

Spirit of Halifax

The Community Newsletter of Halifax Regional



A Doctor Skates on the Ice.



Dr. Sorensen enjoys ice hockey.

Dr. Chris Sorensen is more than a fan of the Boston Red Sox and other sports teams. He is an athlete who began playing the rough and tumble game of ice hockey at age 9. He plans

to play ice hockey in the Triangle and also enjoys boating with his family on Lake Gaston.

His interest in sports is intermingled with his family medical practice at Roanoke and Wildwood Clinics. "The family doctor is much like a quarterback in football," he says.

"In a day when hospitalists provide care

to patients in the hospital and specialists concentrate on separate health issues, your family medicine doctor provides general care and is the one point where all services are coordinated and any conflicts in treatment and medications can be identified," he explains.

"Your family medicine doctor knows and understands your needs and can be your most valuable health partner," added Dr. Sorensen. "Specialists who work on separate health problems may not see your whole health picture or get a good understanding of what's important to you.

"In my practice, I try to understand what the patients are feeling and experiencing, physically and emotionally, and communicate that understanding to them," he continued. "I want to tell them what they need to know in plain language and in a forthright manner. I am interested in them more than just as a patient, but as someone who interacts with them and remembers them.

"Because health problems rarely develop when it's convenient, it helps to have a doctor who can see you when needed," he said.

The American Academy of Family Practice recommends a yearly physical exam for all patients below the age of 21 and above the age of 50 and a physical exam every 1-3 years for people between 21 and 50, depending on medical issues.

Dr. Sorensen is welcoming new patients at Roanoke and Wildwood Medical Clinics. Call 252 537-9176 for an appointment at Roanoke Clinic. Call 252 537-9400 for an appointment at Wildwood, located at 2053 River Road in Henrico.

Roanoke and Wildwood Clinics provide care to patients beginning at age 3. Services include general family healthcare, chronic illness management, immunizations and laboratory services.

For more information, visit www.halifaxregional.org and click on Roanoke Clinic or Wildwood Clinic. Each is a service of Halifax Regional.

In My View

The ER and When to Use It.

At Halifax Regional, our doctors and nurses recognize that it is not always clear when to use the ER.

Our Emergency Care Center is staffed 24/7 by highly trained emergency physicians and nurses. Last year, they handled more than 40,000 visits. The cost of providing care in the ER is high, perhaps two to three times more costly than being treated by your doctor.

We evaluate and treat everyone, without regard to ability to pay, but we hope you will use the ER when you have a true emergency so we can take care of all patients in a timely manner.

Recently, we changed the procedure in the ER with the goal of reducing waiting time. After a brief registration, patients see a nurse for screening and go straight back to a room, if one is available, where they are examined.

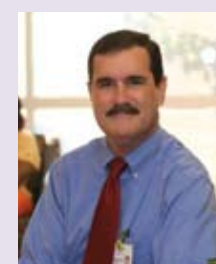
At the same time, we began asking patients for their co-pays after they are treated.

At Halifax Regional, we estimate that about one-third of the visits to the ER are not emergencies. Nationally, that figure is 55%. Here are some guidelines for knowing when to use the ER:

- Chest, neck or arm pain
- Shortness of breath
- Swelling of the face, lips or tongue
- Abdominal pain
- Excessive bleeding or injury due to falls, assaults, wrecks, etc.

By using these guidelines you can help us provide the best possible care in our ER.

Will Mahone, President
wmahone@halifaxrhc.org



You Could Win an iPad by Signing Up for HealthEd.



When you sign up for HealthEd, you'll receive emails with tips for a

healthy lifestyle, information about special events at Halifax HealthLink and news about the services at Halifax Regional.

Now, for a limited time, there is a new reason to sign up for HealthEd.

You Might Be the Lucky Winner of an iPad.

Everyone who signs up for HealthEd between now and June 30 has a chance. Simply go to www.halifaxregional.org and sign up for HealthEd.

PLUS, if you are not a member of HealthLink, you'll get a FREE one-month membership.

Testing Your Heart.



Dwight King.

When he began suffering chest pain, Dwight King knew he should go to the Emergency Care Center at Halifax Regional, and it was a good thing he did.

