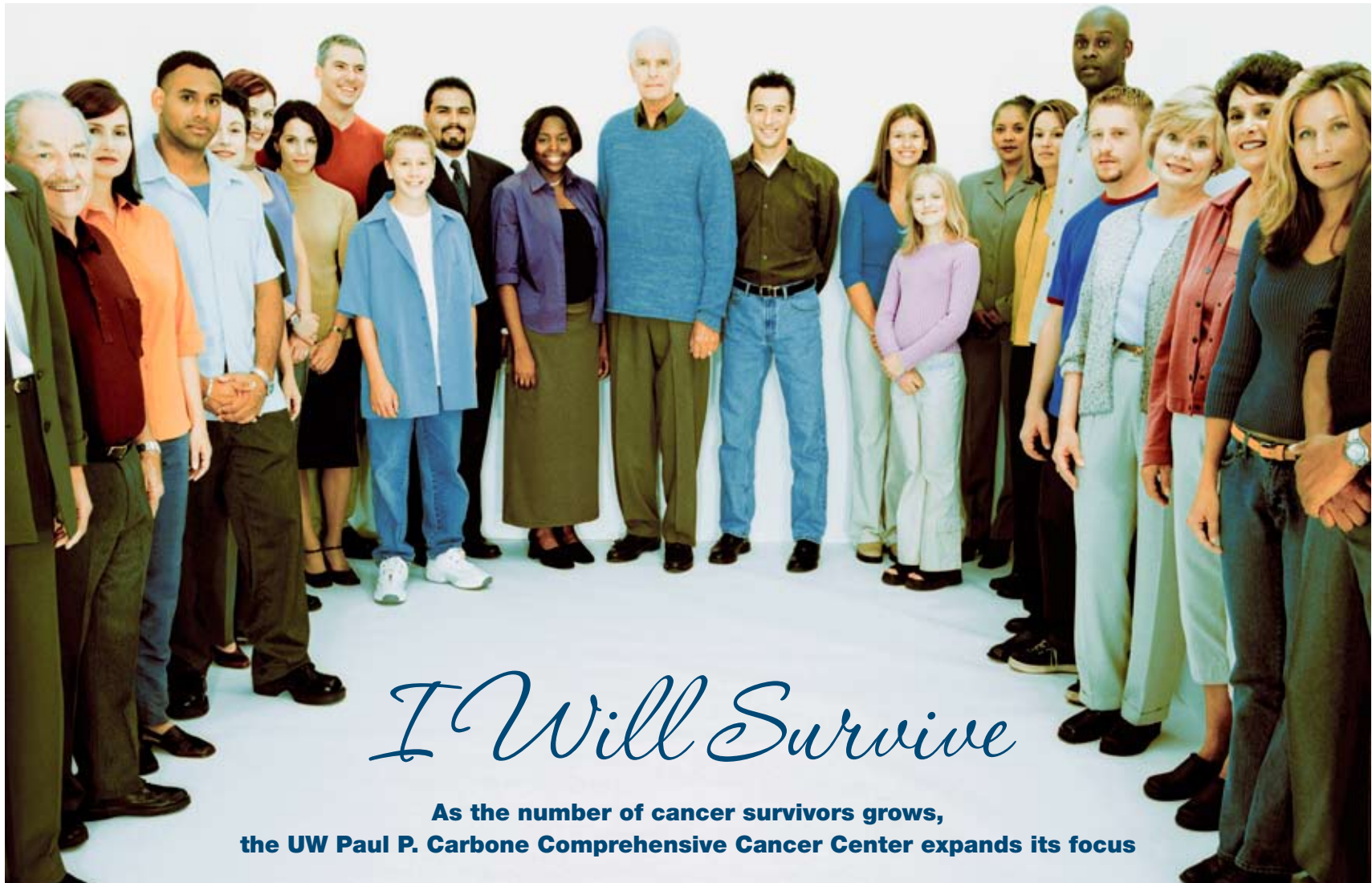


# UW Health Link

Connecting you to health news and resources in your community

Winter 2007



## *I Will Survive*

**As the number of cancer survivors grows,  
the UW Paul P. Carbone Comprehensive Cancer Center expands its focus**

**D**awn Marie Sesto is a survivor. Diagnosed with breast cancer in February 2005, Sesto waged a two-year battle against her disease that eventually included mastectomy, chemotherapy, radiation therapy and the removal of her ovaries. Now, two years later, her cancer is gone... and her life has forever changed.

