



# Healthpoint

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Regional Hospital's  
Dr. Kurt Doggwiler

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## From The CEO



Gene Miller, CEO  
Northeastern Nevada Regional Hospital

## How To Be A Life Saver

It's a sad but true fact. We all know someone whose life has been affected by breast cancer, either directly or as a family member or friend. And it's not at all surprising that breast cancer is the most common cancer in women, aside from skin cancer.

Fortunately, there is good news. Breast cancer can be treated successfully, especially if it's detected early. That is the reason we have devoted much of this edition of *Healthpoint* to providing important information about mammograms.

With October being Breast Cancer Awareness Month, it's time for all of us to become more aware of breast cancer and the ways to prevent it. If you're a woman over 40, you need to schedule an annual mammogram. If your wife or your mother or your sister is over 40, and she hasn't had a mammogram, don't take "No" for an answer. Insist that she have one. Nag if you have to. Tell her to call our hospital or talk to her personal physician about scheduling an exam. If every woman over 40 had an annual mammogram, thousands of lives would be saved. Let's vow to make sure that the people we care about do not become another statistic. We can make a difference and save lives.



# October HOPE



Gary D. Wright, MD  
OB/GYN

## Know The ABCs of Preventing Breast Cancer

October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, a good time to get serious about this all-too-common disease. How common? Just consider these two alarming statistics:

- **Every three minutes in the United States, a woman is diagnosed with breast cancer.**
- **One in eight American women will be diagnosed with breast cancer.**

### A) Know Your Risk Factors

Risk factors are clues that can signal which women are more likely than others to develop breast cancer. By far, the most common risk factor is age. The older you are, the greater the risk. The risk is especially high for women over 60. Your risk for breast cancer also increases if there is family history of the disease, if your mother, sister, daughter or two or more close relatives have had the disease. Other risk factors include having no children, having children after age 35, menstruating before age 12, obesity, smoking, hormonal replacement therapy and the use of oral contraceptives. Talk to your physician about your personal risks for breast cancer.

### B) Know The Warning Signs

Any change in the size, shape or color of your breast can be a sign of breast cancer. For example, you may feel a lump or thickening in or around the breast or the underarm. Redness of the skin or an area that looks distinctly different can also be a sign. The breast may look dimpled, scaly or inflamed. A monthly breast-self exam can help you detect these changes. It's best to perform this exam three to five days after your menstrual cycle.

### C) Eat, Drink and Live Smart

What you eat and drink is important in preventing breast cancer. Decrease your intake of fat, especially saturated fats. Add more fiber to your diet by eating whole grains, fruits and vegetables. Limit the amount of alcohol you drink. Stay active. Try to exercise at least three times a week for 30 minutes.

But by far, the most important step in preventing breast cancer is to have an annual mammogram starting at age 40. Talk to your personal physician today or call our hospital at 775-748-2030 about scheduling an annual mammogram. It only takes a few minutes, and it could save your life.

## SPOTLIGHT ON MAMMOGRAPHY



If you're  
over 40,  
there's no  
excuse



**Kurt Doggwiler, MD**  
*Radiologist*

October 16, 2009 is National Mammography Day, a time for women to remember the importance of early detection in the fight against breast cancer, and, if you're 40 or older, to schedule an annual mammogram.

Breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death among American women. Fortunately, when diagnosed at a localized stage, the 5-year survival rate for breast cancer is 98%. Early detection is critical, and an annual mammogram is the best method available for detecting breast cancer in its beginning stages.

### **Going Digital**

A mammogram is simply an X-ray photograph of the breast. One of the most recent advances in early breast cancer detection is the use of *digital* mammography, now available at many hospitals. This new technology offers many benefits for women. Digital mammography is twice as fast as conventional film-based mammography. It also produces images that are much clearer and more detailed, giving physicians more information for a more precise and accurate diagnosis, so there's much less need for a follow-up exam. Digital mammography also uses less

radiation than a traditional exam and is generally more comfortable for the patient.

Digital mammography is especially effective for women under 50. Indeed, the American College of Radiology estimates that digital mammography detects 28 percent more cancers than conventional mammography techniques for women in this age group, as well as women who have breast tissue that is dense or difficult to image.

### **No Excuses**

There are many reasons women give for not having a mammogram – everything from "I don't have enough time" to "I don't have a family history of breast cancer." In the end, these are not valid reasons; they're just excuses.

Cost should never be an issue. Most private health insurance plans, as well as Medicare and Medicaid, cover mammograms. If you do not have health insurance, free or low-cost mammograms are still available. Contact our hospital or your local public health office for more information.

Both conventional mammography and digital mammography are conducted according to high quality standards. In fact, every mammography unit in the United States must be certified by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

And please remember, a breast self-exam should never be a substitute for a mammogram exam. It's a proven fact that an annual mammogram reduces the risk of dying from breast cancer by 30 to 40 percent. And that's the best reason we can think of for you to schedule one today!



