

# life's point

Colorado Plains Medical Center

Spring 2007

Focus on Health Care

## **BREAKING NEWS** in the Fight against Cancer

Read our special story on page 4



**Tomorrow's Lab Services,  
Available Today** Page 3

**The Story Every Woman  
Should Read** Page 6

*Dear Friends,*

**Happy New Year** to all! As we celebrate, we bring in many resolutions for ourselves. I recently read an article in *Modern Healthcare* written by the Editorial Director, Charles S. Lauer. His piece articulated adopting a more positive outlook on the world and how this can help you succeed. Without question, attitude is the key attribute toward being successful. We each can have a positive impact on life in whatever it is we do.

Here at Colorado Plains Medical Center, I have the opportunity to see and experience this positivity through the actions of the wonderfully caring, service-driven staff members who are part of our healthcare delivery team. During our annual hospital holiday party, we had the honor to present to one staff member the award of "Employee of the Year." The winner, Crystal Madrid, RT, is also honored as

our LifePoint Mercy Award Nominee. In addition, many thanks and congratulations are due to every Employee of the Month from 2006.

Everyone I come in contact with at CPMC has the same DNA for success: positive attitudes. Why? Because it is a choice we make to be enthusiastic and to be around people who are happy and positive and embrace change.

I also want to take a moment to let you know that we have two candidates from CPMC nominated for the Nightingale Award. This award is given annually to a Colorado registered nurse for exceptional service and patient care.

Our goals for 2007 are not complex; they revolve around service and community needs. So along that vein,

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point



we are in the process of recruiting more physicians and establishing a Diagnostic Catheterization Lab with the Heart Center of the Rockies and Poudre Valley Health System, along with a 10-bed Geriatric Behavior Health Unit, which are all scheduled to open in the fall.

I believe in what we do, in what CPMC is doing for our community, and in the difference CPMC makes. It is all about attitude.

**Michael A. Anaya Sr., FACHE**  
*Chief Executive Officer*  
Colorado Plains Medical Center

## Fighting Carpal Tunnel Syndrome



Dr. Fraser Leversedge, a hand surgeon with Hand Surgery Associates, P.C., specializes in carpal tunnel and can see patients at CPMC at his monthly clinics.



**When the** tingling sensations in your hands and wrists turn to an intense pain that radiates up your arm, pay attention. It may be carpal tunnel syndrome. Caused by repetitive motions such as using a screwdriver or typing on a computer, carpal tunnel sets in when the nerve that travels from the forearm to the hand is pinched at the wrist.

If you are diagnosed with carpal tunnel, medication, exercise, or surgical release of the pinched nerve can help. Getting medical attention immediately is key to preventing long-term damage.

However, the best treatment of carpal tunnel is prevention. Using proper posture, taking breaks from repetitive activities, and stretching the wrist and forearm regularly will help you avoid the condition.

*To learn more about this painful condition and how it can be effectively treated, call the Colorado Plains Medical Center Specialty Clinic at (970) 867-6430*

# SAVING LIVES

## One Pint at a Time

Every two seconds, someone in the United States needs a blood transfusion. Are you doing your part?

In 2006, Bonfils Blood Center in Denver, Colorado, collected 218,000 pints of blood to help a variety of people, including those involved in auto

Bonfils Blood Center needs 4,350 people to donate blood each week in order to provide for the needs of Denver and the surrounding communities and to be prepared for any unforeseen events.

accidents, cancer patients, burn victims, and those undergoing elective surgery.

“Donating blood is one of the easiest ways to volunteer and make a positive difference in someone’s life,” says Julie Scott, Public Relations Specialist at Bonfils Blood Center. “Just one pint can save up to three lives.”

### BLOOD PARTNERS

Colorado Plains Medical Center is excited to partner with Bonfils Blood Center. Together, we host blood drives and encourage new and current donors

to give the gift of life. Donating takes about 10 minutes, and donors must be at least 18 years of age, weigh at least 110 pounds, and be in general good health.

