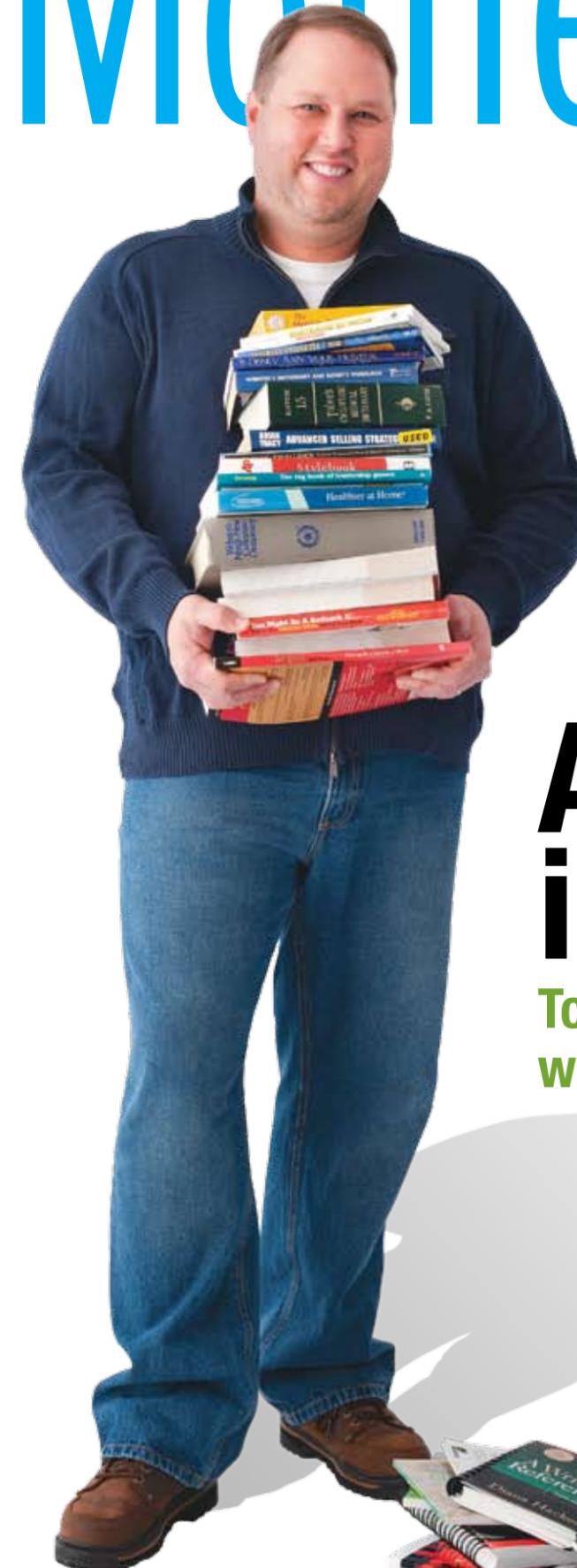


Momentum

Local people. True stories. Real advice.

FEBRUARY 2011



A Lesson in Snoring

Tony Boerger gets the
wake-up call of his life

HOSPITAL EVENTS 2011

2nd Wednesday of the Month, 10:30 a.m.
Diabetes Education Support Group
Dorothy Halvorson Conference Room #2

April 23, 8:30 – 11:00 a.m.
Brunch with the Easter Bunny
Black River Falls High School

February 12; April 9; June 11,
8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Saturday Childbirth Education Class
Dorothy Halvorson Conference Room

March 12; May 14, 9:00 – 10:30 a.m.
Saturday Breastfeeding Class
Dorothy Halvorson Conference Room

For a complete list of hospital events,
please visit www.brmh.net.

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Visit our website at
www.brmh.net
for a full list of hospital
events and to view our
latest videos.

SLEEPLESS IN BLACK RIVER FALLS

HOW TONY BOERGER PUT A REST TO SNORING AND REDUCED THE RISK OF HEART ATTACK AND STROKE.

Snoring. We make jokes about it: My husband snores so loud the dog covers his ears. He snores so loud he wakes the neighbors, and so on. But when you know the facts, snoring is serious business. It's a warning sign that you could be on the way to a heart attack or stroke.

That's the direction Tony Boerger was headed. A local high school psychology teacher, Tony has been teaching his students about the dangers of sleep disorders, including apnea, for years.

"I knew I was a prime candidate," Tony says. "But I didn't want to admit it; I was in denial."

