

Insights

your health and your hospital



Orthopaedics & Rehab Services Team Up With New Name

Northwestern Orthopaedics and Northwestern Rehabilitation Services are uniting to provide a streamlined approach to care with fully integrated services— taking care of everything from the initial diagnosis to treatment and recovery right on the same hospital campus. This experienced team takes pride in helping you regain the movement, stability and intensity you need to get back to what drives you. Both practices will be called Northwestern Orthopaedics & Rehabilitation Center.

“The upcoming merger and new identity allows us to grow and function as a single team who delivers a seamless, exceptional experience for the patient,” said Karen Staniels, Director of the Ortho-Rehab Service Line.

“We’re excited to recognize the work our staff has been doing to build collaborative processes within Ortho-Rehab,” said Kristy Cushing, Manager of Rehabilitation Services.

The new name and integrated identity mean that patients have access to the broad range of services with a one-stop-shopping approach. The Ortho-Rehab Center will use the same phone number, share a web presence, and ensure that members of both teams can assist patients with all questions about physical therapy, occupational therapy and orthopaedic services.

As the Orthopaedics part of the team prepares to move into the new Medical Office Building this fall, it is the perfect time for the launch of the new team name.

For more information about this exciting change contact Manager Kristy Cushing at 524-8818 or Director Karen Staniels at 524-1090.



Integrated Care: {we do that here}

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 Relations Office at 524-1280.

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Joint Fusion Covered

Starting this summer, there is new help for some sufferers of low back pain. Blue Cross Blue Shield of Vermont recently established health coverage for a minimally invasive fusion of the sacroiliac (SI) joint. The policy covers more than 400,000 health plan members for a minimally invasive procedure.

The sacroiliac joint sits between the sacrum and the ilium bones of the pelvis, and transmits all the forces of the upper body to the hips and legs. Degeneration or injury to the joint can cause pain in the lower back, buttocks and legs. Symptoms can be very similar to sciatica. Sufferers of SI joint issues find movements like standing up, sitting down, stepping up or down, sleeping and rolling over in bed very painful.

Diagnosing an SI joint issue can be difficult as providers must methodically rule out a host of other potential issues, says orthopaedic surgeon Dr. Michael Barnum of Northwestern Orthopaedics, who is experienced in back issues and who performs minimally invasive SI joint fusions. But identifying this issue and treating it with the minimally invasive fusion procedure can get patients back in action in as few as three weeks, he said.

Patients who have had lumbar fusions may have low back pain

Sufferers of low back pain may want to be evaluated for sacroiliac joint issues, with a minimally invasive procedure available to help in some cases.

caused by the stress placed on the SI joint, and a fusion may relieve their pain and restore their mobility. “Patients who have had previous surgery and who are not getting better should think about being evaluated for SI joint problems,” he said.

Dr. Barnum also said it was encouraging to see the insurance coverage made possible by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Vermont, as the coverage makes the surgery available to a wider pool of affected people, many of whom have been waiting to be able to undergo this procedure for a long time.

For more information on coping with back pain, please call Northwestern Orthopaedics at 802-524-8915 or visit their website at <https://www.northwesternmedicalcenter.org/services/orthopaedics/>.



Back in Time

We recently obtained a copy of this old photograph, but were not sure what it depicted. We posted the picture to our Facebook page and got an answer from Bill Goldsbury. The produce was a project of two local Lions Clubs and area school kids who collected the food to help the St. Albans Hospital through the winter of 1933.

According to a *Burlington Free Press* article from the time, Lions Club speakers appeared at local schools to encourage students to bring in donations and gave fountain pens to each student in each town who contributed four potatoes. Amazing evidence of the community support for our hospital throughout the years. Thank you to Lions Clubs past and present, and to Mr. Goldsbury for helping us find our answer!

Traffic Around New Medical Office Building to Become Two-Way

Progress inside NMC's Medical Office Building is on track with interior construction complete and building exterior in the finishing stages. Outside, the travel lane running in front of the building will undergo some changes as we create a two-way road passing the entrance.

