

A photograph of a woman with long brown hair and glasses, wearing a green zip-up hoodie, bending over to feed several pygmy goats from a red plastic bucket. The goats are brown and white, and the setting appears to be a barn or farm. The woman is smiling at the camera.

Winter 2018

# health + care

A PUBLICATION FROM MERCY REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

## A New Perspective on Patient Care

Meet Rebecca, cancer services  
clinic manager and licensed  
pygmy goat judge.

page 6

## Am I at Risk?

New guidelines label millions as  
at risk for high blood pressure

page 8

## Obesity and Kids

How to effectively talk to  
children about obesity

page 10

# A warm welcome TO CARDIOLOGIST CHAD BIDART

Mercy is pleased to welcome fellowship-trained cardiologist Chad Bidart, M.D. The 46-year-old is a fourth-generation Nevada native of Basque descent.

He grew up in a small town 160 miles north of Reno and is anxious to return to a small town after having lived in Phoenix (for a residency and fellowship at the Mayo Clinic), Los Angeles (for a residency/fellowship in electrophysiology at UCLA), and Reno (where he worked in a private practice) for much of the past two decades.

Dr. Bidart is a triathlete and Ironman competitor, and confesses he is a wanna-be professional athlete. His wife and two children have lived in Durango for about two years, while Dr. Bidart has traveled back and forth between Reno and Durango. The family's goal in relocating to Durango is primarily about providing an excellent educational environment for their children.



Dr. Chad Bidart

Although it's bittersweet to be leaving his native state, "I'm really excited to be back in a smaller community."



To schedule an appointment at Mercy Cardiology Associates, please call **970-764-2600**.

## JOIN MERCY SPORTS MEDICINE FOR “Athletes on the mend”

Full recovery can take a frustratingly long time, especially if you're an athlete. If you're in the latter stages of injury recovery and want to return to training but have some concerns about re-injury, this is the class for you! You'll work out under the supervision of certified trainers in fun, social, and supportive small-group classes. These classes are designed by our physical therapists, and all exercises can be modified for each participant based on their recovery status and unique limitations. We'll help you not only return to function, but optimize your athletic performance while avoiding re-injury.

Each participant begins with a private evaluation and training session before joining either the upper extremity (hand, wrist, arm, elbow, shoulder) or lower extremity (foot, ankle, leg, knee, hip) group class. Classes are limited to four participants and meet twice per week for four weeks. The program may be repeated as needed (standard fees apply).

- **1 private session + 8 group sessions/\$150**



For more information, please visit [mercydurango.org/sportsmedicine](http://mercydurango.org/sportsmedicine)



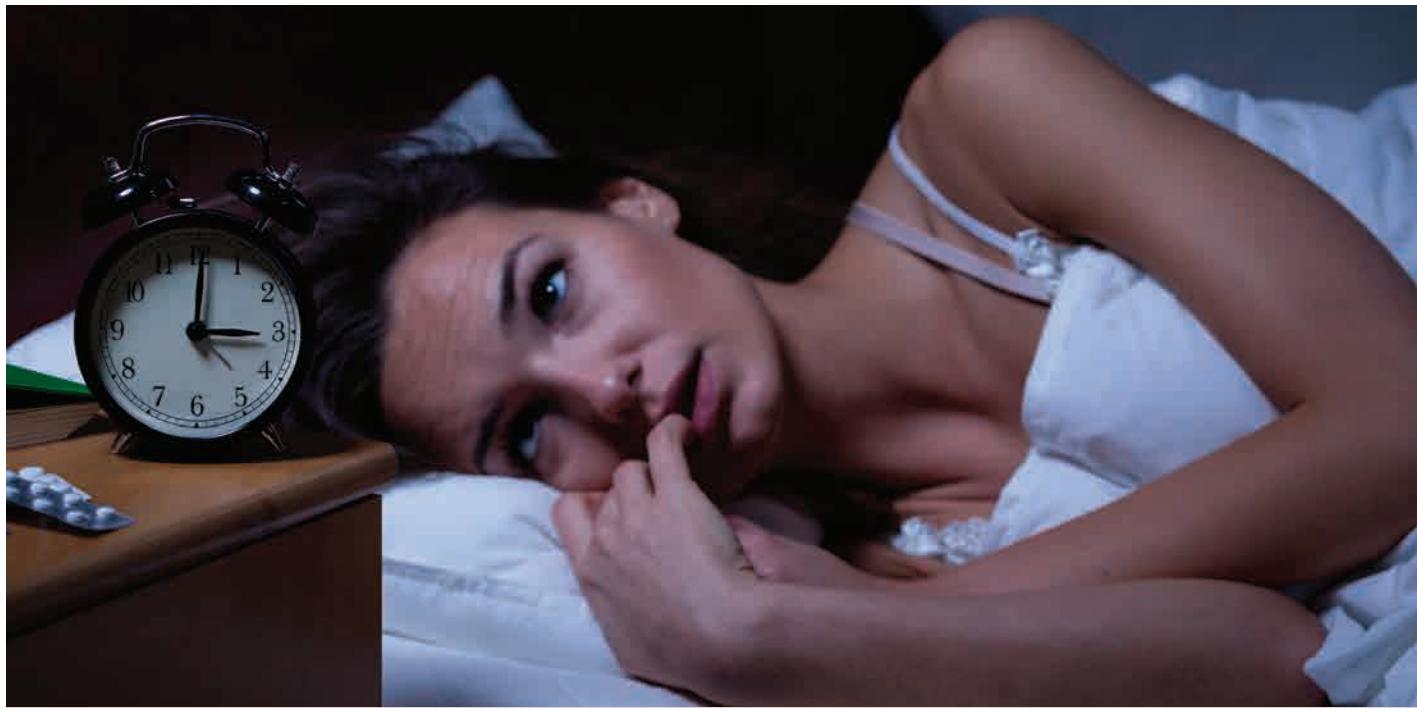
**On the Cover:**  
*The manager of Mercy's cancer services hangs out with the goats at Red Dust Ranch.*

Read more on page 6.

