

Insights

your health and your hospital



NMC Welcomes New Rise VT Coordinator

NMC is pleased to announce the hiring of the Rise VT Coordinator – Dorey Demers. Dorey is a familiar face in our community, having worked as a Public Health Nurse for the Vermont Department of Health's St. Albans District office. Most recently she worked as an RN Wellness Lead for the University of Vermont Medical Center, initiating wellness programs both internal and in the community.

Dorey's experience in public health and in our local area will help her hit the ground running in the role of Coordinator for Rise VT.

RISE VT *Embracing Healthy Lifestyles* This grant-funded initiative will engage people of all ages in Franklin and Grand Isle Counties in achieving better health. The program offers membership for individuals, groups, and businesses, through a point system that recognizes and encourages participation in healthy habits. As participants increase their commitment to healthy lifestyles, they are rewarded with higher levels of membership.



In addition to the membership program, Rise VT will also be the catalyst for several new community-based healthy lifestyle building blocks, including:

- **Access to Care:** improved access to initial health risk appraisals as a complement to Primary Care;
- **Worksite Wellness:** increased community and employer-based education and healthy challenges;
- **Local Support:** a network of health advocates embedded in the community to serve as ambassadors of positive change;

- **Systemic Change:** encouragement of policy changes and infrastructure development; and
- **Online Tools:** creation of a wellness portal to serve as a central informative and interactive resource for the community.

Rise VT launches in March, and pilot participants are needed. To participate, or for more information about Rise VT, call Dorey Demers at **802-524-8825** or visit **risevt.org**.

NMC publishes Insights on a bimonthly basis to help our neighbors have a better understanding of their primary care hospital. If you have questions or comments about this publication, please email insights@nmcinc.org or call our Community Services Office at 524-1280.



melanoma prevention

st. albans urgent care new hours



doris hughes - tree of life

nmc on tv



health and wellness programs

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Melanoma: Awareness and Screening Can Prevent Skin Cancer

Melanoma is the fifth most common cancer in Vermont, but a lack of awareness and education in our community about this type of skin cancer may be hindering the early diagnosis that can improve treatment and mortality.

Melanoma is a form of skin cancer that occurs in melanocytes, which are cells in the outer layer of skin that gives skin its coloring and typically protects deeper layers of the skin from harmful sun exposure. The incidence of melanoma in Vermont is higher than the U.S. rate.

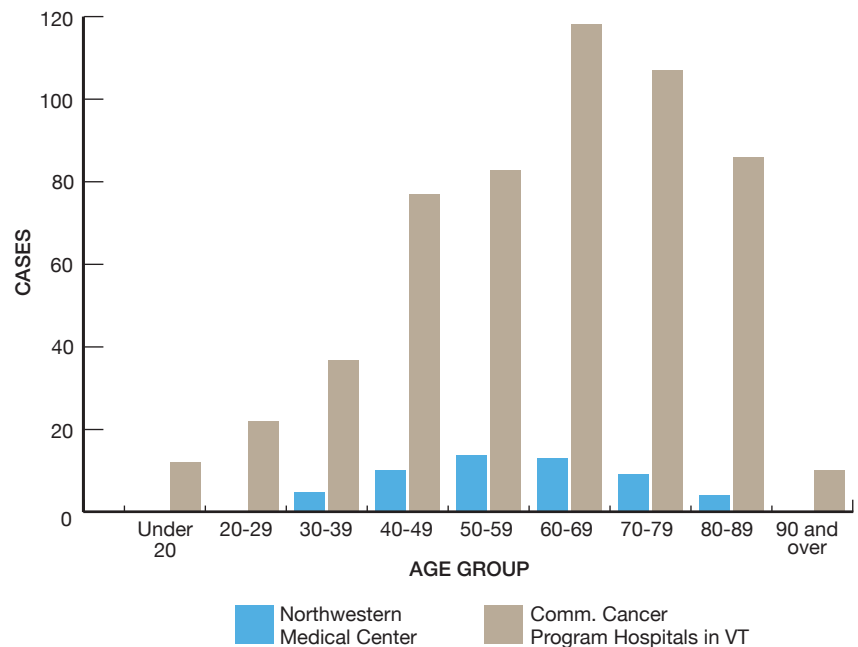
At Northwestern Medical Center, data from the American College of Surgeons shows that the greatest numbers of diagnosed melanomas occur in the 50-69 age ranges, while far fewer cases are diagnosed in younger patients. More importantly, NMC data also shows that only 54 percent of melanomas diagnosed in our area are identified at the earliest stages (0 & 1) versus 80 percent for the rest of Vermont. Only 20 percent are diagnosed at Stage 0 while the cancer is called “in situ” and 34 percent at stage 1 while the cancer has not invaded past 1.0 to 2.0 mm.