The signs certainly were there. Tony was exhausted all of the time, taking naps whenever and wherever he could. His classroom energy and enthusiasm were at a serious low. And he was affecting his family's health by interrupting their nighttime sleep.

Tony Boerger is happy to have the energy again to enjoy activities with his daughter, Cassidy, 8, pictured here and his son, Ryan, 12.

"So I'll lose a few pounds. No big deal," he told himself. But when nothing changed after dropping a few pounds, Tony knew it really was a big deal. Ignoring the facts could be shortening his life.

He called Black River Memorial Hospital and was referred to Krohn Clinic physician Etson Cameron, M.D., a.k.a. the sleep doctor.

Tony's exam started with a take-home test—an apnea link. A device worn while sleeping to get a first read of his nighttime breathing.

After using it a night, Tony brought back the apnea link to the hospital and was scheduled for an exam with Dr. Cameron. He gave Tony the score—a high one. Tony had failed the apnea link test. But Dr. Cameron doesn't make his diagnosis on that test alone.

"I do a thorough physical exam, discuss medical history, and ask approximately 20 questions, including lifestyle, work schedule, and diet to rule out anything else that is keeping the patient awake," says Dr. Cameron. "Then if I think there is a good chance of sleep apnea, I send them to the sleep lab at Black River Memorial Hospital for further testing."

That's exactly where Tony was sent. There, a sleep technician explained what would happen during the test. She then attached wires all over his body to monitor his breathing, brain waves, and body movements when sleeping.

Continued on next page...

DO YOU HAVE SLEEP APNEA?

According to Etson Cameron, M.D., at Black River Memorial Hospital, the most common symptoms of sleep apnea you may notice include:

- Excessive sleepiness during the day.
- Having problems with memory and concentration.
- Morning or night headaches. (About half of all people with sleep apnea report headaches.)
- Getting up during the night to urinate (nocturia).
- Sweating and chest pain while you are sleeping.

Symptoms of sleep apnea that others may notice include:

- Episodes of not breathing, which may occur as few as 5 times an hour (mild apnea) to more than 50 times an hour (severe apnea). How many episodes you have determines how severe your sleep apnea is.
- Loud snoring. Almost all people who have sleep apnea snore, but not all people who snore have sleep apnea.
- Restless tossing and turning during sleep.
- Nighttime choking or gasping spells.

A large number of women are also at risk for sleep apnea. According to the National Sleep Foundation, approximately 45% of sleep apnea referrals are women. But because it is considered a "male" problem, women often go undiagnosed.

Call your doctor if you suspect you may have sleep apnea. ■

GET A FREE APNEA TAKE-HOME TEST.

Call your doctor for a referral.

Also attend our FREE educational program, **What's in a Snore?**

Thursday, March 10

Sign-in and refreshments: 6:30 p.m.

Program starts: 7:00 p.m.

In the Dorothy Halvorson Conference Room
Black River Memorial Hospital

Register by calling 1-855-TOSLEEP

Get a sneak preview by watching a video of Dr. Cameron at brmh.net

The technician wanted Tony to fall asleep as he normally would. But when he couldn't, Tony was given a mild sleeping pill that wouldn't interfere with the testing. After about two hours of sleep, Tony was awakened and fitted with a C-pap, which is used to help apnea patients breathe better for a more restful sleep. The testing confirmed Tony's suspicions—and Dr. Cameron's. Tony has sleep apnea.

When Tony got his C-pap for home use, it took awhile before he could wear it comfortably. It was only after many trips to the hospital, trying different C-pap masks that he finally found what works best for him. And what a difference it made.

"I can't explain how much better I felt after just one night of using the C-pap," says Tony. "I forgot what it was like to feel good and rested."

Tony was impressed with the hospital's respiratory staff, saying they were "fantastic."

"When I had issues with the C-pap, they said it was normal and they'd adjust it for me. I've gotten three calls from them since the end of May just checking to see if I'm all right. And I got a letter today telling me to come in and they'd change the filter and clean it."

Tony saw Dr. Cameron in a restaurant not too long ago. He recognized Tony, and asked how things were going

Tony's wife Allison, Cassidy, 8, and Ryan, 12, are relieved to finally get some sleep.

"Dad snored so loud I could shut my bedroom door and still hear him through the walls," says Cassidy.

"I couldn't sleep and the whole house shook," says Ryan.

"He was a sleeping bear," says Allison.



"I knew I was a prime candidate ... but I didn't want to admit it; I was in denial."

and if he was sleeping better. Tony assured him that things were great.

"I thought it was nice that he stopped to talk to me on his own time to ask about my sleep apnea," says Tony.