## What's Inside

- 4** 11 tips for mental wellness
- 6** Becoming the patient
- 8** New blood pressure guidelines
- 10** Talking to kids about weight
- 12** Big gratitude
- 14** Building resilience to bullying

*John Peel is a contributing writer for Health+Care.*



## Catching Some zzzzzzz's

**S**leep – you know how important it is to both your mental and physical health, but sometimes the simple act of sleeping eludes you. Even after achieving the recommended eight hours of shut-eye, you experience drowsiness throughout the day.

"Clearly sleep is important," said Dr. Gustav Hallin with Mercy's Four Corners Sleep Disorders Center. "All mammals, including humans, need sleep."

To ensure you get a good night of sleep, Dr. Hallin, who is board certified in sleep, pulmonary and critical care medicine, recommends you practice good sleep hygiene by following these tips:

- **Maintain regular sleeping hours.** It is especially important that you get up at the same time each morning, as this sets your circadian rhythm.
- **Regular exercise** will encourage deeper, better sleep.
- **Keep your weight down.** Excess weight can lead to lower oxygen levels, which contributes to poor sleep.
- **Don't smoke.** Smoking causes poor lung and heart health, affecting sleep.

- **Refrain from using alcohol as a sleep-aid.** Alcohol can adversely affect the quality of sleep.
- **Treat pain.** Even mild pain can be disruptive to your slumber.

If you try these tips and still don't feel rested, there may be an underlying cause to your drowsiness. Of the 720 sleep studies the center performed last year, 90 percent of them involved patients suffering from sleep apnea.

Sleep apnea is a condition in which a sleeping person stops breathing for 10 seconds or longer. It is caused when the muscles in the throat relax naturally during sleep. In the case of sleep apnea, a person's throat completely collapses, obstructing the windpipe. Of the 33 percent of adults who snore, four percent suffer from sleep apnea. A person suffering from this condition is usually alerted by their spouse or partner who are awakened by the person letting out a snort as they gasp for air. For some who suffer from sleep apnea, these episodes can occur up to 100 times an hour. The resulting poor sleep quality leads to daytime sleepiness.

What should you watch for to determine if this is happening to you? According to Dr. Hallin, people with sleep apnea may exhibit the following symptoms:

- **A history of heavy snoring.**
- **Daytime sleepiness.** Especially when participating in sedentary activities such as watching TV or traveling in a car.
- **Low oxygen levels,** which may cause swelling around the ankles.
- **Heart rhythm abnormalities.**

While those suffering from sleep apnea make up the majority of its patients, the center also treats many other conditions including narcolepsy, intractable insomnia, restless leg syndrome, and certain lung diseases which cause low oxygen levels.

Accredited by the Academy of Sleep Medicine since 2009, the center has been offering the community compassionate care for more than 20 years. According to Dr. Hallin, the center continues to grow, serving triple the number of patients it treated 18 years ago, when 200 people sought its services.

**INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE?**  
Talk to your primary care provider about your concerns or call Mercy's Four Corners Sleep Disorders Center at **970-764-2330**.

# SELF-CARE for Mental Wellness

(AND WHAT TO DO WHEN SELF-CARE IS NOT ENOUGH)

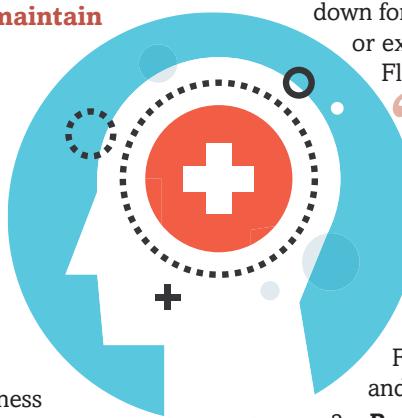
Manager of Mercy's behavioral health team Flow Wolf, LCSW.

It is estimated that about one in four American adults will face a mental health challenge in a given year, which means you or someone you know may be experiencing a mental health issue right now. Your mental health affects your ability to cope with life's normal stress, work regularly and productively, and contribute to the community in which you live.

## With this in mind, what can you do to maintain or improve your mental health?

According to Flow Wolf, LCSW, behavioral health provider and manager at Mercy Family Medicine, resiliency is a key component of mental health. Resiliency isn't necessarily something you're born with; instead, it involves actions, thoughts and behaviors that can be learned and developed. In addition to building resiliency, Wolf suggests the following:

1. **Value yourself.** Treat yourself with kindness and respect.
2. **Take care of your body.** Fit 20 to 30 minutes of cardiovascular exercise into your day.
3. **Surround yourself** with good people.
4. **Give of yourself.** Try volunteering with your favorite charity or at your child's school.
5. **Learn how** to deal with stress.
6. **Quiet your mind.** Give meditation a try.
7. **Get help when you need it.** Talk with someone you trust.
8. **Create balance.** Make sure to balance work, time spent with family and friends, and self-care.



### 9. Spend time outdoors.

10. Write down your thoughts and feelings in a journal.

11. Make time to relax. Try to participate in a hobby or activity you love every day.

What should you do when someone in your life has been down for more than two weeks, has severe mood swings or exhibits other concerning behavior?