Catching melanoma early is important because this form of skin cancer can be treated early. If left untreated, it can spread to other parts of the body and become much more difficult to treat.

Dr. Peter Burke, a pathologist at NMC, says that the steadily increasing cases of melanoma and the late diagnoses may be due to a number of factors including outdoor work being more common in our rural area, a lack of understanding of the risks associated with sun exposure, and Franklin County’s lack of a local dermatologist.

Franklin and Grand Isle Counties are some of Vermont’s most rural areas with many residents working and playing outside. Residents may not be aware of the risk of sun exposure, especially sunburns, which Dr. Burke says causes risk to skyrocket when the sunburns happen to children. One of the best prevention aids has been Vermont’s passage of a law banning use of tanning beds for people under

AGE GROUP OF MELANOMA OF THE SKIN CANCER, DIAGNOSED 2002-2012



18, says Burke. Vermont passed the law in 2012, becoming one of only a handful of states with this protection in place for minors.

Dr. Burke stressed the need to understand risk factors. Those include:

- Exposure to UV radiation, particularly artificial UV rays
- Age
- Fairness of skin
- Severe sunburns
- Failure to recognize “unusual” moles
- Family or personal history

Dr. Burke also said preventive measures are important, and simple.

- Avoid exposure
- Wear sunscreen and protective clothing
- Never use tanning booths, beds or lamps

Performing a self-examination involves checking your skin to take note of all the spots on your body from moles to freckles and age spots. See infographic for details on what to look for. For more information about melanoma or skin conditions, talk to your Primary Care Physician about a screening.

New Sunday Hours for Northwestern Urgent Care in St. Albans

To better serve the healthcare needs of the community, Northwestern Urgent Care has updated its Saturday hours for the St. Albans clinic to 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The hours for the St. Albans office had been later in the day, but urgent care staff found that the early morning hours are more appealing to patients. Stop into Northwestern Urgent Care any day of the week – the St. Albans clinic is open every day and no appointments are needed.

St. Albans

Mon-Fri: 8am – 8pm

Sat: 9am – 5pm

Sun: 9am – 3pm

Georgia

Mon-Fri: 8am – 7pm

Sat: 8am – 5pm



On December 12, 2014, friends and family of Doris Hughes gathered at NMC to honor her by placing a leaf on the hospital's Tree of Life, commemorating her faith, service, wit, music and love. Doris is pictured here (seated) with her life partner Dr. Mara Vijups, MD, and her daughter Sharon Morris (standing). Special Note: Doris passed away January 9, 2015, and NMC wishes to pass along our condolences to her family.

NMC on TV: The Health Beat

NMC recently launched a new TV show on Northwest Access TV, called Health Beat. This is an exciting new way for NMC to connect with our community. Our goal is to provide information about health topics and services so that viewers can become healthier, well-informed consumers of healthcare. The short show is structured as a question-and-answer session and gives an excellent glimpse into the hearts and minds of local physicians, advanced practice providers, hospital staff, and community partners. Hearing first-hand from these talented individuals is a great way to get to know them, and for NMC to share its passion for exceptional care.



Tune in to Channel 15 on Tuesdays and Thursdays to see Health Beat. You can also view past episodes on the NMC website at <http://www.northwesternmedicalcenter.org/northwestern-health-beat>. If you've got a topic you'd like to see us cover on Health Beat, contact producer Kate Laddison in the Community Relations office at 802-524-1239.

Stress Echo Tests Now Available

Northwestern Cardiology now offers Stress Echo testing as a complement to the other diagnostic testing the practice provides. This test is used to evaluate exercise-related changes in heart muscle function. Patients walk on a treadmill at increasing speeds and incline to increase their heart rate. A limited echocardiogram – an ultrasound of the heart – is performed immediately following the exercise.

This test focuses on changes in heart muscle function to help determine if there is decreased blood flow to heart muscle because of a partial or complete blockage of the heart's arteries. The decreased blood flow can damage the heart muscle, hindering its ability to pump efficiently.

Stress Echo testing can be used separately or in combination with other tests like the Echocardiogram which gives information about valves and chamber sizes.

Northwestern Cardiology is a collaborative effort between NMC and the University of Vermont Medical Center. At Northwestern Cardiology, Stress Echo tests are performed in NMC's stress lab, located in the main hallway at NMC, just past the Diagnostic Imaging Department. For more information about Stress Echo testing, or to make an appointment with Northwestern Cardiology, call 802-524-8909.



VISIT OUR BOOTH!