“We recently hosted a celebration for a gentleman who gave 50 gallons of blood over the years,” says Scott. “The 400 pints of blood he gave may have saved up to 1,200 lives in the surrounding community—what a wonderful gift.”

*For more information about CPMC’s upcoming blood drive this summer, call (970) 867-3391.*

## The NEXT LEVEL of Lab Services

Trust your lab tests to Colorado Plains Medical Center.

*Your father’s heart attack may have been caused by clogged arteries.  
Your daughter’s constant thirst leads you to suspect that she may have diabetes.  
You’re pregnant and your physician wants to monitor your fetus more closely.*

Each of these situations requires a laboratory test to determine the correct diagnosis and treatment. When you choose Colorado Plains Medical Center for your inpatient, outpatient, and emergency lab tests, you’re making the right choice.

Our lab is a full-service department that concentrates on providing high-quality services to everyone in our community. We provide 24 hour a day, 7 day a week care and are proud to

consistently score high on our Joint Commission surveys.

Here are a few highlights of our lab services:

- About 90 percent of all testing is performed in-house, which often means same-day results.
  - Physicians have direct input into lab operations.
  - Courier services are available.
  - CPMC has consistently achieved some of the top Joint Commission state scores on surveys.
  - Our medical director is board certified in anatomical and clinical pathology.
- “The expertise of our lab can also be contributed to our staff,” says Tim Muhr, MT (ASCP), Lab Director at CPMC. “Those that perform tests



Professionals at Colorado Plains Medical Center perform 90 percent of all laboratory testing in house, which results in a higher level of convenience for patients.

have completed degrees in medical technology and many have five or more years of experience.”

*For more information about lab services at CPMC, call (970) 867-3391.*

# Spotlight on Advances in the Battle

Americans are winning the fight against cancer, but much work lies ahead. During April—National Cancer Control Month—Colorado Plains Medical Center continues our efforts to reduce the impact of this deadly disease on our region.



With approximately 10 million survivors in the United States, cancer survival rates are increasing due to a continually evolving understanding of the disease, growing public awareness, better diagnostic tools, and innovative treatments. Cancer patients in Northeast Colorado and across the country are living longer and fuller lives. Despite these advances, however, cancer is still the second leading cause of death in America, and cancers such as breast, prostate, lung, and melanoma continue to be all too prevalent.

To continue the fight against cancer, more than 40 physicians, nurses, and community residents attended the inaugural Partners in Caring cancer symposium presented by CPMC in partnership with Morgan Community College and the American Cancer Society (ACS) in November 2006. Leading cancer experts illuminated risk factors, provided educational resources, and discussed treatment options and advancements for common cancers.

Here's a recap of some of the topics presented at the symposium and a look at how physicians at CPMC and elsewhere are breaking ground in cancer care.

## KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

By increasing public awareness about risk factors and encouraging people to take appropriate steps to protect themselves, CPMC is working to reduce the number of cases of advanced cancer. For example, when breast cancer is detected at its earliest stages, treatment is more effective and patients have a greater chance of survival.

Individuals can reduce the risk of developing malignancies by avoiding

Linda Dreessen, RN, BSN, a certified chemotherapy/infusion nurse, is just one of many professionals at Colorado Plains Medical Center on hand to meet your needs.

# attle against Cancer

tobacco and making healthy lifestyle modifications, including eating nutritious foods and exercising regularly. In addition, people should use ACS guidelines to develop preventive screenings schedules and speak with their primary care physicians about additional ways to modify their individual risk factors.

“There’s no ensured protection against malignant diseases, but the more community residents we convince to undergo regular cancer screenings, the more cases of advanced cancer we can prevent,” says Joseph Bonelli, MD, PhD, FCAP, medical staff pathologist at CPMC. “As the medical community reaches a greater understanding about the way in which cancers develop, additional tests may make it possible to discover malignancies before they become clinically significant.”