Flow advises to follow your gut feeling.

*“When you know someone, you become aware of differences in how they relate to you. How they go about their daily lives.”*

Flow suggests you:

1. **Share your observations with the person.** Focus on being nonjudgmental, compassionate and understanding.
2. **Reach out to someone you trust.** Involve others who can provide support, but before you do, make sure your friend or family member is comfortable with it.
3. **Offer support.** Ask, “How can I support you right now?”
4. **Check-in regularly.**

“The biggest thing you can do is to reach out to the person in a loving, kind, nonthreatening way,” Flow said. “Say, ‘I’ve noticed some things and I’m concerned. Would you be OK if we talked about it?’ I know this can be very intimidating for people, but it is far more effective to talk about your concerns than to wish them away.”



# FINDING HELP IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Integrated behavioral health was implemented at Mercy Family Medicine in 2013 as part of the practice's Comprehensive Primary Care grant. Flow and behavioral health provider Elaine Blackmer, LPC, work with Mercy Family Medicine's primary care team and patients to address many conditions, including PTSD, chronic pain, stress, anxiety, depression, caregiver burnout, and grief.

The focus of integrated behavioral health is on a patient's medical conditions and how they may be impacted by other concerns, behaviors, and stressors. The Mercy Family Medicine behavioral health providers offer a brief series of sessions focusing on skill building and behavioral changes.

Part of what makes this model successful is the practice of "warm handoffs." When a patient's primary care provider notes that something is off during a routine patient visit, they can immediately involve a behavioral health provider in the patient's care.

Once the patient has completed their sessions at Mercy Family Medicine, if desired by the patient, the health provider helps the patient find another professional in the community that can continue their care. Mercy Family Medicine's behavioral health providers maintain a directory of psychologists, psychiatrists, and therapists in the community, which insurances they take, the primary issues they handle, and whether they are accepting new clients. They have a 70 to 75 percent referral success rate, and the integrated behavioral health model has also been shown to reduce emergency department visits and inpatient admissions.

Mercy is working to assess the behavioral health of more patients hospital-wide. Currently, Mercy's specialty clinics routinely screen patients for depression with the aid of a patient health questionnaire. This one-page tool can be completed in a few minutes and scored quickly; it may signal the need for further depression screening.



# A New Perspective on Patient Care

**I**t wasn't the preferred method of gathering deep insight into the inner workings of cancer treatment, but Rebecca Doughty had no choice.

Just four months after becoming the manager for the Durango Cancer Center and Southwest Oncology at Mercy Regional Medical Center, she was diagnosed with cancer. Although nerve-wracking, the experience gave her a better familiarity with the people and technology surrounding her daily job, and an empathy for the cancer patients who every day arrive worried, nervous, and perhaps overwhelmed.

Fortunately for Rebecca, treatment has gone well, and her future outlook is positive. But it was an unsettling time for the 50-year-old, who spends her spare time hiking with her husband and – more on this later – as a nationally licensed pygmy goat judge.

Rebecca, a Washington, D.C.-area native, spent nearly 25 years working administratively in the medical field in New Mexico, mostly in Las Cruces, before moving to Durango in September 2016. Most recently the director of business development at a psychiatric hospital, Rebecca felt blessed when she was hired by Mercy in November 2016.

A couple weeks later, her boyfriend proposed, and the wedding was set for March 2017. This was to be an eventful month of widely varying emotions. On



Rebecca is the manager of Mercy's Southwest Oncology and Durango Cancer Center.

March 16 her father died, and she flew back to Virginia for the funeral. Just a week later she got married. During the honeymoon, life really got complicated.

She experienced heavy bleeding, and although she figured it was simply a result of menopause, she visited her gynecologist. The doctor recommended a biopsy, and Rebecca was stunned. It's just menopause, right?

Two days later in her office came the phone call: She'd tested positive for endometrial cancer, affecting the lining of the uterus. She was even more stunned.

"It just kind of stops you in your tracks," she says. "So you pause for a moment. OK, what are my next steps?"

***"It just kind of stops you in your tracks."***

That's when she leaned on the staff around her – doctors, nurses, office workers – for consult.

She received this advice from oncologist Dr. Steven Bush: Don't get on the internet. There's too much misinformation. "You need to trust your physicians," he told her. "Just trust that you're going to be in the best hands possible."

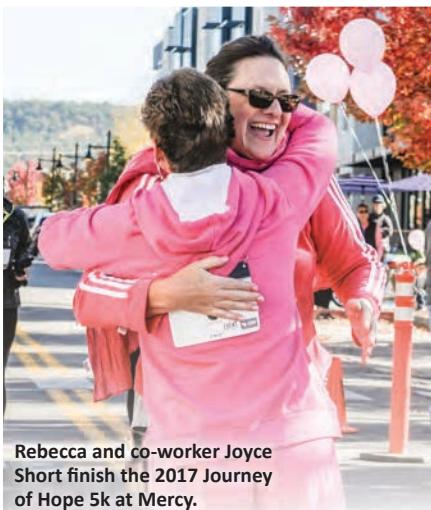
"It was super helpful to talk to our physicians," Rebecca says. "I went into surgery believing there was a good chance the cancer hadn't spread or metastasized."

In April, she underwent a hysterectomy. The surgery was successful, and Rebecca did not require radiation or chemotherapy. Nearly a year later, there is no sign of the cancer's return.

"I am doing great. I feel better than I have in years," says Rebecca, a woman of deep faith. "I'm just so blessed."

The cancer experience, she believes, has made her a better administrator. She's a hands-on person, and often fills in when someone's away from their desk. So she frequently meets new patients.