"I'm obviously relieved that I'm done with active treatment," says Sesto, 38, mother to 7- and 3-year-old girls. "Survivorship puts you in a different category. I'll never go back to the life I had before I was diagnosed with cancer."

Sesto is in good company—in fact, the number of cancer survivors in the United States swelled to more

than 10 million last year. On the heels of an American Cancer Society report revealing that the number of Americans who died of cancer in 2006 dropped for the second year in a row, it's clear that survivorship is becoming an increasingly important development in cancer care.

How important? Just this year, the Institute of Medicine published a book on survivorship called *From Cancer Patient to Cancer Survivor: Lost in Transition*.

"I think it's a reflection of the maturing of cancer care," says Dr. James Stewart, the UW Health medical oncologist at the UW Paul P. Carbone Comprehensive Cancer Center (UWCCC) who coordinated Sesto's treatment. "Twenty

years ago, when somebody was diagnosed with cancer, the emphasis was the diagnosis and the treatment around that diagnosis."

Today, physicians and patients are taking a much longer view. Having overcome the difficult obstacles of diagnosis, treatment and recovery, both groups are facing a new set of issues, from the long-term side effects of chemotherapy to dealing with lingering fears of recurrence and determining whether future health care issues such as mammograms and bone density scans are best handled by a primary-care doctor, a cancer specialist or a combination of both.

"We are looking very hard at how to take care of patients who are long-term survivors of breast cancer, colon

**continued on page 2**

# Survival Training

The following support groups are available to patients with cancer and their loved ones at the University of Wisconsin Paul P. Carbone Comprehensive Cancer Center. Please call for dates, times and locations:

**Cancer Caregiver Network**  
(Caregiver support group)  
Lori DuBenske, (608) 265-4088

**Gynecologic Cancers:  
A View Beyond**  
Teresa Woods, (608) 262-7515

**Heads Up!**  
(Head and neck cancer)  
Peggy Wiederholt and Rachael Kammer, (608) 263-8500

**Leukemia Support Group**  
Mark Heiland, (608) 265-5926

**Lung Cancer Support Group**  
Mark Heiland, (608) 265-5926

**Lymphoma Informational and Educational Group**  
Susan Brye, (608) 263-8633

**Madison Area Adult Brain Tumor Support Group**  
Lori Hayes, (608) 265-1192

**Pain Management and Coping Group**  
Shilagh Mirgain, (608) 890-9476

**Wisconsin Multiple Myeloma Support Group**  
Chuck Koval, (608) 238-5466 or Jayne Schwartz, (608) 244-2120

**Young Women's Cancer Support Group**  
Laurie Medenblik, (608) 263-9975

## Who's at risk? And for what?

*Nationally, statistics show that lung cancer survivors have a high risk of cancer recurrence, in the form of lung, mouth or esophageal cancer. Breast cancer patients who've had certain types of chemotherapy and radiation, meanwhile, may have long-term risks of changes in the heart or esophagus, and, in rare cases, treatment-related leukemia.*

*"There's a wide range of long-term risks associated with cancer treatment, and we're learning more and more about them," says Dr. James Stewart, medical oncologist at the UW Paul P. Carbone Comprehensive Cancer Center.*

## I Will Survive from page 1

cancer, other types of cancer—efficiently, and appropriately for what they need," says Stewart.

Survivorship clinics could provide an important resource for patients with medical questions about the risks and concerns associated with their cancer (see sidebar below). Staffed by physician assistants, nurse practitioners and mid-level providers skilled in following up with survivors, these clinics could offer ready access to cancer specialists—without overwhelming the center's resources.

"A lot of our skills as oncologists in the cancer center are best used with new patients, putting together complex, multidisciplinary treatment plans," explains Stewart. "Obviously, we want to continue to serve those patients. But we also want to develop long-term ways to follow up with patients who are doing well but have questions."