## RIGHT ON TARGET

Cancer treatment is evolving rapidly, making chemotherapy and radiation therapy more focused and localized than in years past. Targeted therapies focus on an aspect of the malignancy that differs from normal cells, sending destructive chemotherapy medication or energy beams directly to the site of the tumor or lesion and sparing the surrounding tissue.

“We’re starting to see the fruits of more than 20 years of research, and as therapies become more specialized, they involve fewer negative side effects,” says Michael Stone, MD, board-certified hematologist and oncologist at CPMC.

“As a result, these therapies are not only more effective at treating malignancies but also better tolerated by patients.”

Additionally, surgeons can extract tumors with precise, minimally invasive techniques. Using smaller

incisions greatly shortens recovery time and reduces post-operative pain and scarring for patients.

## CANCER ON TRIAL

Through the Community Cancer Oncology Program, area physicians are involved in multiple clinical trials to test the effectiveness of leading-edge medicines and modalities for treating breast, colon, lung, lymphoma, and other common cancers. Participation in these clinical trials, which are led cooperatively by nationally respected organizations, entails receiving the current standard of care in addition to utilizing a new approach that may provide added benefit.

“The emerging treatments we’re studying look very promising, and enrolling a patient in a clinical trial is one of the first options I explore—because that really should be the standard of care,” says James Moore, MD, board-certified hematologist and oncologist from Fort Collins, Colorado. “The patient gets to participate in the latest studies locally, and the new treatment may improve his or her outcome significantly.”

In addition, CPMC offers chemotherapy with a certified chemotherapy nurse, meaning cancer patients receive expert care with a personal touch—all without traveling far from their homes, families, and friends.

*For more information about cancer care at CPMC, call (970) 867-6430. For more information about chemotherapy treatment at CPMC, call (970) 867-3391, ext.3328.*



## A Shot of Prevention

Airwaves have been buzzing with news of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s approval of a vaccine developed to prevent most cervical cancers—the second-leading cause of cancer deaths in women worldwide. For uninfected females ages 9 to 26, the vaccine provides nearly 100 percent protection against the strains of human papillomavirus (HPV) that cause 70 percent of all cervical cancers and 90 percent of genital warts.

The HPV vaccine does not, however, replace a woman’s need for regular Pap tests as determined by her physician. Since HPV often has no signs or symptoms, many of the 20 million Americans with this sexually transmitted virus don’t even know they have it.

## Save the Date!

Colorado Plains Medical Center will present the second annual **Partners in Cancer** caring symposium later this year.

Don’t miss this exciting chance to learn more about advances in cancer detection and treatment, what’s on the horizon, and how you can take precautions to avoid common cancers—without charge.

*Seating is limited, so be sure to preregister by calling (970) 542-3346.*

# Breast Cancer Care *Close to Home*



Early detection is of the utmost importance in the fight against breast cancer, and Colorado Plains Medical Center is pleased to offer women state-of-the-art equipment and procedures that cater to all of their breast health needs.

According to the American Cancer Society, more than 212,920 American women were diagnosed with breast cancer in 2006, with more than 40,970 succumbing to the disease.

Although there is no magic cure for breast cancer or proven ways to prevent it, there are state-of-the-art methods of detection and treatment that provide hope to women diagnosed with the disease, many of which are currently offered at CPMC.

## ADVANCED PROCEDURES

One advanced technology—the sentinel lymph node mapping system—offers women whose breast cancer has not spread to the lymph nodes a way to avoid auxiliary lymphadenectomy (removal of all lymph nodes) surgery.

“Prior to acquiring this system, doctors removed the lymph nodes before testing for the presence of cancer,” says Lawrence Schoelkopf, MD, board-certified general surgeon on staff at CPMC. “Thanks to this system, we can learn which nodes are most likely to be involved, saving the patient’s lymph nodes and reducing complications.”