"Once I self-disclose that I, too, have had cancer, it kind of puts someone at ease," Rebecca says. "They're able to trust they're in the best possible location for the best possible care. I have confidence our doctors are the top of the top and wouldn't hesitate to recommend family or friends."



Rebecca and co-worker Joyce Short finish the 2017 Journey of Hope 5k at Mercy.

## PYGMY GOATS AND TRAVEL

**R**ebecca was sitting in the pen of a friend's farm in Las Cruces when a baby pygmy goat jumped into her lap.

"Would you like to have her?" the woman asked.

"OK, sure."

Rebecca had found a hobby. Soon she had a small herd, then she began exhibiting them at shows throughout the U.S. And why not be a judge? She took the tests, got her license from the National Pygmy Goat Association, "and here I am."



Rebecca judges pygmy goats around the country.

She can judge goats anywhere in the U.S. or Canada. Recently she judged a competition at the Louisiana State Fair. Other recent trips have taken her to Washington state, Idaho and the East Coast. Last August she was honored to be goat superintendent at the La Plata County Fair in Durango.

Goats are judged on things such as structure, coat, teeth and bite. Then there's the showmanship – the ability of the person to make a good presentation while showing their goat.

"I really love it," she says. "And what I love most is helping our youth learn about showmanship and herdsmanship. Something as seemingly simple as showing a goat requires a lot of work."

Rebecca knows about hard work, and brings that attitude toward her job. It's about providing good care for those in crisis, all the way from their first referral through treatment to the end of the process, for better or worse.

"Every patient is the number one patient here," she says.

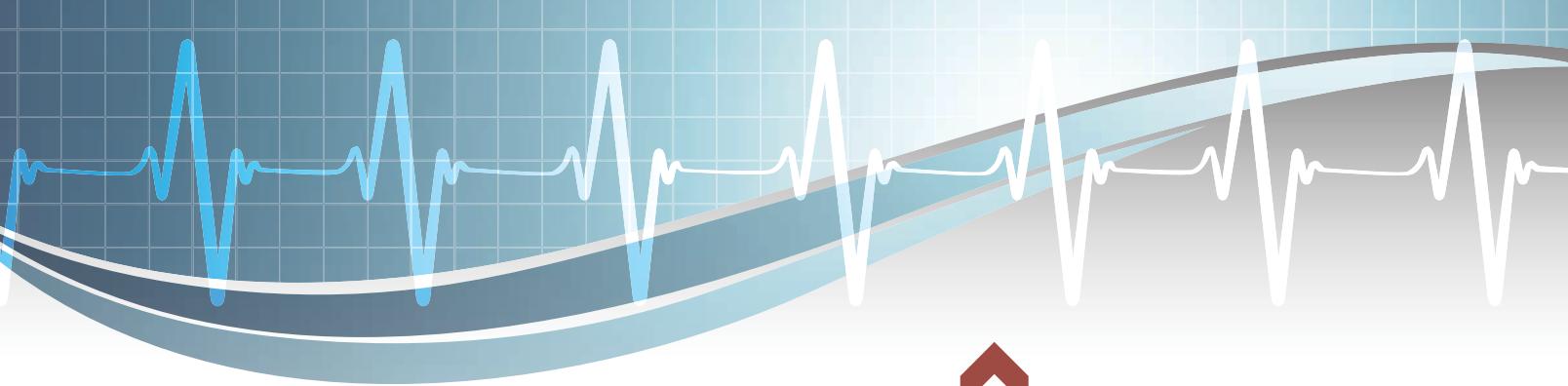
***"Every patient is the number one patient here."***



For more information or to contact  
**Southwest Oncology** or the **Durango Cancer Center**, call **970-385-4746**



Rebecca visits the goats at Red Dust Ranch in Red Mesa.



# Don't let new guidelines GET YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE UP

**S**o, you thought you were healthy. Your body hasn't changed a bit, but now you're told that your blood pressure is too high. What gives?

Late last year, the American Heart Association and American College of Cardiology set new standards for your heart. High blood pressure (hypertension) is now a systolic reading of greater than 130 or a diastolic greater than 80. The old standards were 140 and 90.

The new guidelines will come as a jolt to many Americans, who suddenly find themselves in a category now considered "at risk." But for many doctors, this won't change what they've been telling patients, or how they're treating them.

"It's really lock-step with what I do and I think what most cardiologists do," said Dr. Chad Bidart, who recently joined Mercy Cardiology Associates. "We know that getting peoples' numbers down means less heart disease."

That high blood pressure is detrimental is nothing new: It is linked to not only heart disease, but strokes, kidney disease and other maladies. The only thing that's changed is that continuing research has increased our understanding of the health processes of the body, Bidart said. Hypertension has been known as the leading cause of stroke; what's changed is the definition of hypertension.

