

For Your Health



Wyoming
Medical Center

WYOMINGMEDICALCENTER.ORG ■ SUMMER 2015



The long goodbye:
Julie Cann-Taylor
retires after 43 years.
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STOP SMOKING

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LIFE-AND-DEATH TREATMENT

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Andy Dunn, MD, transitions to Mesa Primary Care to treat patients at every stage of life

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Your Most Valuable Asset



As the guardians for health in our community, we know that providing excellent health care means more than waiting for you to show up at the hospital. Wyoming Medical Center's mission is

to advance the health and wellness of everyone we serve, and that means bringing health services to our patients, close to where they live.

That's why we are building Mesa Primary Care in West Casper, the fastest-growing residential area in the city. It opens this fall on the corner of Wyoming Boulevard and Talon Drive. You can read more about what this exciting clinic will offer in our interview with **Andy Dunn, MD** (see page 6).

Your health is your most valuable asset, and we are here to help you protect it in any way we can. The pages of this issue of *For Your Health* contain expert wellness advice from several of our health providers: Neurosurgeon **Don Penney, MD**, explains why smoking is bad for your spine (see page 3); **Ketura Talbot, MD**, helps tackle hypertension, often called "the silent killer" (see page 4); and **Adrian Fluture, MD**, and **David Wheeler, MD, PhD**, show why our heart and stroke care is among the best in the country (see page 5).

We hope these stories inspire you to take control of your health. When you do, know that Wyoming Medical Center—Casper's only community hospital—will be with you every step of the way.

Vickie Diamond, President and CEO



Farewell, Julie!

We would like to send a fond farewell to **Julie Cann-Taylor**, who retired March 31 after 43 years at Wyoming Medical Center. Our halls don't feel the same without her.

Cann-Taylor started in our laundry department in 1972 and worked her way up to chief nursing officer and senior vice president of patient care services. She inspired many young healthcare workers to continue their education and step into leadership positions.

Read more about this inspiring woman on our health news site, The Pulse, at **thepulse.wyomingmedicalcenter.org**. And if you see Julie around Casper, tell her we miss her!



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One More Reason to Quit Smoking

In case you didn't have enough reasons to stop smoking, here's one more: Smoking makes it harder to recover from surgery.

"Smoking has a significant influence on a patient's healing after a spinal fusion—whether it be in the cervical, thoracic or lumbar spine," says **Don Penney, MD, a neurosurgeon at Wyoming Brain and Spine Associates** in Casper. "Cigarette smoking has been shown to interfere with bone metabolism and inhibit bone formation. In some studies, patients who continue to use nicotine products after spine fusion have an up to 47 percent higher rate of failure. That means the segments of the vertebral bone don't fuse as they should."

Nicotine has been shown to slow healing from other surgical procedures and other illnesses as well. The evidence is overwhelming: It's time to quit. Here are five tips to help.

- Keep other things around instead of cigarettes: Sugar-free chewing gum or candy can help with the urge to smoke.
- Avoid being around other smokers.
- Take a walk. Exercise helps you fight the urge.
- Wash your hands. Splash your face with cold water. Or slowly sip a glass of water. Research shows these steps "wash away" cravings.
- You may need medicine to help control your withdrawal. Talk to your doctor about this.

Ready to quit? Contact the Wyoming Quit Tobacco program at **800-QUIT-NOW** for free help.



Be Gentle with Your Joints

Osteoarthritis is the most common form of arthritis, affecting more than 27 million Americans. Minimize your risk while protecting your joints with these dos and don'ts:

- DO** keep your weight down. For every one pound you shed, you'll lower the load you exert on your knees by four pounds.
- DO** exercise. Exercise keeps your joints flexible and improves muscle strength. If pain is a barrier, consider an aquatic exercise program.
- DON'T** sit still. Changing positions regularly can loosen muscle and joint stiffness.
- DO** maintain good posture, which will protect the joints in your neck, back, hips and knees.
- DON'T** ignore pain. If you experience pain after an activity, you may have overstressed your joints.

Having Joint Pain?

Nobody should live with pain, and Advantage Orthopedics is focused on getting patients back to doing what they love—as quickly as possible.