Currently, cancer survivors are treated and followed jointly by their primary care physician and physicians at UWCCC. Stewart estimates that as many as two-thirds of cancer survivors still receiving care at the UWCCC are reluctant to be discharged—even as long as 15 years after being declared cancer free.

"It does come down to a comfort level," says Sesto. "For patients like me, the Cancer Center becomes a second home. I was happy when active treatment ended, but at the same time, it's weird not to be there. In a

way, hearing that you're done is almost more scary: When you've had cancer, you want to know that somebody has a magnifying glass on everything."

Breast, ovarian and colon would be the three types of cancers most likely to receive their own survivorship clinics. Stewart and his colleagues are also considering the possibility of using group-style appointments, in which an oncologist might meet with as many as 10 cancer survivors together.

For patients like Sesto, who's still receiving follow-up care at the UWCCC, it's just one more indication that UW Health has recognized that being a cancer survivor is dramatically different from being a cancer patient.

"I used to be in constant fighting mode," says Sesto. "Now, I've started to reflect on my situation. I need to consider side effects—things like the impact of going through menopause at 38 and joint pain due to medications I'll be on for years to come. I welcome the opportunity to continue to receive care within the cancer center as a survivor, to know I have a place to bring my ongoing questions and concerns."

For more information about survivorship care at the UW Paul P. Carbone Comprehensive Cancer Center, visit [uwhealth.org](http://uwhealth.org) or contact Cancer Connect at (800) 622-8922.



## Playing an ACE

**New program aims to help older patients**

**A**n independent 80-year old breaks her hip at home and undergoes hip replacement surgery. In recovery, she refuses physical therapy and becomes despondent. Because of her pain and inactivity, her appetite and thirst decline, and she quickly becomes malnourished and dehydrated. Her family and health care team can't get her to eat, drink or work with the physical therapist, so she's sent to a nursing home to recover. Her mental state

deteriorates, and she remains in the nursing home permanently—losing her independence and home.

Scenarios like this are sad and unfortunately, all too common. Fortunately, the new Acute Care for Elders (ACE) service at UW Hospital and Clinics is now available to help prevent them. A team comprised of geriatricians, an advance practice nurse, a social worker, a pharmacist and a physical therapist work

continued on page 4

# Infertility: a guy thing?

**Y**ou can get a man to talk about a surprising number of things—sports, politics, hobbies, his family. Infertility, however is another matter. Especially *his* infertility.

While it's not uncommon for couples to have difficulty becoming pregnant, what's less usual is for both the man and woman to be evaluated simultaneously for infertility. That's important, say experts: 30 percent of the time the man has a problem, half of the time it's the woman, and 20 percent, it's both.

"Sometimes a woman will go through many advanced and expensive tests, only to find out that the issue is not with her fertility," says Dr. Dan Williams, a UW Health urologist who's one of only three fellowship-trained physicians in Wisconsin who specializes in male infertility. "Then the man will be tested, and after a few quick tests we will realize he has a potentially correctable problem."

One of the biggest causes of male infertility isn't sport-related injuries or frequent bicycle riding. It's called varicoceles—enlarged veins within the scrotum—and it's something that just happens.

"This is not a condition that runs in families or results from an accident," says Dr. Williams. "The valves just weaken, and that leads to problems."

For couples trying to get pregnant, those problems can complicate an already difficult process, especially if the man also has low sperm counts and/or low-quality sperm. Fifteen percent of males have varicoceles, but may not even know it: Only some men experience noticeable symptoms of discomfort and possibly some fullness in the testicles.

There is no known cause for varicoceles, but physicians believe weakened veins are no longer able to prevent blood flow from the abdomen into the testicles. With more blood around the testicles, the temperature goes up, which harms the sperm and sperm production.

"Varicoceles can happen to anyone, at any point in life," Dr. Williams says. "It's much more common in the left testicle, based on the drainage of blood."

Although generally not harmful if left untreated, men usually seek treatment for varicoceles because they have pain or the condition is interfering with fertility.