After seeing the entrance to the Medical Office Building come together in construction, NMC decided to make further improvements to the roadway and parking design. Our campus strategy is to improve access for the community, and efficient traffic flow and parking are key ingredients to good access.

This change will create a two-way road and preserve the drop-off lane under the canopy and adjacent handicapped parking, which serves both the Medical Office Building and the hospital main entrance. This is an improvement over the original design that included only one-way traffic in front of the MOB, from Crest Road toward the hospital main entrance.

Making this change will add several weeks to the timeline for occupancy of the two-story building, with the move-in date still to be determined. While the initial design met minimum traffic requirements, this new enhancement will serve our patients even better in the long-term with greater convenience and ease of navigation.

Look for more information about the opening of the Medical Office Building to come in the next several weeks as details of the outside work are planned and developed. Keep informed about progress by visiting our Construction Updates web page at <https://www.northwesternmedicalcenter.org/about-nmc/who-we-are/construction-updates/>



Rule Change for Prescribing Opioids

Effective July 1, Vermont physicians began following a new rule for prescribing opioid medications to patients. This new rule prevents the use of addictive opioids to treat minor injuries or simple procedures and caps prescriptions for the treatment of severe, acute pain.

Opioids are a class of painkiller medications that began to be used more commonly to treat chronic pain in the 1990s. Studies have shown that many patients do not use all the medication that is prescribed to them, making opioids widely available for misuse.

The Vermont Department of Health worked collaboratively with Vermont's medical community to devise ways to prevent first time exposure to addictive opioids and to reduce the amount of medications left over.

The original opiate prescription rule came out in 2016, governing the use of opioids for chronic pain. This more recent rule change that took effect this summer covers opioid prescriptions for acute pain. Here are some elements of what the new rule does:

- Dictates the steps the provider has to go through to make sure that a prescription is appropriate and that a patient is a good candidate for acute pain medicine.
- Requires informed consent by the patient

- Requires the provider to have an in-depth, face-to-face education session with the patient before they write a prescription
- Sets prescribing limits
- Sets consultation requirements, especially for Pediatricians

Northwestern Medical Center's Emergency Department Director Dr. John Minadeo said the new rule signals NMC's commitment to caring for patients effectively and appropriately.

"We recognize that there is a significant problem with the diversion of prescription pain medicine and we are going to do our best to limit the amount of pain medicines that we prescribe and focus them on those that really need it and for the briefest amount of time," he said.

All patients can expect to have more discussion with providers about pain management and treatment options. For example: Surgical patients will have these conversations during pre-op discussions, and patients in the Emergency Department will also discuss the risks and benefits of opioids including their addictive qualities.

NMC and the local medical community have recently received training on the new rule and are working hard to address opiate addiction issues.

"I would like the community to know how incredibly engaged all the providers in this service area have been in wanting to do the right thing for their patients," said Jamie Pinkham, NMC's Compliance Supervisor, who has worked actively on provider education and preparation for the new rule.

INSIGHTS TO HEALTH

Your guide to local healthy programs, classes, and more!



Healthier Living with Diabetes

Wednesdays, August 9 to Sept 13 1:00pm – 3:30 pm

Are you or someone you know living with Diabetes? Then this Healthier Living Workshop is for you! Learn to feel better by learning how to deal with frustration, fatigue and pain, manage symptoms and medications.

Location: Northwestern Medical Center, Cobblestone Building, Suite 202

Pre-registration Required: Call 524-1031.

Breastfeeding and You

Thursday, September 7 6:00 to 7:30 pm

Welcome to the Department of Health's FREE Breastfeeding Prep Class for you, family members, and other moms-to-be to plan for breastfeeding your newborn in the first month of life. Personalize your breastfeeding plan, line up your support, go over the basics, ask questions and get real-life answers. You can do it, WIC can help!