"The difference you can make in a person's life is huge, just by helping to relieve their pain," says **James Shaffer, MD, a board-certified orthopedic surgeon**

offering a full range of orthopedic services. "Most people just want to be able to play with the grandkids, or maybe play some golf."



James Shaffer, MD

DON'T LIVE WITH THE PAIN

If you have pain in your bones or joints, Advantage Orthopedics may be able to help. For an appointment or referral, call **307-233-0250**.



Don Penney, MD

NEED A NEUROSURGEON?

Dr. Penney is a neurosurgeon with Wyoming Brain and Spine Associates in Casper. For a referral or an appointment, call **307-266-2222**.



8 Rules to Prevent Medicine Poisoning in Children

Medications are the leading cause of child poisoning in the United States. In 2011, nearly 67,000 children were seen in emergency rooms around the country for medicine poisoning. This equals about one child every eight hours.

“Children are curious by nature and medications can be tempting. Many medications look and taste just like candy,” says **Anna Edwards of the Safe Kids program at Wyoming Medical Center**. “While we want to encourage our children to explore their world, when it comes to medications, we need to follow these eight safety rules.”

1. Store medicines and vitamins in a place your child cannot reach.
2. Put medications away every time.
3. Make sure the safety cap is locked.
4. Put away products you might not think about as medicines—such as diaper cream, eyedrops and vitamins.
5. Give the right dose by using the dosing device that comes with your medications and following all directions.
6. Teach your children about medicine safety.
7. Ask houseguests and visitors to put purses, coats and bags that may contain medicine out of reach and out of sight.
8. Program the toll-free Poison Help Number, **800-222-1222**, into your cellphone and post it on your refrigerator.

GET MORE TIPS TO KEEP YOUR KIDS SAFE

To learn more about our Safe Kids program, go to wyomingmedicalcenter.org and click “Services” and find the link for “Safe Kids/Communities.”



Easing the Pressure

High blood pressure, also known as hypertension, is a common health problem that can lead to serious issues if not controlled. It's the No. 1 reason for patient visits to their primary care doctors, says **Ketura Talbot, MD**, a family medicine physician at Mesa Primary Care.

“We call hypertension ‘the silent killer’ because most people won't have any symptoms as the condition develops,” Dr. Talbot says. “But as the pressure wears on your body over time, it puts you at a higher risk of stroke, heart disease, heart attack, damage to your kidneys and blindness.”

Lower your blood pressure with these lifestyle changes:

- Take your medications as directed and have regular checkups with your doctor.
- Aim for at least 150 minutes of exercise per week. It may sound like a lot, but you can break it into 10-minute chunks spread throughout the day.
- When cooking, use fresh ingredients. Avoid processed foods, fast foods and salty snacks.
- If you smoke, get help to quit.
- Avoid excess alcohol.



Ketura Talbot, MD

MAKE AN APPOINTMENT TODAY

Need a doctor? Wyoming Medical Center's primary care practices are taking new patients of all ages—from birth to old age.

→ **Sage Primary Care:** Located in central Casper, this Patient-Centered Medical Home offers same-day appointments and a 24-hour provider hotline. Call **307-265-8300**.

→ **Mesa Primary Care:** Mesa's new building will open this fall in West Casper, but its providers are seeing patients now. Call **307-234-6765**.



When the Clock Is Ticking

Get help right away if you suspect a heart attack or stroke



In life-and-death emergencies, time is of the essence. This is particularly true in cases of heart attack and stroke, where patients risk catastrophic damage to the heart and brain for every minute treatment is delayed.

The latest data proves that when the clock is ticking, Wyoming Medical Center provides among the fastest, most efficient care in the country.

Survivor: Heart Attack

Data from the American College of Cardiology's National Cardiovascular Data Registry shows that Wyoming Medical Center's 45-minute door-to-balloon time is in the top 10 percent of hospitals in the country. Door-to-balloon time is measured from the moment a patient arrives at our Emergency Room to the moment we have inflated a balloon in the blocked heart vessel. WMC's mortality rates from heart attacks are 25 to 50 percent below national averages.