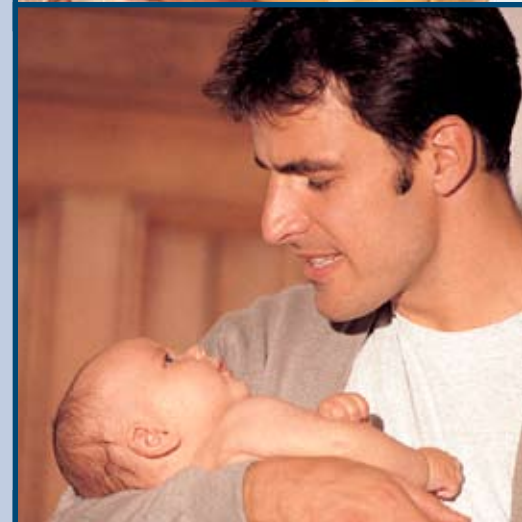
Adolescents with varicoceles may experience a size discrepancy in their testicles.

Outpatient surgery is the most common treatment—a one- to two-hour operation with general anesthesia. Radiologists can also use a catheter to insert small metal coils into the veins to block reversal of the blood flow, called embolization.

"Both methods work, but there's a higher risk of recurrence with embolization," Williams says. "After surgery, there is improvement almost 70 to 80 percent of the time."

Because a sperm cycle is 90 days, it takes roughly three months for patients to notice improvement. A recent study showed that couples who received varicoceles treatments were twice as likely to achieve pregnancy as untreated couples.

For more information about varicoceles and UW Health's male reproductive and surgery program or to make a referral, visit [uwhealth.org](http://uwhealth.org) or call (608) 287-2900.



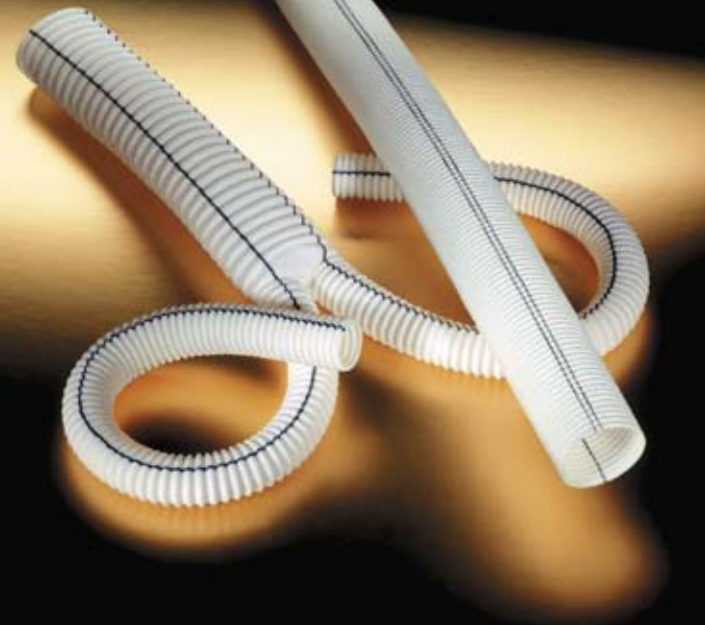
## Salute the Five Stars

**F**or the second year in a row, UW Health has been named one of the 10 top-performing academic health-care systems in the United States, based on a national quality and accountability benchmarking study by the University HealthSystem Consortium, an alliance of academic health centers in the U.S. and their affiliated hospitals.

The study focused on measuring quality and safe patient care at the 81 UHC member organizations, each of which was rated in four key areas:

- Safety – based on 15 nationally recognized patient safety indicators and procedures;
- Mortality – comparing the actual rate to the rate that would be expected based on severity of patient illness;
- Effectiveness – performance on Joint Commission national hospital quality measures and other indicators such as surgical readmission rates; and
- Equity – based on disparities in outcomes related to race, gender or ability to pay.