Free Admission

MARCH 20, 21 & 22

AT COLLINS PERLEY SPORTS
& FITNESS CENTER



Pre-registration is required. Please call 524-1234 (or email cfhw@nmcinc.org) to pre-register or receive more information on content. Programs are FREE unless otherwise indicated.

FEBRUARY & MARCH PROGRAMS

Oncology Rehab

Every Tuesday and Thursday 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

This class pin points the common needs of patients, including decreased range of motion, decreased strength, cancer-related fatigue and lymphedema. A physical therapy evaluation is required to ensure that participants are able to join.

Location: NMC Cardiac Rehab gym, Cobblestone Building

Featuring: Wendy Lawrence, STAR Oncology Clinician

Pre-registration required: Call 524-1064 to register or for more information

Program Cost: \$40 per month

Introduction to Tai Chi

Every Monday 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Tai Chi is a slow gentle series of movements designed to enhance mental and physical well-being. This introductory course is led by a physical therapist who is a certified instructor and is designed especially for those with joint pain, arthritis and balance issues or for anyone wanting an introduction to this ancient Chinese art.

Location: NMC Cobblestone gym

Instructor: Pat Cervini, NMC Physical Therapist

Program Cost: \$5 per class

Pre-registration required: Call 524-1064

Diabetes and You

Thursdays, February 5 to March 5 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

Location: Swanton School Apartments

Mondays, March 9 to April 6 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Location: Northwestern Medical Center, Conference Room 2

This self-management educational program is a five part, ten hour group education program, plus telephone follow-up sessions for people with diabetes and their families.

Facilitator: Deb Robertson, RN, BSN, CDE, NMC

Program Cost: Call for pricing information

Pre-registration Required: Call 524-1031 or email drobertson@nmcinc.org

Program Size: Limited to 15

Vermont Quit Network Freshstart (tobacco cessation class)

Mondays, February 2 to 23 4:00 to 5:00 p.m.

Location: Islands in the Sun, Alburgh

Thursdays, March 3 to 26 11 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Location: Swanton School Apartments

Join others for this 4-session series to help you successfully quit smoking. Sessions include: understanding why you have an addiction and how to quit; mastering the first few days, mastering obstacles; and staying quit and enjoying it forever. Vermonters get free patches, gum & lozenges.

Pre-registration Required: Call Chari at 524-8480.

Cholesterol Class

Wednesday, February 4 8:30 to 9:00 a.m.

Discuss foods and eating habits that may help to manage cholesterol levels. Hear practical suggestions for overcoming the barriers to eating in a heart healthy way. Topics include saturated and unsaturated fats, fiber, portion sizes and other American Heart Association guidelines.

Location: Northwestern Medical Center, Cobblestone, Cardiac Rehab Gym

Speaker: Kay Tran, Registered Dietitian, MS, CDE, NMC

Pre-registration Required: Call 524-1234 or email cfhw@nmcinc.org

Breastfeeding: Keep it Simple

Wednesday, February 25 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.

Location: NMC Family Birth Center Conference Room

Tuesday, March 31 Noon to 1:30 p.m.

Location: Vermont Department of Health, 27 Federal St., St. Albans

Attend this free Department of Health Breastfeeding Prep class to learn how your body makes milk, what to expect, tips for getting nursing off to a great start and who to call if you need support or help.

Speaker: Vermont Department of Health staff

Pre-registration required: Call 524-7970 to register

Healthier Living with Chronic Disease

Wednesdays, February 18 to March 25 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Location: Georgia Public Library

Fridays, March 27 to May 1 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Location: Northwestern Medical Center

Learn to feel better by learning how to deal with frustration, fatigue and pain, manage symptoms and medications.

Pre-registration Required: Call 782-5323 or 524-1031 or email hmessier@nmcinc.org

Healthier Living with Chronic Pain

Wednesdays, March 25 to April 29 1:30 to 4:00 p.m.

Learn to feel better by learning how to deal with frustration, fatigue and pain, manage symptoms and medications, and improve strength and flexibility.

Location: Northwestern Medical Center

Facilitator: Various

Pre-registration Required: Call 782-5323 or 524-1031 or email hmessier@nmcinc.org

Saturday Childbirth Education Workshop

Saturday, February 7 or March 7 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Join other expectant parents in a day-long Saturday Workshop to prepare for the birth and care of your baby. You will learn about labor, birth, medications in labor, and relaxation and breathing techniques. You can also enroll in an optional breastfeeding class held on the Monday evening following your workshop.

Location: Franklin County Home Health, 3 Home Health Circle, St. Albans

Program Cost: \$90

Pre-registration Required: Call 527-7531

