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Licking Memorial Health Systems

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*Please take a few minutes to read
this month's report on patient
care quality. You'll soon discover
why Licking Memorial Hospital
is measurably different
for your health!*

Visit us at www.lmhealth.org

*Call our Health Line at
740-348-4YOU.*



**Licking Memorial
Health Systems**

November 2002

Volume 3

Number 11

***Surgical
Care***

measurably
different
for your
health!



HEALTH TIPS

Your physician may prescribe antibiotics for you before or after your surgery, but taking antibiotics unnecessarily may encourage the development of antibiotic-resistant bacteria. To avoid this:

- Don't ask your physician to prescribe antibiotics if you have a virus. Antibiotics fight only bacterial infections.
- If your physician prescribes antibiotics, take the entire amount as directed.
- Do not save unused antibiotics or take antibiotics prescribed for someone else.

...a community report on patient care quality.



Surgical care:

How do we compare?

At Licking Memorial Hospital, we take pride in the care we provide. To monitor the quality of that care, we track specific quality measures and compare them to benchmark measures. Then we publish them so you can draw your own conclusions regarding your health care choices.

1 Unscheduled returns to the operating room (OR) may result from problems involving surgical technique, anesthesia or infection control.

	LMH 2001	LMH 1/02-8/02	National Benchmark ⁽¹⁾
% Unscheduled returns to the OR	0.64%	0.69%	1.3%

2 Treating patients in the most appropriate setting is an important issue in today's health care environment. It is important to monitor if outpatient operative procedures require inpatient admissions, as these unplanned admissions may indicate inappropriate use of outpatient services.

	LMH 2001	LMH 1/02-8/02	National Benchmark ⁽¹⁾
% Unscheduled admissions	0.07%	0.14%	2.7%

3 According to the AHCPR Pain Management Guideline Panel, approximately 23 million people undergo surgery each year in the United States. Despite the use of pain medications, at least 40 to 50 percent of postoperative patients report inadequate pain relief. ⁽²⁾

	LMH 2001	LMH 1/02-8/02	LMH Goal
% Patients said pain handled appropriately after surgery	91%	95%	>90%

4 Conscious sedation allows patients to tolerate unpleasant procedures while maintaining adequate breathing and the ability to respond to stimulation. Most of the drugs used in conscious sedation can be reversed fully or partially if necessary. However, careful patient assessment and monitoring reduce the need for reversal agents and improve patient outcomes. Therefore, minimal use of reversal agents is a good indicator of quality in conscious sedation.

	LMH 2001	LMH 1/02-8/02	National Benchmark ⁽¹⁾
% Use of reversal agent—Gastrointestinal Endoscopy Lab	0.95%	0.58%	0.87%
% Use of reversal agent—Intensive Care/Coronary Care Units	3.5%	0.0%	1.9%

5

Infections after surgery have a significant impact on the cost and quality of health care. By monitoring infection rates, the infection surveillance program can identify potential problems in surgical practice for selected procedures. One of the rates of infection LMH monitors is colon surgery infection rate.

% of colon surgeries, risk 0, ⁽³⁾ with infections		
LMH 2001	LMH 1/02-9/02	National Benchmark ⁽⁴⁾
3.03%	0.0%	4.13%
% of colon surgeries, risk 1, ⁽³⁾ with infections		
LMH 2001	LMH 1/02-9/02	National Benchmark ⁽⁴⁾
7.32%	5.71%	5.83%

6

The health care team at Licking Memorial Hospital follows a multiple-step process to prevent wrong-site surgery (e.g. surgery performed on the left foot instead of the right). This process includes left or right designation at the time the surgery is scheduled, verification of the site on the day of surgery with the patient and the patient's current medical record, marking the site, and final verification in the operating room.

Number of surgeries	
LMH 2001	LMH 1/02-8/02
6097	4140
Number of wrong-site surgeries	
LMH 2001	LMH 1/02-8/02
0	0

Data Footnotes:

- (1) National benchmark from second quarter 2002 data, The Association of Maryland Hospitals & Health Systems QI Project.
- (2) Devine EC. Effects of psychoeducational care for adult surgical patients: a meta-analysis of 191 studies. Patient Educ Couns 1992;19:129-142.
- (3) The risk for infection is determined on a 0-3 scale, with risk 0 being low risk, risk 1 being moderate risk, and risk 3 being higher risk.
- (4) Most recent NNIS Benchmark Rate issued in December 2001.

Finding Relief

through Technology

A PATIENT'S STORY

Steve Douglas suffered with recurring sinus infections for years. For nearly the past 12 months, they were severe. "It felt like a real bad toothache," the 48-year-old Newark resident said. "I even went to my dentist, but it turned out to be a real bad sinus infection."

Licking Memorial Health Professional Michael Shternfeld, M.D., performed traditional surgery to remove bone and scar tissue from Steve's sinuses in early 2002. After the procedure, Steve's sinuses were temporarily blocked with packing; he received pain medication; and his face was swollen.