After an exam, he was admitted to the Medical Center and soon scheduled for a heart catheterization. That's a test to

determine blood flow and blood pressure in the arteries and chambers of your heart to help cardiologists determine the best course of treatment.

It's a relatively new service at Halifax Regional staffed by physicians from Raleigh Cardiology Associates and eliminates the need for patients to travel outside the area for a high-tech service.

A Littleton resident, King is well known as the owner of Sharky's restaurant in Roanoke Rapids. "I had top-notch care and would definitely recommend the Cardiac & Vascular Center to my friends," he said.

Fortunately, the test determined King has minor cardiac disease which could be managed by controlling risk factors.

"I'm feeling great since the test," he said. "Every part of the experience was good and I did not have any problems. That was the best part."

Dr. Marc Silver of Raleigh Cardiology performed the test. "He was wonderful," recalls King. "He explained everything."

Having Raleigh Cardiology physicians at Halifax Regional provides continuity of

care since they also would treat patients if they need additional care at WakeMed.

If you are having chest pain, come to the Emergency Care Center at Halifax Regional. If you have shortness of breath on exertion, see your doctor.

For more information, visit www.halifaxregional.org and click on Cardiac & Vascular Center.

A Heart-Healthy Lifestyle.

- Don't smoke
- Choose good nutrition
- Reduce blood cholesterol
- Lower high blood pressure
- Be physically active every day
- Aim for a healthy weight
- Manage diabetes
- Reduce stress
- Limit alcohol

Learning about Babies.



Kentricer.

Kentricer and Emmanuel Ragland did not know quite what to expect as they planned for the birth of their first child.

The Gaston couple was excited and a bit anxious, so they enrolled in a prepared childbirth class at Halifax Regional. Since both work, they were happy that they had the opportunity to choose a Saturday class

for convenience.

They learned about terminology, about changes in pregnancy, exercise and nutrition, labor process, pushing techniques, Cesarean sections, caring for their baby and more.

"There was a positive learning atmosphere," says Kentrice. "The information was valuable, and the instructor made my

husband and me feel comfortable asking questions. She was very knowledgeable about the information she presented.

"I learned about labor and delivery and enjoyed the video and the hands-on activity," she continued. "I recommend the class to all expectant parents."

Kentricer and Emmanuel are the parents of Emmanuel, Jr. "I loved the Birthing Center and the staff was excellent," she said. "The nurses were right there when I needed them." Dr. Lawrence Singer of Smith Church OB-GYN was her physician.

Kentricer and Emmanuel are enjoying parenthood. She has returned to work full time and she "loves motherhood." E.J. is healthy and growing fast.

Prepared childbirth classes are held quarterly at Halifax Regional. The Medical Center also offers a baby care class, sibling class and healthy pregnancy classes, and there is a breastfeeding support group.

For information, visit www.halifaxregional.org and click on The Birthing Center or call Lori Moseley, RN at 252 535-8702.

He Recovers at His Own Pace – FAST.

Younger Patients Have Joint Surgery.



Chris Mabine breaks the record at the Joint Care Center.

“I was determined to walk out of there without pain,” recalls Christopher Mabine, referring to the Joint Care Center.

“And I did,” he says. “In fact, I was riding my scooter the day I came home from

Halifax Regional.”

A major reason for his pain-free knee was Chris’s extra walking after his surgery. And walk he did. He broke the record for most feet walked after a joint replacement – 50,400 feet. The previous record was 34,000.

“I did not set out to break the record,” says Chris. “But when I realized I was so close to breaking the record, I said, why not?”

“I wanted to walk as much as possible because I wanted to make sure I could walk correctly,” he said. Chris had been walking with pain for two years and could walk only a half block before his surgery by Richard Holm, MD.

Chris is 48 years old, young for knee replacement, and doctors near his home in Ahaslie had suggested that he wait 10 more years before having the surgery. Then, he saw Dr. Holm, who examined him and said it was fine to have surgery.

