are all possible signs.

### GO HEART SMART

- Aim for a normal weight.
- Exercise for 30 minutes every day.
- Quit smoking and avoid secondhand smoke.
- Avoid foods high in saturated or trans fat and curb refined carbohydrates—cookies, white bread, sweet drinks—sometimes referred to as “high-glycemic-index” foods.



– Donald Parker, MD  
Board-Certified, OB/GYN

*I choose Women & Children's Hospital*  
**because I want my  
patients in the most  
experienced hands.**

Ask Dr. Donald Parker why he considers Women & Children's Hospital to be a leader and you'll hear everything from "more experienced nurses" to "superior care if situations become bad" to being "the hospital that was built on women's healthcare." For Dr. Parker, as well as the majority of OB/GYN's in the Lake Charles area, we deliver. For more information visit [www.women-childrens.com](http://www.women-childrens.com).

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