Tony is now an advocate for sleep testing, telling everyone who snores they should be tested.

The doctor he would recommend? Dr. Etson Cameron, the sleep doctor. ■

If you suspect you may have sleep apnea, we'll give you a FREE apnea link take-home test like the one Tony was given.

To find out how, call your doctor for a referral. Also see page 3 for common symptoms and learn about a free educational program about sleep apnea.

At five o'clock in the morning on Friday, July 18, 2008, 58-year-old Luanne Totten woke up with a heart attack. The Melrose woman describes her symptoms as having some pain in her chest, but it was stronger in her arms, neck, chin, and jaw.

Luanne woke her husband Gregory and said, "We might look foolish; but I think I'm having a heart attack."

Luanne was taken by ambulance to Black River Memorial Hospital and the pain didn't get any better on the way. The ER team told Luanne she was indeed having a heart attack and it was serious. The team quickly stabilized Luanne and had her transferred by helicopter to Gundersen Lutheran, where they performed angioplasty to open up a blocked artery and inserted one stent, small mesh tubes used to prevent arteries from becoming narrowed or blocked again.

One week later, Luanne was back at Black River Memorial Hospital as a swing-bed patient, meaning she didn't require constant care.

Luanne hadn't been in the hospital since it was completely refurbished and was very pleased with the results.

"I thought it was wonderful," says Luanne. "To think that little Black River Falls can have such a nice hospital."

During her stay, Luanne learned she has diabetes. Staff members showed her how to use an insulin needle and monitor her sugar levels. When asked if she thought the diabetes contributed to her heart attack, she responds, "It certainly didn't help. But I think it was a combination of things like being overweight, stressed, and inactivity."

In addition, heart disease runs in her family. Her father died of a heart attack at age 61 and a brother had a heart attack in his 40s, but is doing fine.

Luanne is now 60 years old. It's been two years since her heart attack and she's doing well. She credits the quick

I HAD A HEART ATTACK.



Thanks to the ER Team at Black River Memorial Hospital, Luanne Totten is able to tell her story today.

response of BRMH's ER department for saving precious minutes of her life. Luanne also learned an important lesson we all can learn from. Dialing 911 isn't so foolish after all. Not dialing it is the real foolishness. ■

Learn more on page 6, where Dr. Kitowski addresses questions about women's heart disease.

Kathy Eggebakken

Physical Therapist
Black River Memorial Hospital



Meet Kathy Eggebakken, physical therapist for home care at Black River Memorial Hospital. Or, as her colleagues call her, Kathy Eggs & Bacon. Kathy helps patients regain physical function—often needed after surgery.

“It’s so rewarding to give people the physical and mental strength to stay in their homes,” says Kathy. “I love motivating people to improve themselves.” She goes above and beyond to do so.

When an older patient was struggling with mobility, Kathy turned inventor and fashioned leg lifters out of webbing and Velcro®. Meant to be a temporary solution, Kathy was surprised—and pleased—to learn that three years later, the man still uses her invention.

Kathy knows motivation. While working full time, she’s pursuing a Doctorate degree in Physical Therapy. In her “spare” time she spearheads a women’s health initiative at the hospital.

We all were inspired when Kathy lost 85 pounds over the past 12 months through a careful and disciplined regimen of exercise and proper nutrition.

She may not be the Superwoman of comic fame. But Kathy is a real, honest to goodness super woman. ■

ASK A DOCTOR



Dear Dr. Kitowski:

As a woman do I need to worry about heart disease?

Dr. Kitowski says:

Cardiovascular disease is the most common cause of death and disability in women in the United States. Between the ages of 45 to 64, one in nine women develops symptoms of some form of cardiovascular disease. After age 65, the ratio climbs to one in three women.