Location: NMC's Family Birth Center

Registration: Call 524-7971

Tai Chi Classes

Mondays, September 11 through November 13

4:00 to 5:00 pm (1st class) 5:15 to 6:15 pm (2nd class)

Tai Chi is a form of gentle, guided movement that is sometimes referred to as "meditation in motion" and can aid in reducing stress and anxiety. It has also been found to improve balance and promote a sense of wellbeing. This 10-week program is open to all ages.

A physical authorization is required, so please sign up by September 1st.

Location: Northwestern Medical Center Wellness and Fitness Room (Conference Center)

Pre-Registration Required: Contact Faith at 524-1217 or fdubois@nmcinc.org for more information.

Fee: \$80 for 10-week session

Vermont Quit Partners Fresh Start Tobacco Cessation Class

Thursdays, September 7, 14, 21, 28 4:00 to 5:00 pm

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. As a Vermont resident, you can get free patches, gum and lozenges.

Location: Richford NOTCH Health Center, 4th Floor

Pre-Registration Required: To sign up for a session call Chari @ 524-8480.



Featured Program

Core Stabilization

Thursday, August 17 4:00 to 5:00 pm

Northwestern Medical Center Rehab is partnering with Collins-Perley to offer educational sessions to both the community and active members at Collins-Perley. This program will help you to understand the importance of your core and its role in maximizing your everyday performance. You will also learn how to incorporate core stability into your everyday movements with instruction from a Northwestern Medical Center physical therapist.

Location: Collins-Perley Sports and Fitness Center

Registration: Contact Faith DuBois at (802)524-1217 or email fdubois@nmcinc.org

Introduction to Postural Restoration

Thursday, September 21 4:00 to 5:00 pm

Northwestern Medical Center Rehab is partnering with Collins-Perley to offer educational sessions to both the community and active members at Collins-Perley. In this program, led by NMC physical therapist Natalie Shea, you will learn what postural restoration means and gain an understanding of the role of the diaphragm. Learn daily tips to incorporate this knowledge into your day to day routine and maximize your function and physical performance. This new and growing treatment is impacting many in a positive way!

Location: Collins-Perley Sports and Fitness Center

Registration: Contact Faith DuBois at (802)524-1217 or email fdubois@nmcinc.org

Look Good Feel Better

Monday, October 2 4:30 to 6:00 pm

For women with cancer who are experiencing appearance related side effects due to treatment. Join us to learn how to look good and feel better about the skin and hair changes that cancer treatment can cause. Free workshops/interactive demonstration led by trained, volunteer cosmetologists. Get help with cosmetics, skin care, and head covering options.

Featuring: Carol Lumbr, Beautician, Rail City Salon and Bonnie Rainville, Beautician, Elite Body Boutique

Location: Northwestern Medical Center Grand Isle Room

Pre-Registration Required: Call 524-8479.

Diabetes and You

Fridays, Sept 1 through Sept 29 1:00 to 3:00 pm

Join us at this self-management educational series for people with diabetes and their families, proven to help people improve control of this disease. Learn how to keep diabetes from controlling your life and improve your blood sugar control to feel better and delay or prevent complications.

Location: Enosburgh Emergency Services Building

Pre-Registration Required: Contact Deborah Robertson at 524-1031.

Fee: NMC will bill your insurance for the course fee. Scholarships available. No one will be turned away for lack of ability to pay.

Fall Prevention and Balance

Tuesday, September 12 6:00 to 7:00 pm

Are you at risk for falls and how can physical therapy help? Join us with physical therapists Natalie Shea and Anna Krahn to learn about the risk factors for falling. Take part in standardized balance screens to identify if you may be at risk. Learn about quick tips for reducing the risk of falls within your home. Learn how physical therapy can help to improve balance and reduce the risk of falling.

Location: Northwestern Medical Center's Rehab Services, Cobblestone Building

Pre-Registration: Contact Faith DuBois at 524-1217 or fdubois@nmcinc.org