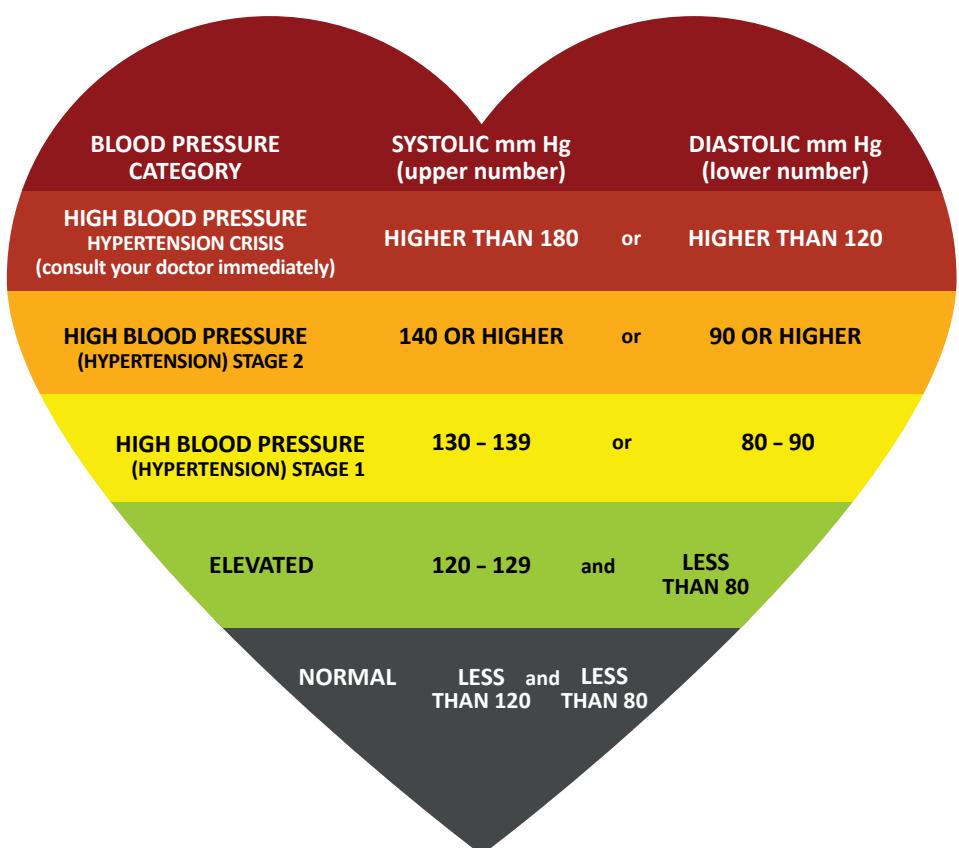
"It's been called the silent killer before, and it truly is," said Dr. Bidart, who specializes in cardiology and electrophysiology. "Blood pressure is something that people don't feel unless it's super low or super high, and I think we've done an injustice by not

communicating that very well. Hopefully these new guidelines do that."

The heart acts as a pump, moving blood around the body, beating about 100,000 times per day. Like any pump, the heart creates pressure in the delivery mechanism, in this case the arteries. The systolic measurement is the pressure blood is exerting on the walls of the artery when the heart muscle contracts, and blood is being pushed out of the heart. Diastolic is the pressure blood is exerting on the arteries when the heart is filling, between beats.

The new guidelines won't mean much unless patients understand the significance. Dr. Bidart advises to study up on the new guidelines, get information online (preferably from a reliable source such as the American Heart Association's [heart.org](http://heart.org)), and if you have questions, talk to a doctor.

"The best thing to do is just ask," he said. "Discuss what you find with your provider, so that treatment becomes a mutual decision where patients understand and buy in to what's going on."



"Normal" blood pressure is now considered 120 or lower for systolic and 80 or lower for diastolic pressure. With these new guidelines, the prevalence of hypertension among men under 45 will triple, and among women under 45 it will double. If you're above these pressures, it may be time to consider lifestyle changes:

**Increasing exercise.** Dr. Bidart recommends 30 - 60 minutes of aerobic exercise per day.

**Dietary alterations**, such as lowering your calorie and salt intake. Dr. Bidart recommends a "Mediterranean" diet that includes lean meats, fresh fruits and vegetables, nuts and olive oil.

**Moderation** in things such as alcohol, and cutting tobacco entirely.

**Medications** may become necessary for some patients. Psychologically this can be a tough sell, but Dr. Bidart counsels patients to think of it as tending to your heart, or brain.

"It's really better to think of these almost as heart medicines, or brain medicines," Dr. Bidart said. "If you get it in your mind that, 'Hey, I'm treating my heart, I'm treating my blood vessels, I'm treating my brain to reduce the risk of stroke,' I think it's more palatable than saying, 'I have high blood pressure, so I've got to take these three pills.'"

For more information visit online;  
American Heart Association blood pressure  
recommendations: <http://bit.ly/2ptiAEE>

Help determine your risk of heart disease with a comprehensive lipid panel test. Available at any Mercy laboratory location without a provider's order or an appointment\*. For more information, call 970-764-1105.

\* Fasting is recommended prior to blood draw. Call for details.



Dr. Chad Bidart suggests staying active to lower blood pressure. Dr. Bidart stays active training for Ironman races.

# Obesity & kids

## A WEIGHTY SUBJECT, INDEED

**O**besity is a topic many parents fear bringing up with their children more than sex, drugs, and alcohol, studies show. Yet it may not be the least important. The number of children with obesity in America has tripled in the last forty years (1971-2011), now numbering one in three. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention define obesity in children as having a BMI at or above the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile for children and teens of the same age and sex. The long-term ramifications of childhood obesity are enormous.

"It's dramatic," says Dr. Sarah Goodpastor, M.D., who specializes in obesity medicine and internal medicine at Mercy Internal Medicine. "And it's causing a wide range of health problems – high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, elevated cholesterol – things we didn't typically see in children."

Broaching the weight subject is tricky because you don't want to hurt a child's psyche. So here are a few tips – some things to say and not to say to your kids:

### EXCESS WEIGHT

Yes, it is a sensitive subject. So develop an awareness of your own biases and assumptions about obesity, and how your words can impact your children. For example, it's best not to use the word "obese" in discussing your child's situation. Terms that people are more comfortable with are "excess weight" and "extra weight," Dr. Goodpastor advises. Go ahead and ask a child what words they're comfortable using.