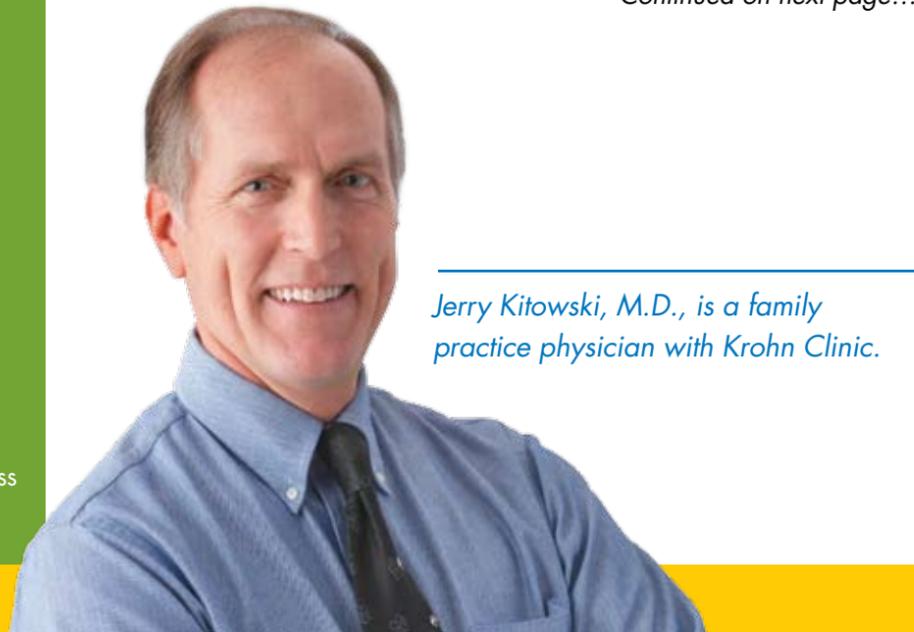
How are women different than men with regard to heart disease?

Women with coronary heart disease (CHD) are generally about 10 years older than men. Coronary heart disease mortality is higher in women compared to men. Furthermore, most available data suggests that women are not referred as often as men for appropriate diagnostic or therapeutic procedures. Women who go to the emergency department with chest pain are diagnosed less aggressively than men.

Are women’s symptoms of heart disease different than men’s?

Women are less likely than men to have typical chest pain. Women rated their chest pain as more intense, used different terms to describe the pain (more often sharp and burning), had more symptoms unrelated to pain, and more frequently had pain and other sensations in the neck and throat. Another report identified fatigue and shortness of breath as frequent complaints among women; chest pain often radiated to the back or jaw. Women were more likely to have chest pain induced by rest, sleep and mental stress, in addition to or instead of physical exertion. Common symptoms are shortness of breath, weakness and fatigue. This results unfortunately in many heart attacks going unrecognized, particularly at younger ages.

Continued on next page...



Jerry Kitowski, M.D., is a family practice physician with Krohn Clinic.

What are significant risk factors for me having CHD?

- Over age 55
- High LDL or bad cholesterol
- Low HDL or good cholesterol
- Diabetes
- Smoking
- High blood pressure
- History of stroke or peripheral artery disease

In addition, obesity, inactivity and high triglycerides or fats in the blood can increase your risk. Risk factors of hormonal status (post-menopausal), diabetes, smoking and premature CHD in a family member appear to be more important in women than men.

Do you have a question? Please submit it to: yaegera@brmh.net ■

What can I do to prevent CHD?

- Moderately intense physical activity for at least 30 minutes on most days of the week
- Avoid smoking and exposure to second hand smoke
- Maintain an ideal body weight and keep your waist circumference less than or equal to 35 inches
- Eat a healthy diet high in omega-3 fatty acids
- Treat high blood pressure and diabetes
- Have your cholesterol and triglycerides checked
- Consider a baby aspirin daily if at high risk or age greater than 65, but always check with your doctor first
- Treat depression

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

If there is a board, committee, or event in the Black River Falls area, it’s a good chance **Barb Brower** is somehow involved. Barb is the Executive Director for the Black River Area Chamber of Commerce. But her job is just one of the many ways Barb is helping our community. She volunteers her personal time—a lot of it—in so many ways we could fill this entire page.

Barb has contributed much to Black River Falls School District, Black River Memorial Hospital, and Jackson County both as a board member and a member of numerous committees and associations. Her commitment comes from a desire to make our area a great place to live, work and play.

As a member and secretary of the Educational Enrichment Fund Committee, over the last three years Barb has helped award \$8,300 in grant money to area schools to help with unmet needs within the School District. She helps ensure the hospital is operating the way it should as a member of the Black River Memorial Hospital Board of Directors; assists in recruiting hospital volunteers to raise money for such things as programming and equipment; and is instrumental in helping with events such as Oktoberfest and Christkindl be successful.

Barb Brower

Executive Director, Black River Area Chamber of Commerce

It’s not only here that Barb’s making a difference. As a member of the Rotary Club, she also is helping other countries in need. The Club is an international organization deeply involved in eradicating polio where it still exists and doing such things as digging wells in India. Locally, the group is planning to strengthen an exchange student program that would bring students from other countries to the homes of area families.

And all this comes from a woman who says, “There are many people better deserving of a spotlight than me.”

We look forward to meeting them, too. ■