Based on the benchmark scoring, UW Health ranked well in each of the four key areas. "We're proud that the work we're doing to become the safest hospital in the country is being recognized by our peers," says Donna Sollenberger, president and CEO of UW Hospital and Clinics. "This tells us that our continuing efforts to focus on patients are resulting in quantifiable positive outcomes for them. Our showing in this study reflects the excellence of the nurses, physicians and staff who care for our patients."



# It's only natural

**New aortic surgery spares patient valves**

*“There is no other valve better than the patient’s own valve.”*

*– Dr. Nilto De Oliveira*

The fact that the material used in Mike Larsen’s recent aortic valve-sparing surgery is the same one often used to make sails isn’t lost on the 28-year-old PhD physics student. An avid sailor and outdoorsman, Larsen loves everything having to do with the water, especially being on it.

Larsen can discuss anything from his passion for sailing to the detailed aspects of physics. But he’s especially informed about Marfan syndrome, a genetic disorder that affects the body’s connective tissue. Diagnosed with Marfan at age 12, Larsen explains that many patients with this disorder have continuing problems with the heart and blood vessels.

“Without protein [in the body] being properly produced, the aorta stretches, but doesn’t necessarily come back to normal size,” says Larsen.

As the aorta gradually enlarges, patients with Marfan syndrome risk two life-threatening conditions: an aneurysm, which stretches and bulges the aorta wall and can eventually burst, or a dissection, where the aorta attached to the heart stretches and pulls the valve, causing it to leak. Physicians carefully monitor Marfan syndrome patients for aneurysm formation and often recommend aortic root replacement surgery, depending on the size of the aneurysm and how well the aortic valve is functioning.

Historically, surgeons would replace the parts of the aorta with a graft that includes a mechanical valve. Dr. Nilto De Oliveira, a UW Health cardiothoracic surgeon, offered Larsen an alternative: a more advanced, aortic valve-sparing procedure. Performed for the first time at UW Hospital, the procedure allowed De Oliveira to carefully re-implant Larsen’s natural aortic valve.

“In a patient with Marfan syndrome with an aortic root aneurysm, the aorta is dilated and the wall is very thin and ready to rupture. But often the aortic valve cusps are preserved and normal,” said Dr. De Oliveira.

If the cusps are still normal, it’s possible for surgeons such as Dr. De Oliveira to preserve the natural valve, rather than use a mechanical one. The technique allows qualified patients to avoid the risks of the blood thinner medication often associated with a mechanical valve: clot formation, risk of bleeding and possible infection. Since patients on blood thinners are prohibited from practicing contact sports, avoiding the blood thinner was a big plus for Larsen.

“It’s just another drug you have to take the rest of your life; plus it puts restrictions on what you can do because now injuries are a very dangerous thing,” says a smiling Larsen. “For a guy like me who gets injured occasionally, it’s not such a good idea.”

Patients with Marfan syndrome often reduce physical activity, especially activity from contact sports. By the time Larsen was a teenager, most competitive sports, including basketball, were taken away from him.

“It’s not an easy thing to deal with at age 14,” he said.

Now Larsen can look forward to another season of sailing on Lake Mendota this spring. He can also rest easy knowing that an activity-related injury is less likely to be lifethreatening.

“I’m really looking forward to running again. I haven’t been able to run in nearly two years, and I’m looking forward to being active and having energy again,” says Larsen.

From Dr. De Oliveira’s perspective, it is always more satisfying to preserve a patient’s natural valve, even though the procedure is quite complex.

“There is no other valve better than the patient’s own valve,” says Dr. De Oliveira.

For more information on the aortic valve-sparing procedure, call (608) 263-6311 or visit [uwhealth.org](http://uwhealth.org).

## ACE from page 2

together to provide consultation at critical times when older patients are faced with serious geriatric risks while hospitalized for an acute problem.

“Older adults often experience a decline in functional status during their time in the hospital,” says Maria Brenny-Fitzpatrick, a nurse practitioner and ACE team leader. “ACE offers an enhanced element

of care for hospitalized older adults, to help maintain or improve their function and independence, during and after they’ve received care at our hospital.”