Joint replacement patients are younger and more active than ever before, according to a recent article in *The Wall Street Journal*. More than half of all hip replacement

surgeries performed this year are expected to be on people under 65, with the same percentage projected for knee replacements by 2016. The fastest growing group is patients 46 to 64, according to the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgery.

Dr. Holm has replaced Chris’s other knee, and that surgery went smoothly as well.

Chris joins the growing number of patients who are pain free in their knees and hips after having surgery in the Joint Care Center.

The emphasis on walking is one of the benefits of Dr. Holm’s approach. He has performed more than 2,000 joint replacements, supported by a dedicated staff. “Recovery takes place in an upbeat, healing environment that focuses on your wellness and rehab,” said Mick Olesnevich, RN, who manages the center.

“The staff is excellent,” says Chris. “I had no worries. I was in the best of care.”

If you have pain in your joints, call us at 252-535-8757 and visit www.halifaxjointcare.com.

Physician Teamwork Benefits Breast Cancer Patients.



Dr. Fred Wier.

A team of physicians works together to treat breast cancer patients who need surgery at Halifax Regional.

Dr. Fred Wier has performed the first sentinel lymph node biopsy at the

Medical Center. The probable benefits of the surgical procedure for patients are to reduce the number of lymph nodes which may need to be removed and to reduce the side effects of surgery, says Dr. Wier.

The lymph node biopsy is based on the idea that cancer cells spread in an orderly way from the primary tumor to the sentinel lymph node and then to other

nearby lymph nodes, says Dr. Wier.

“This is why early detection is the key,” he said. “We can remove the sentinel lymph node before the cancer cells spread to other lymph nodes. That often results in more extensive surgery.”

Halifax Regional has purchased a special instrument to help identify the lymph node.

A pathologist checks for the presence of cancer cells.

A radiologist then reads the mammogram, which is a special x-ray image that detects abnormal growths or changes in the breast tissue. Mammography is the best defense against breast cancer because the disease is detected in its early stages.

“This is an excellent example of three physicians working together to help our patients,” Dr. Wier said. “A radiologist, pathologist and surgeon are teamed up to treat a complicated disease.”

American Cancer Society Reminder for Women.

The American Cancer Society recommends that women have yearly mammograms starting at age 40 and continuing for as long as they are in good health. The Mammography Center is located conveniently at Halifax Medical Plaza. For information, call 252 535-3417.

Accredited Diabetes Education Program Expanded to Community.



Carrie Davis, RN, BSN, teaches a class.

Halifax Regional is the first diabetes education program in the area to become accredited by the American Association of Diabetes Educators.

With the accreditation, Halifax Regional's program will be expanded to any person with diabetes in Halifax and Northampton Counties who is referred by his/her physician.

Diabetes education is a crucial part of care for all persons with diabetes, enabling them to learn the skills and knowledge to change

their behavior.

"Accreditation means Halifax Regional's program provides quality education so that type 2 diabetics can manage their diabetes for life," said program coordinator Carrie Davis, RN, BSN. Davis is a Certified Diabetes Educator.

"Halifax Regional's education program is exactly the type of program we envisioned when we set up our accreditation program in 2009," said Leslie Kolb, RN, of the

American Association of Diabetes Educators.

"Trends show that diabetes education is moving out of the hospital and into the community, so our accreditation program is designed to encourage diabetes education where the patient is seeking care," added Kolb.

"Education is the key for those with diabetes to manage their diabetes, avoid complications and achieve an optimum health status," added Davis.

Classes are offered monthly at Halifax Medical Plaza in Building 3. After individual assessments, diabetics attend four two-hour group classes and a one-hour follow up.

Davis cited the assistance of Louis Chetty, MD of Halifax-Northampton Internal Medicine, and Shari Kingsley, a Registered Dietitian at Halifax Regional, in meeting the accreditation standards.

For information about the program, contact Davis at 252 535-8276 or cldavis@halifaxrmc.org.



Nineteenth Edition. *Spirit of Halifax* is the newsletter of Halifax Regional, published quarterly to inform residents of the Roanoke Valley about the advancements at the Medical Center. If you have questions or comments, please contact Gail Wade at 252 535-8111 or gwade@halifaxrmc.org. © 2011, Halifax Regional Medical Center.

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