"Cardiac care at Wyoming Medical Center is a team effort, and everyone—from our EMS to our emergency room nurses and doctors to our cardiac cath lab staff—work extremely hard to provide fast, efficient care to our heart attack patients," says **Adrian Fluture, MD, director of Regional Myocardial Infarction Care at Wyoming Medical Center** and an interventional cardiologist at Wyoming Cardiopulmonary Services in Casper. "Patients in Casper, and across the region, get the best treatment they can when treated at Wyoming Medical Center. These numbers make us really proud."

Stroke of Good Timing

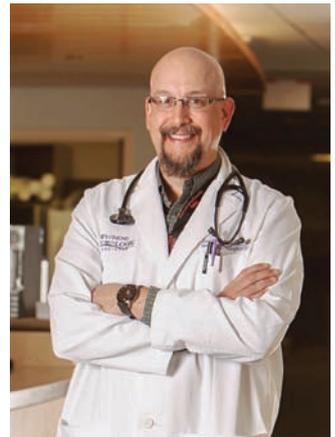
The American Stroke Association gave Wyoming Medical Center its highest level of recognition—Target: Stroke Honor Roll—Elite Plus status—for quick treatment of stroke patients in our Emergency Room. It was the award's first year and we were one of just about 30 hospitals in the country to receive it.

Our door-to-needle time—the time from when a patient arrives at the ER to the time a clot-buster is administered intravenously—averages 45 minutes, and often is as little as 30 minutes. Wyoming Medical Center also has earned the ASA's Get With The Guidelines®—Stroke Gold Plus Award for meeting or exceeding standards in stroke care for three consecutive years. It's the seventh year in a row we've been recognized.

"Among my proudest professional achievements is leading an amazing team that has built our Primary Stroke Center from the ground up. This is only possible in our small town because of the passion for quality and excellence exhibited by team members from every part of Wyoming Medical Center," says **David Wheeler, MD, PhD, medical director of WMC's Primary Stroke Center** and a neurologist at Wyoming Neurologic Associates. •



Adrian Fluture, MD



David Wheeler, MD, PhD

Call 911 ASAP

The data proves it: In both cases of heart attack and stroke, patients can be treated even faster when they call 911. WMC's EMS services are like mobile emergency rooms, and can start treatment before you even arrive at the hospital. Plus, EMS can activate our stroke and cardiac teams from the field, speeding up the treatment process.

In fact, when heart attack patients call 911, our door-to-balloon time is actually 10 minutes quicker than for patients who go directly to the Emergency Room.

Survive. Don't drive. Call 911 at the first signs of heart attack or stroke.

Care Close to Home



Admired hospitalist Dr. Andy Dunn transitions to Mesa Primary Care

Growing up in Denver, Colorado, **Andy Dunn, MD**, never came to Wyoming except to buy fireworks just over the border. Today, he is one of our most highly regarded hospitalists, following patients throughout their hospital stays, from the Emergency Room to discharge.

His first daughter was born at Wyoming Medical Center and he and his wife, **Mesha Dunn, MD**, an attending physician at University of Wyoming Family Medicine Residency, are expecting their second child in August.

This summer, Dr. Dunn will transition to a new healthcare role in Casper—medical director of Mesa Primary Care. He will also see patients who are transitioning from an inpatient to outpatient setting. It will give him a chance to develop deeper, more long-term relationships with his patients, while allowing him to help build a practice devoted to keeping patients out of the hospital in the first place. We asked Dr. Dunn more about his life and career.

What made you decide to make medicine your career?

Being in that position to *really* help somebody. This sounds corny, but I love the Norman Rockwell approach. There is a Rockwell painting where the doctor is using his stethoscope to listen to the “heart” of a young child’s doll, and that has always kind of stuck with me. My mother is a teacher, and she had so much of the

same mission to help people; My father as well. I like being able to be more involved in people’s lives.

What does a hospitalist do?

Basically, a hospitalist practices primary care in an acute setting. When we see you in the Emergency Room, we try to diagnose and treat you in the ER, and then care for you throughout the rest of your hospital experience—from the medical floor to neurology, the Progressive Care Unit or surgery—until you are well enough to go home and to a primary care provider.

What I didn’t understand until I actually started in this role is that I thought you couldn’t foster relationships with patients as a hospitalist. But that is not true. I have seen many patients and their family members over and over again, so that has been rewarding. That’s one thing I knew I would like about the outpatient setting that I didn’t think was also possible in the inpatient setting.