Lawrence Schoelkopf, MD

## PROTECT YOURSELF

Physicians at CPMC encourage women to schedule regular mammograms. These screenings are the gold standard in breast cancer detection and should be part of your annual exam beginning at age 40—earlier if suggested by your physician. A mammogram records images of your breast tissue that are inspected for abnormalities by a trained radiologist. Sometimes other diagnostic tools such as an ultrasound or a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) machine may be used to confirm the results of a mammogram.

“Early detection is the key element in the fight against breast cancer,” says Thomas Bryant, MD, board-certified general surgeon at CPMC. “If a woman’s cancer is discovered in the early stages, she may be able to avoid a mastectomy, or breast removal, if she chooses to undergo lumpectomy (removal of tumor) and radiation.”

“The medical staff at CPMC is equipped with the knowledge and technology to detect cancer in its earliest, most treatable stages,” says Timothy Ferrugia, MD, board-certified general surgeon at CPMC. “Women should not die from this disease.”

For more information on breast cancer screenings and treatment, call CPMC at (970) 867-3391 or visit our Web site at [www.ColoradoPlainsMedicalCenter.com](http://www.ColoradoPlainsMedicalCenter.com).

## Know Your Risk Factors

Breast cancer occurs when cells in the body grow or divide uncontrollably and form a tumor. The disease may be caused by exposure to carcinogens such as radiation, chemicals, and hormones, or may be the result of your genetic makeup present from birth. Risk factors for developing breast cancer include:

- age (average age of diagnosis is 62)
- beginning menstruation before age 12 or menopause after age 55
- ethnicity (Caucasian women are more likely to develop breast cancer than African-Americans, Native Americans, or Asians)
- family history of breast cancer (including first-degree relatives—especially if diagnosed at a premenopausal age—on the maternal or paternal side)

*“While a cure for breast cancer may still be on the horizon, it isn’t here yet. Fortunately, there are leading-edge methods of detection and treatment that provide hope to women diagnosed with the disease.”*

—Timothy Ferrugia, MD, board-certified general surgeon

# The Stock *Exchange*

If you have highly appreciated stock but don't want to subject yourself to capital gains, consider transferring that stock directly to the Fort Morgan Community Hospital Association.

**By donating** your appreciated stock to the Hospital Association—rather than selling the stock and making the same donation—you're able to basically “double up” on your tax benefits by taking both the charitable deduction and avoiding the capital gains tax on the appreciation of the stock you sold. Additionally, the Hospital Association will pay your broker's commission on the stock transfer.

“While you would need a stockbroker to donate your stock in this way, it's an easy transaction to complete,” says Tim Guggenmos, CFP, Financial Advisor for Edward Jones and the Past President of the Fort Morgan Community Hospital Association. “A brokerage firm can simply transfer the stock from one account to another, and you can feel great about making your donation.”

*For more information about planned giving opportunities to the Fort Morgan Community Hospital Association, call (970) 542-3346.*

Tim Guggenmos, CFP



## Be *Skin* Smart

**While skin cancer** can occur anywhere on the body, this disease is most frequently found in the areas often exposed to sunlight, such as the arms, hands, face, and neck.

The majority of skin cancers are detected when the patient notices non-healing sores or areas of the skin with some of these changes:

- small, raised areas that are smooth, shiny, and waxy, or are red or reddish-brown
- scaly, flat, rough, and red or brown
- crusty, bleeding, or scaly
- firm areas that appear similar to scars.

If you suspect you might have skin cancer, talk to your dermatologist about a skin examination and possible biopsy.

“If caught early, skin cancer—even melanoma—is often very treatable,” says Stephen P. Castle, DO, FAAD, board-certified dermatologist on staff at Colorado Plains Medical Medical Center.

“However, a serious skin cancer can be fatal if ignored for too long and allowed to enter an aggressive growth phase.”

*To make an appointment for a skin screening, call the Colorado Plains Medical Center Specialty Clinic at (970) 867-6430.*



Stephen P. Castle, DO



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