Lisa Isenberg, certified pediatric nurse practitioner with Mercy Family Medicine, point-blank asks children, "How do you feel about your weight?" Most children are aware of their issue, and further discussion ensues.

### HEALTH, NOT LOOKS

Perhaps foremost, parents should discuss weight as a matter of health, not of appearance, says Registered Dietitian Joanna

Kriehn, diabetes educator and sports nutritionist at Mercy Regional Medical Center. Studies show that when children become ashamed of their weight, it can lead to eating disorders, Dr. Goodpastor advises.

"It's not about what you look like, but the health impacts of extra weight on your body," Kriehn says. A possible metaphor to use with children: You know how you feel loaded down when your teacher gives you extra homework? Well, that's how your body feels when you give it extra weight.

Along similar lines, it's important that a child not be defined by his or her weight. "They're not that number on a scale," Kriehn says.

Remind kids often that they are "smart," "courageous," and "kind," Dr. Goodpastor says. It's important they continue to get these positive messages. Post those thoughts on the refrigerator or in their room, if that seems appropriate.

### MAKING CHOICES

Isenberg says she quizzes children, such as asking them what a fruit or vegetable is. And she asks them what they eat. If the answer isn't something healthy, she'll pose another question: "Instead of this food, what is another option?" Ultimately, she says, it's their decision.

Dr. Goodpastor says to use a tack such as, "Let's talk about foods we can eat that help our body to work really well and be strong and help us do the activities we want to do." Present the idea of a body as a working machine (Kids like machines, right?). What kinds of fuels best help your machine function?

Making diet adjustments should be a family approach, experts say. Excess weight may be a problem for just one of your children, but, says Dr. Goodpastor, "Really, everyone is going to have to think about changing for the benefit of the children." And the adults must set the model. "The parents are also going to have to eat the broccoli."

One guideline that Dr. Goodpastor uses for meal planning is to have at least one fruit, one vegetable and one protein on the plate. And the more colorful the better. (That means carrots, apples, red peppers, and grapes. Not Cheetos or Skittles!) Keep the house filled with healthy foods, not junk, so kids don't have to make a stressful decision.



And get them involved in meal preparation, says Jenny Treanor, a counselor and coordinator of Profile Employee Assistance Program (EAP) at Mercy Regional Medical Center. That can mean anything from the planting stage (a home garden, or even a potted cherry tomato plant), to helping prepare the vegetables for a salad. The sooner the better, age-wise, so kids learn where their food is coming from.

## GET MOVING

The dog needs a walk, and so do you. Make it a habit to take a quick jaunt around the neighborhood after dinner, Goodpastor says. It's not only good family time, but emphasizes being active and helps the body's muscles begin to process glucose and decrease the amount circulating in the bloodstream. And, after-dinner walks create a great habit of keeping the body in motion and avoiding a sedentary lifestyle.



## Helpful books



**"Eat Lots of Colors,"** by Helen Marstiller. This fun book encourages kids to keep track of the colors they eat.

## Useful apps



**MyFitnessPal** – helps keep track of calories.



A slew of food-related apps are designed for kids, including **Easy Eater 2**, and **Smash Your Food**.

## Online sources



**"Traffic Light Eating,"** a program of the Dr. Sears Wellness Institute, tells us which foods are green (GO ahead and eat), yellow (go SLOW and eat in moderation), and red (STOP and make a different choice or eat a smaller portion): <http://bit.ly/2tc5HOD>



**The Stop Obesity Alliance** offers information and a guide to talking to your children about their weight and even an e-book on the subject: <http://weighinguide.com>



**U.S. Department of Agriculture** dietary tips, geared toward all ages: [choosemyplate.gov](http://choosemyplate.gov)



**American Heart Association's** "Dietary Recommendations for Healthy Children":  
<http://bit.ly/2kIzDl>

# BIG gratitude

## FOR MERCY EMPLOYEE GIVING

Jessica Martinez was in a tough spot. Her 59-year-old mother had fallen and broken her hip, and needed constant guidance during stays at the hospital and then a rehabilitation unit. Every day brought challenges, both financial and physical. Martinez had to do it all for her mother, who had also suffered cognitive loss.

Martinez took time off from work to help her mother, but quickly used up her personal leave. After that, paychecks stopped, and she was in danger of missing payments and perhaps losing her home in Hermosa. To try to keep up, she ran up her credit card debt. Martinez is proud of being self-reliant, but she needed help.

That's when Mercy Employee Giving and the Employee Financial Assistance Program came to the rescue.

### ALL IN THE FAMILY

In the old days, Durango's Sisters of Mercy kept an unofficial "slush fund" to help hospital employees. More recently, in 2008, Mercy Health Foundation noticed some employees struggling for financial reasons, so they created a stash of cash, more official this time. To fund it, they asked Mercy Regional Medical Center employees for donations.

The Employee Financial Assistance Program was born. The fund is there when one of Mercy's 1,350 employees suffers unforeseen emergencies that create financial crises. (Employees voluntarily contribute to this program under the Mercy Employee Giving umbrella, which includes three other funds they can support.)

In less than ten years since its creation, the emergency fund has delivered nearly \$500,000 in quick aid to 563 employees. Half the assistance is a loan, paid back incrementally with no interest; the rest is a no-strings-attached grant.

For employees down on their luck, it's a way Mercy can bring them into the family.

"One of Mercy's missions is to make this a big family," says Karen Midkiff, Chief Development Officer of Mercy Health Foundation. "I think that our employees value their work family."

Lauri Wilson-Lacy, the Foundation's administrative assistant who tracks the program, says, "It's a different atmosphere than other



companies. It's people caring for people. You can sense that."

