

Bulletin

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Mercy recognized among nation's Top 100 Hospitals for cardiovascular care

Mercy was recently ranked among the nation's Top 100 Hospitals® for cardiovascular care, according to a newly released study by Thomson Reuters – a leading news and information company.

The 2009 Thomson Reuters 100 Top Hospitals®: Cardiovascular Benchmarks study examined the performance of 971 hospitals in measures related to congestive heart failure, heart attacks, coronary bypass surgery, angioplasties and other coronary interventions. Mercy is the only Des Moines hospital on the list and was one of just 40 teaching hospitals without a cardiovascular residency program nationwide to be recognized. This is the fourth year Mercy has made the list.

“Being listed among the nation's top hospitals for cardiovascular care honors the excellence, collaboration and innovation of the physicians, nurses and staff of Mercy Heart Hospital and Iowa Heart Center,” said Mercy President & CEO Dave Vellinga. “It recognizes the many ways we work together to provide the best possible cardiovascular care available.”

The complete results of this year's 100 Top Hospitals®: Cardiovascular Benchmarks study were published in the Nov. 16 issue of *Modern Healthcare*.



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Mercy offers leading-edge cancer surgical procedure to **relieve symptoms, prolong life**

Surgical oncologists Jan Franko, M.D., and Charles Goldman, M.D., of Mercy Surgical Affiliates are the first surgeons in Iowa and two of just a handful in the entire nation who are performing a leading-edge procedure called Hyperthermic Interperitoneal Chemotherapy (HIPEC) to treat patients with cancers of the abdominal cavity.

HIPEC is a novel approach to destroying cancer cells attacking the inner lining of a patient's abdomen. After surgically removing as much cancer as possible from the abdominal cavity through an operation known as cytoreductive surgery, Drs. Franko and Goldman bathe the cavity with a heated, highly concentrated solution of chemotherapy drugs for up to two hours. The liquid has proven to be highly effective at eradicating even the tiniest cancer cells, which relieves cancer symptoms and significantly prolongs life (up to 10 years in patients with Stage IV cancers that were previously considered terminal).

Since Mercy began using the HIPEC procedure this past May, five patients have had the surgery – which typically lasts between 14 and 16 hours – with excellent outcomes.

“Until fairly recently, we didn't have an effective way of treating widespread peritoneal tumors,” said Dr. Goldman. “This procedure is indicated for a select group of cancer patients whose cancer meets the criteria and who are healthy enough to undergo the procedure.”

Surgical Affiliates is the only surgeon group in Iowa trained to use HIPEC and



Drs. Jan Franko (left) and Charles Goldman (right) of Mercy Surgical Affiliates are the only surgical oncologists in Iowa and two of just a handful in the nation who are trained to perform Hyperthermic Interperitoneal Chemotherapy (HIPEC) on patients with hard-to-treat abdominal cancer.

Mercy is one of just five hospitals in the country that performs the surgery on a consistent basis.

“Clinical studies have shown that cytoreductive surgery with HIPEC treatment has improved survival rates and quality of life for patients who otherwise have few treatment options,” said Dr. Franko. Abdominal cancer is often resistant or unresponsive to traditional treatment options.

Moving forward, Drs. Goldman and Franko plan to follow the patients they have treated to validate the nationwide data and document the benefits and outcomes of the HIPEC procedure. In addition, Dr. Franko is scheduled to present his surgical experience and outcomes involving HIPEC at Creighton University later this month.

For more information about HIPEC, please call Mercy Surgical Affiliates at x-73266 or visit the Mercy Clinics Web site at www.mercyclinicsdesmoines.org.

Announcements & News Briefs

Mercy named NAACP Merit Employer of the Year

On Nov. 14, Mercy Medical Center received the NAACP Merit Employer of the Year Award from the Des Moines branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) during the group's 34th Annual Freedom Fund Banquet.

The awards were presented following a celebratory keynote address honoring the NAACP's centennial anniversary. Mercy was chosen for the award based on its demonstrated commitment to diversity, illustrated by its diverse Board of Directors, corporate diversity plan, employee diversity committee and numerous community outreach activities each year.

Des Moines seven-year-old uses birthday to "pay it forward"



Riley Mengel recently celebrated her seventh birthday in a pretty unusual way – she gave away all her gifts. On Nov. 12, Riley visited the Mercy Children's Center to donate all the toys and stuffed animals she received at her birthday party on Oct. 31.

Riley is a first-grader at Greenwood Elementary School in Des Moines and the daughter of Deb and Jed Mengel.

"We're so proud of Riley for being unselfish and wanting to give her presents to pediatric patients," said her mother. "She's even inspired a couple of her friends to do the same type of 'pay-it-forward' for their birthdays."

Mercy EMS Program celebrates 30-year anniversary



Above (L-R), Steve Vannatta, David Filipp, Kim Wetzell and Ryan Woods pose near a booth celebrating the Mercy EMS Program's 30th anniversary at the IEMSA Annual Conference and Trade Show earlier this month.

The Mercy Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Program celebrated its 30-year anniversary recently with a special booth at the Iowa Emergency Medical Services Association's 20th Annual Conference and Trade Show, which was held Nov. 12-14 at the Polk County Convention Center.

The Mercy EMS Program offers two certificates and an associate's degree through Mercy College of Health Sciences. The program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs.

H1N1 vaccines available for eligible Mercy employees

Mercy employees who wish to receive the H1N1 flu vaccine and who meet the current Polk County Health Department criteria for eligibility can receive a vaccine at Employee Health Services on weekdays from 6:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Priority groups include pregnant women; people who live with or care for children under six months of age; health care workers who have direct patient contact in diagnosing and treating patients with flu-like illnesses or who care for patients at high risk of contracting influenza; and people between the ages of five and 64 years old who have chronic medical conditions or compromised immune systems.

Mercy gives generously through Combat Hunger



Above Myron Zehr and Ramona Kirsch of the Mercy Physician Billing Office drop off more than 1,500 items collected by employees in their office during the Combat Hunger Drive-Through at the West Entrance on Nov. 17.

Thanks to the generosity of the Mercy Family and employees' participation in the Combat Hunger Food and Fund Drive, fewer central Iowans will go hungry this holiday season.

Mercy contributed 10,173 pounds of food and paper items to the Food Bank of Iowa this year through Combat Hunger – a goal achieved in part by friendly food drive competitions throughout the organization.

One such contest – Patient Access vs. Patient Accounts – challenged employees to see which department could collect the most food during the drive. At the final weigh-in on Nov. 12, Patient Access was declared the victor, with a total of 2,010 pounds compared to 2,001 pounds collected by Patient Accounts.

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