The ACE team reviews the patient’s plan of care, and recommendations are communicated back to the physicians, nurses and case managers. Physicians with patient concerns can request an ACE

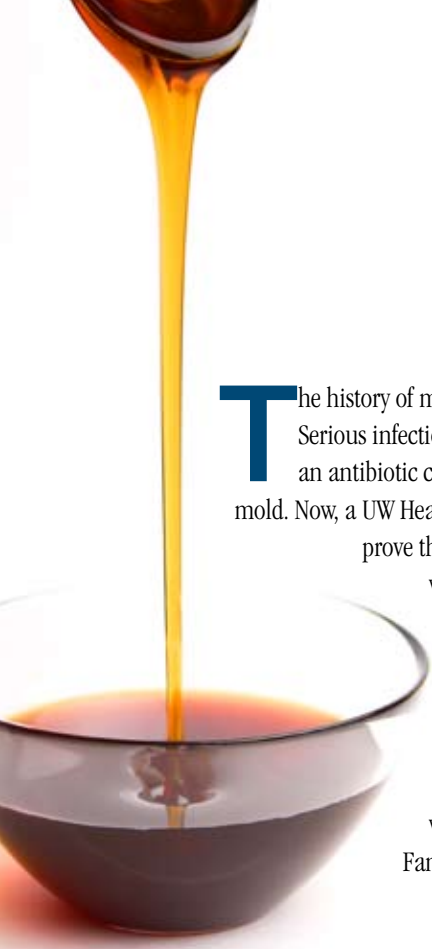
consultation—ideally upon admission, or as early as possible after admission.

This referral triggers a comprehensive, interdisciplinary review of the patient by the ACE team. The team meets daily on weekdays to discuss the patient’s geriatric concerns, focusing on common issues, such as changes in mental status, mobility, and medication safety.

For UW Hospital and Clinics, ACE is a great opportunity to improve patient and family satisfaction and decrease patient length of stay. For patients, it’s another way to know they’re getting a high level of care—at a time when it may be needed most.

If you or a loved one are admitted to UW Hospital, ask a doctor or nurse if an ACE consult might be right for you.





# A SWEET ALTERNATIVE?

Topical honey shows promise in healing diabetic ulcers

The history of medicine is rich with irony: Serious infections are treated with penicillin, an antibiotic culled from the bacteria found in mold. Now, a UW Health physician is attempting to prove that honey, a substance packed with natural sugars, can help cure ulcerous wounds in patients with diabetes—individuals whose cells struggle to process sugar.

Dr. Jennifer Eddy, a physician with UW Health's Eau Claire Family Medicine Clinic, first began

exploring honey's antibacterial qualities several years ago, when she was treating a patient with severe ulcers who was facing the amputation of his foot. Conventional therapy had failed to improve his condition, but after a few weeks of applying honey and a gauze bandage, the patient's wounds began to improve. Four years after treatment, the wounds are completely healed, and the patient remains ulcer-free. Since then, Dr. Eddy has used honey to treat several other patients in situations where traditional medical therapy had failed.

Experts like Dr. Eddy believe that treating wounds with honey has tremendous potential for the approximately 200 million people in this world with diabetes, 15 percent

of whom will develop an ulcer, usually because of impaired sensation in their feet. Currently, every 30 seconds someone somewhere in the world undergoes amputation for a diabetic foot ulcer. In 2001, treating diabetic ulcers and amputations in U.S. patients cost \$10.9 billion.

"This treatment could represent a huge healthcare savings potential," explains Dr. Eddy. "You could be talking the difference between hundreds of thousands of dollars in conventional care versus \$1,000 in honey therapy."

Patients interested in learning more about Dr. Eddy's study can visit [uwhealth.org](http://uwhealth.org), or contact the study coordinator at **(715) 855-5683**.

## Just call him "hero"

As a Madison firefighter for the last 19 years, Lieutenant Tim Binger has saved the lives of countless strangers. But he never thought of himself as a hero until his son Kellen called him just that.

Suffering from the effects of cystinosis, a genetic disease that can lead to renal failure, Kellen was just seven years old when he learned he needed a kidney transplant. His father, Tim, was the best match.