Financial emergencies can run from electric or grocery bills, to needs stemming from family issues, to fire damage, to veterinarian bills. And to car repairs, which are crucial to employees who commute from as far away as New Mexico and Utah.

Employees needing this financial boost start by applying at Mercy's Human Resources department, filling out forms that state what they need, why, and providing invoices or bills if necessary. The application is sent via email to an employee committee of seven people, who review it within 24 hours and then approve, deny, or request more information. Most requests are granted, Midkiff says.

Employees can request a maximum of \$1,500 per year. When the request is granted, Wilson-Lacy prepares the check, Midkiff signs it, and Wilson-Lacy delivers it.

### *"I've seen many employees cry with relief"*

Wilson-Lacy says. "I have been hugged so many times, and I have to tell them, 'It's not me. It's your co-workers.'"





## A LIFE-SAVER

In Martinez's case, she admits to being stubborn and not asking for aid. Fortunately, her boss knew about the program. Mary Briskey, supervisor of Centura Health Physician Group Southwest-Gastroenterology at Mercy, began filling out the paperwork for Martinez.

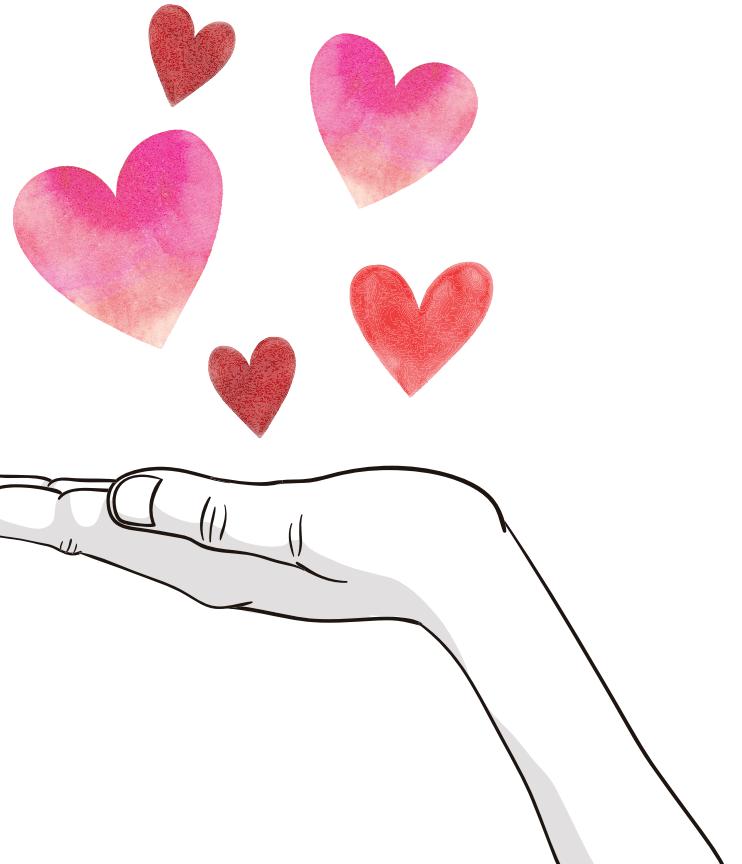
"I know you need help," Briskey told Martinez.

Soon, the program was helping Martinez pay her immediate bills via a grant, and giving her an interest-free loan to help pay off the rest of her debts.

"Mary worked with me. The hospital worked with me," Martinez gratefully recalls.

The members of Mercy Health Foundation were both supportive and helpful. "I didn't want a handout," Martinez says. "They made me feel like it was OK." Martinez now works as an obstetrical unit tech at Mercy's Family Birthing Center. She didn't lose her home, and her mother is doing much better. Thanks in part to her family at Mercy, Martinez stayed on her feet. "It was a life-saver," she says.

Or, as one of the numerous other thankful employees wrote in a card treasured by the Foundation: "**Wapila tanka.**" That's Lakota Sioux. Translation: "**Many thanks,**" or as the card-writer added: "**Big Gratitude.**"





# Battling back against bullying

Boys and girls are bullied for many reasons. A classmate may be perceived as too smart, dumb, too small, too big, or just doesn't "fit in." Parents can play a crucial role in helping children deal with others who are persistently trying to harm them using intimidation. Counselor Jenny Treanor, coordinator of Profile Employee Assistance Program (EAP) at Mercy Regional Medical Center, offered some tips in helping kids build resiliency to bullying:

## SELF-ESTEEM

Having self-esteem is one of the main lines of self-defense against bullying, and parents can take steps to help children build that self-esteem, Treanor said.

"Self-esteem comes from doing," Treanor said. Give kids chores, and challenges, and hold them accountable for the outcomes. "Challenges successfully met produce resiliency, and that's what we're trying to produce in kids: When I feel better about myself, I am less likely to be a victim of a bully."

## BE GOOD LISTENERS

Parents need to take time to check in regularly with kids, and to be a "safe" person for them to talk to. Reacting with empathy, rather than anger, when a child talks about being bullied helps us be that safe person.

Being there for children is important. Generally, a bully is using an advantage such as being larger, or older, or more popular. Talking to an adult – someone older, and likely bigger, than the bully – helps level out that advantage. And for the child, it's comforting to know they're not alone in their battle

"Parents need to pay attention, and be curious," Treanor said.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

The social media era has created a new method of intimidation, called cyber-bullying.

Social media sites such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp offer a round-the-clock medium for bullies, who can send hurtful messages or start rumors, often anonymously. About 15 percent of high school students were electronically bullied in the last year, according to stopbullying.gov. The rate shoots up to 55.2 percent for LGBTQ students.

