

Mercy Health Matters

News & advice for healthy living

www.mercy.com

A Mother's Day Message

Mammograms Save Lives!

Not sure what to get your mom for Mother's Day? Well, in addition to that scrumptious brunch you'll be treating her to, remind her to get her annual mammogram.

This month, Mercy Health Partners is offering Mother's Day Mammogram Specials at our Breast Centers in Knoxville.

Schedule a screening mammogram and receive a free heel bone density test, massage and chocolate-covered strawberries. Appointments for Mother's Day Mammogram Specials are available between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Call **865-545-7771** to make your appointment.

May 10Mercy Ambulatory Care Center South
7323 Chapman Highway**May 11**Mercy Medical Center St. Mary's
900 E. Oak Hill Avenue**May 18**Mercy Medical Center West
10820 Parkside Drive

Early Detection Is Your Best Protection

One in eight women will be diagnosed with breast cancer. When detected early, the five-year survival rate is more than 90 percent.

Mercy Health Partners' state-of-the art digital mammography systems make this important exam faster and more precise than ever. According to the American College of Radiology, digital mammography (as compared to traditional mammography) detects up to 28 percent more cancers in women 50 and younger and for women with dense breast tissue.

Call **865-545-7771** today to schedule your digital mammogram at any of these Mercy Breast Centers:

- Mercy Medical Center North*
- Mercy Medical Center St. Mary's
- Mercy Medical Center West
- Mercy Ambulatory Care Center South
- St. Mary's Medical Center of Campbell County

*Accredited by the National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers (NAPBC)

Assess Your Risk

Many women who develop breast cancer have no known risk factors other than growing older. And many women with known risk factors don't develop breast cancer.

Knowing your risk profile is your best defense against breast cancer. Take our BREAST CANCERaware risk assessment at www.mercy.com/health_tools.asp. It's quick, free and strictly confidential.



Mercy Wellness

An Endless Source of Healing Answers

Marla Thode, RN, BSN, nurse coordinator for Mercy Wellness, knows what people want when it comes to healthcare: someone to help them navigate what can be a complex and intimidating system.

The Mercy Wellness program, created in April 2009, helps match callers to the appropriate physician or service they need, taking into consideration individual needs and desires as well as location and insurance. "My goal is to match the caller with the best provider at a time and location that is most convenient for the patient," she says.

Marla has a 25-year nursing background. A graduate of East Tennessee State University, she says her healthcare experience covers "a lit bit of everything," including work in

a hospital recovery room and in obstetrics/gynecology.

Marla offers referrals and can schedule appointments for patients. "I don't provide a medical diagnosis," she says, "but I can point out general health needs, such as mammograms starting at age 40 and colonoscopies for those 50 and older."

Marla answers many types of questions including:

- "I'm having sleep problems and I'm not sure what do. Who should I see in your system?"
- "I think I'm pregnant. Can you refer me to a doctor who delivers babies at Mercy?"
- "My dad is aging and his health isn't what it should be. How do I schedule a geriatric evaluation for him?"



Marla Thode, RN, BSN
Nurse Coordinator for Mercy Wellness

"I offer a unique level of care," Marla says. "I'm part educator, part friend, part personal assistant all rolled into one."

For a physician or service referral, call Mercy Wellness at **1-877-599-WELL (9355)** and ask for Marla.

The Digital Difference

The Breast Center at St. Mary's Medical Center of Campbell County is proud to announce the addition of a new digital mammography system—purchased with grant money from The LaFollette Medical Foundation and Mercy Foundation. To learn more, read our news release online at www.mercy.com.

Q&A

With **Tom T. Gallaher, M.D.**
Board-Certified Plastic/Reconstructive Surgeon
Gallaher Plastic Surgery

Q. I had a mastectomy many years ago. At the time, I was more concerned with beating the cancer than my appearance. Is it too late for breast reconstruction?

A. When it comes to breast reconstruction, the choices that are right for one woman won't necessarily be right for another. Timing for the surgery is often based on the patient's desires, overall health and cancer treatment.



Whenever possible, plastic surgeons encourage women to begin the process of reconstruction at the same time they are having their mastectomy. However, it is also possible to do delayed breast reconstruction months or even years after a mastectomy.

Reconstructive breast surgery involves reproducing the appearance of the breast including the nipple and areola as well as reshaping the opposite breast for symmetry in many instances. Surgical options include the use of a breast implant, your own tissue flap (skin, fat and muscle moved from your tummy, back or other area of your body to the chest area), or a combination of the two.

Advancements in plastic surgery techniques offer better results today than ever before, and make breast reconstruction an option for most women facing mastectomy. The decision, as you know, is a personal one and is not easy to make.

Restoring the breast is not considered cosmetic surgery. Instead, it is part of the treatment for breast cancer and should be covered as dictated by the specifics of your insurance policy as protected under federal law.

I encourage you to make an appointment with a physician with expertise in breast reconstruction. The surgery will not only change your physical appearance, it has the potential to promote a renewed sense of wellness for you and your loved ones.