"Children will typically be transplanted with an organ from a living donor, and relatives are the most common living kidney donors," says Dr. Hans Sollinger, UW Health transplant surgeon and chair of the UW Health Transplant Program. About 40 percent of the kidney transplants done at UW Hospital are from living donors.

Last year, Tim joined the more than five thousand people in the United States who became a living organ donor during the first nine months of 2006.

"Kellen needed a kidney, and I had two," said Tim. "I knew I could give him the opportunity to be healthy and active. I thought to myself 'of course I'm giving him my kidney.'"

### The Long Wait

At almost 50 percent, Wisconsin has one of the highest rates of deceased organ donors, but there are still almost

1,500 people in Wisconsin waiting for a life-saving organ transplant. More than 1,000 are waiting for a kidney.

Patients on the kidney waiting list at UW Hospital and Clinics, the nation's most active renal transplant program in 2005, wait an average of 15.4 months, compared to a national average wait time of 38 months. UW Hospital transplanted 112 kidneys from living donors in 2005, including nine from anonymous donors. Living donors greatly reduce the wait for people who need a kidney transplant.

While recipients are responsible for finding their own donor, educational materials are available to help patients understand the statistics related to living donation, and help them prepare to ask someone to be their donor.

"Living donation is a social decision," adds Dinny, Kellen's mother. "When you improve someone's health, you improve everyone's health. As parents, the decision is easier, but I hope more people consider living donation."

### Living Donation: Learn More

To learn more about living organ donation, contact the UW Health Transplant Center at **(608) 263-1384**. Transplant coordinators share information about what it is like to be a living donor, and can answer questions



*Every little boy thinks their dad is a hero, but Kellen's dad really is, both on and off the job.*

about the surgery, recovery process, blood work, evaluations and risk factors and share information about potential tax and wage waivers.

To view a video about living kidney donation or to learn more about living donation, go to: [uwhealth.org/livingdonor](http://uwhealth.org/livingdonor). More information can be found at: [livingdonorsonline.org](http://livingdonorsonline.org).

Cerebral palsy affects more than 500,000 children in America under the age of 18. Of that number, approximately 60 percent have muscle spasticity and 15 percent have some other type of movement disorder.

Unfortunately, the one thing many of them don't have is a medical specialist—or even better, a group of medical specialists—with the means and skill to improve their condition.

“Few physicians are really committed to children with movement disorders,” says Dr. Leland Albright, a UW Health pediatric neurosurgeon. “Unfortunately, kids with this type of disability are not very highly valued in our society. They have trouble speaking, and in some cases they don't speak at all. And yet the differences in the quality of life you can make with these kids are substantial.”

*“The differences in the quality of life you can make are substantial.”*

That was certainly the case for Maggie Barton, a 7-year-old from Delavan, Wis., born prematurely with cerebral palsy, a condition that left her muscles almost constantly tight. In her early years, Maggie also battled seizures and cortical vision impairment.

When Maggie's first growth spurt combined with her tense muscles to begin dislocating her hip joint, doctors recommended orthopedic surgery to lengthen Maggie's hamstrings and relieve her pain. But Maggie's parents, Beth and Jim, were skeptical that surgery alone would work as a long-term solution for their daughter. Later that week, they received a letter from UW Health announcing Dr. Albright's arrival in Madison.

Albright told the Bartons about a new medicine that relaxes muscles tightened by spasticity or dystonia, the two most common types of muscle tightness in children with cerebral palsy and head or spinal injuries. Known as intrathecal baclofen, the drug replaces a chemical that's missing or interrupted in patients with movement disorders.

The Bartons agreed to participate in a trial: A catheter was inserted into Maggie's spine, and an internal pump began distributing intrathecal baclofen into her nervous system. Within the first few days, Maggie's clenched muscles began to relax.

“We were overjoyed to see the difference in her arms,” Beth recalls. “She was able to feel her clothes and bed sheets for the first time.”

After some adjustments, Maggie had a permanent baclofen pump installed in October 2006. A month later, orthopedic surgeons at UW Health repaired her hip. Her parents are hopeful that when Maggie has completed her recovery, she'll resume using her pony walker to move around on her own—something she hasn't done for several years.