Although he was feeling better, the relief was only temporary. Within three months, Steve's symptoms had returned. "Dr. Shternfeld said he had a new piece of equipment that he could use to go back in," Steve said. Following that operation in September, Steve had unexpected results. "I woke up groggy but not in pain," he said. "I've never had a surgery when I wasn't fairly uncomfortable for a couple or three days." Although he was prescribed pain medication for post-surgery pain, Steve said he didn't need to fill the prescription. "I never even took a Tylenol™," he said.

Steve was the first patient with whom Dr. Shternfeld utilized Licking Memorial Hospital's new Stryker-Leibinger Navigation System, which gives the physician a more detailed look at problem sinus areas. A computed tomography (CT) scan taken in advance of the operation is projected onto a video screen while the physician performs the procedure. (See *Technology Improves Surgery* on the next page.)

"Steve is absolutely thrilled with the results," said Krista Price, a point of care technician in Dr. Shternfeld's office. "We're looking forward to continued positive results with other patients."

Weeks after the second surgery, Steve said he hadn't had any return of symptoms, and he's optimistic that he will continue to feel well.

"The biggest difference is with the headaches," he said, explaining that he no longer has a rush of intense pressure in his head whenever he bends over.

Such pain was something Steve had accepted as part of everyday life.

"It's uncomfortable, but you just kind of learn to live with it," he said. "Now, I can do things that I've always done, but I'm no longer bothered by pain."



Steve Douglas had learned to live with pain after suffering with recurring sinus infections for years. Then Michael Shternfeld, M.D., performed sinus surgery at LMH using a new technology. Steve's pain disappeared, and he's enjoying the outdoors again – pain free.

// Now, I can do things that I've always done, but I'm no longer bothered by pain. //

Technology Improves Surgery

Licking Memorial Hospital's new image-guidance technology for sinus surgery is an exciting advancement that gives the surgeon a better view of the sinus area, resulting in more thorough surgery and better outcomes for patients. The hospital recently purchased this technology in the Stryker Navigation System (Ear, Nose and Throat Module).

How It Works

Before surgery, the patient has a series of CT scans, which are downloaded to the guided imaging device. The device functions as a "global positioning system" inside the patient's sinuses, giving surgeons an interactive display of the sinus cavity before and during surgery. This virtual 3-D model helps surgeons plan operating room procedures before surgery. During surgery, the Stryker System uses laser scanners, infrared optics, and tracking software to help guide the surgeon.

How Patients Benefit

In addition to giving patients better outcomes, this new technology has other benefits:

- Reduced complication rates.
- Surgeries take less time.
- Recovery time is usually shorter.
- Total hospital costs are usually less.
- Smaller surgical incisions, which result in less trauma to nearby healthy tissue.

For more information, contact Licking Memorial Otolaryngology at (740) 348-4270.



Be Prepared for Your Surgery

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE OUTCOME OF YOUR OWN SURGERY BY PROPERLY PREPARING FOR IT AND BY FOLLOWING RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES AFTER SURGERY.

Take a proactive approach to help the surgeon and hospital staff provide you with the best possible care. Elaine Kinnard, R.N., B.S.N., patient care manager of the Licking Memorial Hospital Operating Room, offers practical suggestions of things you can do to help ensure your safety and a more successful surgery.

Before Surgery

- Make sure you understand what will happen during surgery. You, your physician, and the surgeon should all agree on exactly what will be done during the operation. Write your questions down before your appointment with your doctor and take them with you so you can be sure to cover everything. You may want to ask questions such as these:
 - Who will be in charge of my care while I am in the hospital?
 - Exactly what will you be doing during the surgery?
 - How long will it take?
 - What will happen after the surgery?
 - How can I expect to feel during recovery?
 - How long will it take for me to fully recover?
 - How long should I plan to take off from work/school?
 - Do I need to make an appointment to meet with the anesthesiologist a few days before my surgery for a presurgery evaluation?
- If your doctor gives you instructions to follow before the surgery, such as limiting food or water, be sure to follow those instructions carefully. Try to give up smoking before surgery.
- If you are taking any medications, ask your doctor if you can take them as usual before the surgery. Be sure to include over-the-counter medications and herbal supplements.

- Make arrangements for someone to drive you home. This is very important. Any type of anesthesia you receive will impair your ability to drive, and hospital staff members cannot allow you to drive.
- Make arrangements for someone to stay with you for the first 24 hours after your surgery. Having someone to help you out during this time so that you can rest will help you recover more quickly. This person can also contact the physician or hospital if you have any unexpected complications.
- Plan ahead for your return home. For instance, make sure your walks will be clear of snow, and have some meals cooked ahead of time.
- Tell the surgeon, anesthesiologist and nurses if you have allergies or if you have ever had a bad reaction to anesthesia.

After Surgery

- While in the hospital, ask your friends and family members to limit their visits so that you and other patients can rest and recover.
- Ask physicians, nurses, and other health care professionals to explain each procedure and medication you receive. This not only helps you understand your own care, it also provides an extra measure of protection for your safety.
- Before you leave the hospital, make sure you understand what you need to do for follow-up care, including medication, activity/exercise, care of incisions, and follow-up appointments with the doctor or hospital.
- Follow your discharge instructions carefully.
- Call your physician or the hospital if you have any questions or concerns.