Why are you making the transition to primary care?

My heart has always been in the outpatient setting. I really liked Wyoming Medical Center and the specialists here. They have been terrific to work with. Now, I have an amazing opportunity, as Casper is growing and Wyoming Medical Center is growing, to establish a strong niche for community service. Mesa Primary Care will focus on better preventive medicine so patients may not have to go to the hospital as often. I love treating families: I love kids; I love the grandparents and everything in between. To treat a family is a huge honor and blessing.

Why is it important that Mesa Primary Care will be located in West Casper, now underserved by medical services but also the fastest-growing residential area in the city?

Health providers need to be located in and involved with their community. Providing education and access to care are major components of preventive medicine and in keeping people healthy and out of hospitals. Education,



About Mesa Primary Care

Dr. Dunn is board-certified in family medicine. He will continue to work as a hospitalist at Wyoming Medical Center until this fall when Mesa Primary Care's new building opens in West Casper. He is Mesa's medical director and will also see patients.

Mesa Primary Care features an Immediate Care clinic for walk-in patients and will collaborate with our full range of specialist services to offer comprehensive primary care. It is now serving patients from its temporary location—this is a good time to establish your family with the practice. To make an appointment, call **307-234-6765**.

There will be an immediate care walk-in clinic at Mesa. When is immediate care appropriate and when should you go to the ER?

Whenever your red flag is up, go to the Emergency Room. Chest pain? ER. Numbness and tingling on one side? ER.

Things like respiratory infections, nausea and vomiting, diarrhea and broken bones can be handled in an urgent-care setting. We can provide casting, splinting and a lot of other services. Of course, all things that are very serious will be deferred to the ER.

With this new role, are you planning to stay in Casper?

Yes. My wife and I have just bought a house and are renovating it. Our daughter was born here. We hope that our future children will be born here. We do not see going anywhere else as we love Casper. Not used to the wind yet, but we love everything else.

What will you miss about inpatient work?

The people at Wyoming Medical Center. They are hard-working and they do a good job. I will miss the medicine to an extent, and seeing the difference in a person's health change right away. ●

managing chronic disease and preventing acute injuries and illnesses are the right things to do for the community and for patients.

In your mind, what does an ideal system of primary care look like?

There would be clinics for chronic diseases—such as a diabetes clinic and a chronic obstructive pulmonary disease clinic—but geared to more primary care with specialist involvement as needed. We'd also focus on whole

health to treat the individual overall, not just the disease. This involves mental health, physical and occupational therapy, and holistic medicine.

Ideally, members of the community would be able to access care whenever they needed to, and it would be a total package so to speak; mind, body, spirit. If everything is clicking on all cylinders, then we will keep people out of the hospital. We can provide really strong affordable care with specialists orchestrated through primary care providers.

Save the Date!
Join us for Safe Kids
Swim Night on **July 15**
from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.
at Paradise Valley Pool.
It's free!

 **Wyoming**
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Fun Raising

Don't miss Sawyer Brown
at this year's Country for
Cancer event



By Alisha Havens,
Development Director of the
Wyoming Medical Center Foundation

We are excited to announce that Sawyer Brown will headline the second annual Country for Cancer concert on Saturday, Oct. 10, at the Casper Events Center.

Country for Cancer was organized to provide great country music while supporting a worthwhile cause: the Angels Cancer Care Program. The Angels Program of the Wyoming Medical Center Foundation has a rich history of addressing the varied concerns of cancer patients, including offering emotional support, financial assistance, transportation and medication retrieval. On average, the Angels give \$81,000 a year to support Wyoming cancer patients in need.

Sawyer Brown has been depicting through song many of life's ups and downs, through 23 albums and for more than 30 years. Their hits include "Some Girls Do," "The Dirt Road," "The Walk," "Thank God for You" and "The Race Is On."

We are thrilled that Sawyer Brown has signed on to bring funding and awareness to the fight against cancer for many Wyoming families. Just as the Angels Program connects with cancer patients, Sawyer Brown truly connects with the audience through their charisma and lyrics. ●

GET YOUR TICKETS EARLY!

Tickets go on sale in August and seats are limited. They are \$30 each or \$40 for the first six rows. Reserve yours at caspereventscenter.com.