# Treating Sleep DISORDERS



**John Gull, DO**  
ENT Specialist

**To Find Mr. Sandman, Sometimes You Need Medical Help.** Are you always feeling tired during the day? Do you have trouble falling asleep at night? Do you snore loudly when you sleep or wake up frequently during the night? If you answered “Yes” to any of these questions, you may be suffering from a sleep disorder and need to seek medical advice.

## Why Sleep Is So Important

Sleep is not a luxury. It is essential to your health and vitality. Most people need between seven and nine hours of restful sleep each night. There’s more to not getting enough sleep than just feeling drowsy. The lack of restful sleep can lead to a number of medical conditions, including diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, obesity and even depression.

Unfortunately, most people aren’t getting enough sleep. A recent study found that 40 percent of Americans need more shut-eye. And, an estimated 50 to 70 million Americans suffer from long-term sleep loss and sleep disorders.

## Finding Mr. Sandman

The best way to determine if you have a sleeping disorder is to have a sleep study, also called a polysomnogram. A sleep study is usually performed in a special home-like sleep lab that helps promote a good night’s rest. The study electronically records specific physical activities during your different stages of sleep. Equipped with this information, a qualified

physician can detect any sleep disorders and can recommend an appropriate treatment.

*Here are some of the more common sleep disorders:*

### *Insomnia*

You may have insomnia if it takes more than 45 minutes to fall asleep or if you wake up frequently during the night and can’t fall back to sleep. Worrying about a stressful situation can cause insomnia for a few nights or weeks. Long-term insomnia, which can last for months or even years, usually requires medical treatment.

### *Sleep Apnea*

Sleep apnea is present when a person repeatedly stops breathing for 10 to 15 seconds or longer during sleep. It’s usually caused by a blockage in the upper airways, especially in the nose and mouth. If you snore loudly, toss and turn during the night, or wake up with a headache, you may have sleep apnea. Older men who are overweight are more likely to have this condition.

### *Narcolepsy*

With narcolepsy, a person is engaged in normal daily activities and then suddenly falls asleep for a few seconds to several minutes. In some cases, the person may remain asleep for more than an hour. Narcolepsy is caused by the brain’s inability to regulate a normal sleep-wake cycle.

### *Restless Legs Syndrome*

When you lie down to sleep, do you ever have a tingling, pulling or painful sensation in your leg? If you do, you may have a sleep disorder called Restless Legs Syndrome.



# Breast Cancer By The Numbers

## You Can Beat Breast Cancer

There are about 2.5 million breast cancer survivors in the United States alone!

## Women Aren't The Only Victims

There were almost 2,000 cases of breast cancer in men last year.

## Many Lives Can Still Be Saved

Less than 60 percent of women 40 and older have had a mammogram within the past year. Yet, it's a proven fact that an annual mammography exam is the single most effective method of early detection because it can identify breast cancer several years before any physical symptoms develop. Most importantly, be sure to schedule an annual mammogram screening if you are over 40 or have a high risk for breast cancer. There's simply too much at stake – for you, and your family.

*Information is an important tool in the fight against breast cancer.* Here are some revealing numbers that will help you better understand the disease.

## Breast Cancer Is Much More Common Than 50 Years Ago

As an American woman, your chance of having breast cancer during your lifetime is one in eight. In 1960, the rate was one in every 20 women.

## We're Getting Better At Fighting The Disease

Since 1990, the death rate for breast cancer has decreased by more than 2 percent every year. From 1974 to 1990, the death rate was actually increasing slightly.

## Celebrity Breast Cancer Survivors

Being famous does not shield you from the risk of breast cancer. The list of celebrities who have survived breast cancer includes:

- **Edie Falco:** Star of the TV show *The Sopranos*
- **Rue McClanahan:** Star of the TV show *The Golden Girls*
- **Olivia Newton-John:** The singer was diagnosed in 1992
- **Jaclyn Smith and Kate Jackson:** Stars of the 1970s TV show *Charlie's Angels*

Even men can have breast cancer. (About 1 in 100 breast cancer victims are men.) Richard Roundtree, who starred in the 1970s movie *Shaft*, was diagnosed in 1993 and now speaks often to raise awareness of the disease among men.

Robin Roberts, the host of *Good Morning America*, is one of the more notable recent examples of a celebrity diagnosed with breast cancer. Roberts first detected the condition herself during a breast self-exam. After finding the lump, she underwent both a mammogram and ultrasound examination. Then, on July 31, 2007, Roberts announced on air that she had breast cancer. She was only 46 years old. Within a week, she underwent surgery and began chemotherapy. Six months later, she celebrated her last round of chemotherapy. Today, Roberts is again hosting the show. "I am better off than so many people who find it so late," she says. "That is why I am grateful and that again is why my battle cry is early detection!"



# FLU Vaccinations

**Last April**, the H1N1 flu virus (originally called the swine flu) caused great concern worldwide. Reports of illness from the H1N1 virus continued in the U.S. through the summer, normally a flu free season. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) is concerned that the H1N1 virus, combined with the regular (or seasonal) flu, could cause a severe flu season this winter.