If you learn about cyber-bullying, ask your child questions, document, and if necessary, report the activity to the school. Advise children to cast a wide net of friends and mix with different groups. This can head off many types of bullying.



For more information visit on-line:  
[www.stopbullying.gov](http://www.stopbullying.gov)

# Bite Size NEWS

## MERCY NAMED AMONG TOP 10% IN NATION FOR CARDIOLOGY SERVICES

Cardiology services at Mercy are among the top 10 percent in the nation — as measured by volume-weighted performance — according to this year's evaluation from Healthgrades, an online resource for comprehensive information about physicians and hospitals. Every year, Healthgrades evaluates hospital performance at nearly 4,500 hospitals nationwide for 34 of the most common inpatient procedures and conditions.



Stephanie Clements, RN, MBA

## YOU'RE INVITED TO MERCY'S MONTHLY PREDIABETES CLASS

Have you been diagnosed with prediabetes? If so, you're at a higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

However, effectively managing prediabetes can help prevent diabetes. In fact, studies have shown that the risk of developing type 2 diabetes can be significantly reduced through weight loss and exercise, which is shown to be more effective in managing prediabetes than medication alone. Anyone identified as having prediabetes is invited to attend a FREE class with Sheena Carswell, CNS, BC-ADM, and Marge Morris, RD, CDE, offered on the first Friday of every month from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. in suite 140 of Mercy's Medical Office Building. Attendees will learn how to manage prediabetes and help prevent the onset of type 2 diabetes. To register, call **970-764-3415**.



Gwen Heller, CMPE

## MERCY'S GRAY MATTERS PROGRAM HELPS PREVENT BRAIN INJURIES

Mercy is committed to reducing the number of traumatic brain injuries in our community through education and putting helmets on kids in need. Since 2010, Mercy's Gray Matters program has donated \$49,111 in helmets and educational materials to the communities we serve. That translates to educating thousands of kids and distributing 3,035 helmets to those who did not have the resources to buy their own. If you would like to support the efforts of Mercy's Gray Matters program, by making a donation to Mercy Health Foundation, please call **970-764-2800**.



## MERCY WELCOMES NEW CHIEF NURSING OFFICER AND A NEW VICE PRESIDENT OF OPERATIONS AND OUTREACH STRATEGY

Mercy is pleased to welcome Stephanie Clements, RN, MBA, to the position of chief nursing officer, and Gwendolyn (Gwen) Heller, CMPE, to the position of vice president of operations and outreach strategy. In their new roles, Stephanie and Gwen will help lead the hospital and physician clinics as members of Mercy's Senior Leadership team.

health+care is published quarterly as a service of Mercy Regional Medical Center and is not intended to provide personal medical advice, which should be obtained directly from a physician. If you have a health issue or concern, please contact your health care provider.

If you have an address change or would like to be removed from our mailing list, please call 970-764-3995.

## Mercy Regional Medical Center



Mercy Regional Medical Center  
1010 Three Springs Blvd.  
Durango, CO 81301

[mercydurango.org](http://mercydurango.org)

# Keep that Resolution Alive!

MERCY SPORTS MEDICINE OFFERS AFFORDABLE EXERCISE CLASSES TO KEEP YOU FIT



Mercy Sports Medicine is where athletes get better. Whether you're looking to improve performance, promote overall health and wellness, or recover from an injury and get back to your favorite sports and activities, we have the solutions you need. Mercy Sports Medicine instructors offer a variety of programs to reduce the risk of injury, enhance performance, and promote overall wellness. From one-on-one fitness coaching, to fun and supportive group classes, we have something for everyone.

## OPEN PARTICIPATION GROUP CLASSES

**BOOT CAMP:** Focused on high intensity intervals, this class provides a killer workout and a chance to sweat. It delivers results with a total-body approach and an emphasis on core and cardiovascular/muscular endurance.

**CORE/BALANCE:** This class offers the best movements for improving endurance, balance, cardiovascular fitness and muscular strength using your body weight, dumbbells and resistance bands. Expect a great full body, overall conditioning and toning workout composed of 30-second high intensity intervals.

**RAD MOBILITY:** Using RAD Rollers and other myofascial release tools, this class offers relief in motion to help with tightness, tension, and reduced movement. We use SMR, or Self Myofascial Release techniques, to facilitate mobility. All abilities are welcome to learn how to increase mobility and relieve stress, tightness, and tension.

**ROCKIN YOGA:** This is a high energy, musically inspired, energizing, fun-focused, cardio-yoga for all ages. No yoga or dance experience is necessary to join in on the fun. This class gives you a much needed "pick-me-up" with a sprinkle of fun!

**FLOW YOGA:** In this class you will increase flexibility, balance, and strength while burning away toxicity and emotional tension through a conscious connection of breath and movement. The class is appropriate for all levels, with modifications given to suit individual needs.

### Cost:

- Drop in: \$15 (First class **FREE**)
- 5 class punch pass: \$55
- 10 class punch pass: \$100
- 20 class punch pass: \$180

(Most classes limited to 20 participants.)



For more information, visit  
[mercydurango.org/sportsmedicine](http://mercydurango.org/sportsmedicine)

### MONDAY

Flow Yoga  
5:15 p.m.

### TUESDAY

RAD Mobility  
noon  
Core/Balance  
5:15 p.m.

### WEDNESDAY

Boot Camp  
6:45 a.m.

### THURSDAY

RAD Mobility  
1:00 p.m.  
Rockin Yoga  
5:15 p.m.

### FRIDAY

Boot Camp  
6:45 a.m.