**The best way** to protect yourself and your family is for those in the high risk categories to be vaccinated.

**First**, people must not forget about the risks of regular (or seasonal) flu, which causes 36,000 deaths and 200,000 hospitalizations annually. Recommendations are that vaccines be given in the early fall to children ages 6 months up to 18 years, pregnant women, and people ages 50+ as well as people who have chronic medical conditions, live in nursing homes or other long-term care facilities, or live with or care for people who have a high risk for complications from the flu.

**New developments** are happening every day with the H1N1 vaccine, however, at the time of this writing a vaccine was not yet available. According to the CDC, a H1N1 vaccine is currently being developed and could be available in the fall.

**Talk to your physician** and visit [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov) for the latest guidelines and information about both the H1N1 and seasonal flu.



## Halloween Safety

**October 31 is one of the most anticipated days of the year for a child.** But with all the excitement of Halloween, it's very easy for children to forget to be safe. Here are some helpful tips to keep your children safe this Halloween.

- **BE SEEN:** Walking on streets in the dark can be dangerous for a child. Make sure your children wear costumes that are bright and reflective so passing motorists can see them. Carrying flashlights and adding reflective tape to their costume and trick-or-treat bag are other good ways to increase their visibility. Flashlights also come in handy for spotting obstacles in the dark. Be sure to use a sidewalk when one is available and to cross streets in designated crosswalks as a group so you'll be more noticeable.

- **DON'T TRAVEL ALONE:** Children should always travel in groups and, preferably, with an adult. Stay in neighborhoods that are well lit and well-known.
- **WEAR THE RIGHT COSTUME:** Remember that costumes, especially wigs with long hair, can be a fire hazard. Make sure your child wears a costume that is flame-retardant. Wearing a mask can limit a child's range of vision, so think about using non-toxic makeup instead. If your child does wear a mask, stress to them the importance of turning and looking both ways before crossing a street. Costumes should also be short enough so the child doesn't trip and fall. Falls are the most common unintentional injuries that occur during Halloween.
- **EAT SAFE:** Don't take, eat or drink any unwrapped food. Treats should not be eaten until they are taken home and inspected by an adult. When in doubt, throw it out.



Advances in the Fight Against Breast Cancer Have Been Steady

25 years  
of progress



## *2009 marks the 25th anniversary of National Breast Cancer Awareness Month*

The past 25 years have seen great progress and many achievements in the diagnosing, treating and prevention of breast cancer.

To really appreciate the advances that have been made thus far, consider the situation 35 years ago. In 1974, the five-year survival rate for breast cancer was around 75 percent. There was only one acceptable surgical option, a mastectomy, for the treatment of breast cancer. And the use of multiple drugs during chemotherapy was only just beginning.

Today, the five-year survival rate for breast cancer is almost 90 percent. If the breast cancer is localized and hasn't spread from its site of origin, the five-year survival rate is 98 percent! Instead of a mastectomy, which removes the entire breast, a lumpectomy, in which only the tumor and some surrounding tissue is removed, is now the preferred treatment option for women in the early stages of breast cancer. And the use of multiple drugs during chemotherapy has become the standard treatment method.

Thanks to ongoing research, the mortality rate for breast cancer has dropped an average of 3.2 percent each year since 1995. Here are a few of the many advances made in the fight against breast cancer during the past three decades.

**Early 1980s:** Screening mammograms begin. For the first time, mammograms are used to check for breast cancer without any signs or symptoms. Previously, mammograms had been used strictly as a diagnostic tool, to analyze a lump or other condition that had already been found. In addition, the use of ultrasound continues to help more and more physicians as a valuable diagnostic tool.

**1985:** The lumpectomy, combined with radiation therapy, is determined to be as effective as a mastectomy.

**Early 1990s:** Digital mammography is introduced, offering more detailed images and a more precise diagnosis. This new technology is especially helpful for detecting breast cancer in women who are under 50 or who have dense breast tissue.

**Late 1990s:** Scientists confirm that certain variations in two genes cause up to an 80 percent increase in risk.

**2007:** For the first time, the American Cancer Society recommends that women with a high risk for breast cancer have an annual MRI, in addition to a mammogram.

**Tomorrow:** More and more research is being conducted on the relationship between genes and breast cancer. Three-dimensional mammograms will soon offer even more detailed images to help diagnose breast cancer in its earlier stages.



**NORTHEASTERN NEVADA  
REGIONAL HOSPITAL**

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**Important News and Helpful  
Advice for a Healthier Life inside:**

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Mammography

Treating Sleep Disorders

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# Healthpoint

**NORTHEASTERN NEVADA REGIONAL HOSPITAL**    **OCTOBER 2009**

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www.NNRHospital.com



\*Drawing to take place on November 15, 2009. If you are an employee or an immediate family member of an employee of Northeast Nevada Regional Hospital, or you are otherwise affiliated with Northeast Nevada Regional Hospital, we appreciate your support. However, you are not eligible for the drawing. VOID if prohibited by law.