“Without that pump relaxing her muscles, I can't imagine how horrible this recovery would have been for her,” says Beth. “Her body is so quiet now.”

Baclofen pumps do carry complications—they're expensive, require refills 2-4 times per year, and occasionally result in infections. Despite these risks, Albright notes in Maggie Barton the important effects the drug can have on movement and quality of life.

“Patient after patient, you'll see things get better,” he says.

For more information on Dr. Albright and UW Health's pediatric neurosurgery program, visit [uwchildrenshospital.org](http://uwchildrenshospital.org) or call (608) 263-9651.

Dr. Albright handles a full range of pediatric neurosurgery cases, including hydrocephalus, brain tumors and epilepsy. But his primary focus is treating children with cerebral palsy and movement disorders. Since coming to UW Health, Dr. Albright has established a weekly multi-disciplinary Spasticity and Movement Disorders Clinic at the Waisman Center. He and his colleagues evaluate each child and recommend a spectrum of treatments that may include:

- Botox injections
- Intrathecal baclofen
- Orthopedic operations
- Physical or occupational therapy
- Neurosurgical procedures, including rhizotomy, peripheral nerve operations and deep brain stimulation



## moving in the right direction

**New pediatric  
neurosurgeon uses  
cutting-edge methods  
to help patients**



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## Let's Get Loud...

On Friday, April 27, the Wisconsin Singers will bring the sounds of some of America's favorite kids' TV stars to life during their newest show, Let's Get Loud, with proceeds to go to the American Family Children's Hospital.

Let's Get Loud will take audiences of all ages on a journey through pop music in the media over the past five decades. The Wisconsin Singers' Broadway-style review features song and dance from 40s-era radio, early TV's "American Bandstand" through contemporary iPod charts. The show will also feature a performance by the UW's premier a cappella men's ensemble, MadHatters.

This family friendly evening of song and dance begins at 7:30 p.m. at the Wisconsin Union Theater (800 Langdon St. in Madison). All seats are reserved. To order tickets, (\$10 for students/seniors, \$20 for adults), contact **(608) 262- 2201**. For more information, visit [www.wisconsinsingers.com](http://www.wisconsinsingers.com) or [www.uwmadhatters.com](http://www.uwmadhatters.com).

## Rise Up



## Make a Difference

**E**leven-year-old Zach Fairchild had been listening to the Z104 Cure Kids Cancer Radiothon in May 2006 when he suddenly had an idea.

"I was hearing these stories about children's cancer and thought I could help out," recalls Zach, now a sixth grader at Prairie View Middle School in Sun Prairie, Wisconsin. "As it turns out, I had just won a bike after being named Grand Rodeo champion in 5th grade. I didn't really need another bike, so I organized a contest that raised \$375 for the hospital and gave away the new bike as the grand prize."

Such enterprising creativity and generosity embodies the spirit of "Rise Up for Kids," a program that provides philanthropic opportunities for kids, tweens and teens interested in helping patients at UW Children's Hospital. Rise Up empowers individuals and schools in planning their fundraising efforts; groups of any size can come together and donate to various funds, including Cure Kids Cancer, Child Life, Patient and Family Services and the American Family Children's Hospital, set to open in August 2007.

"Be it sponsoring a Penny War (spare change collection) or Caps for a Cure (charging students \$1 to wear a hat to

school), the possibilities for involvement are truly endless," says Rise Up Coordinator Kylee Carolfi. "When the idea comes directly from an individual such as Zach, it inspires others to rise to philanthropic endeavors."

One of the patients who inspired Zach during the Radiothon was Kristina Schultz, 9, a leukemia survivor who underwent a bone marrow transplant in 2005.

"I am so proud of Zach," says Kristina's mom, Lori, who also happens to be the principal at Royal Oaks Elementary in Sun Prairie, the school Zach attended before moving on to middle school. "Kristina and I feel his efforts are truly awesome. It shows no matter how old you are, you can make a big difference."

Generously supported by funding from Kohl's Department Stores, Rise Up for Kids welcomes the chance to share more information about the program and UW Children's Hospital with any kid, tween, teen, parent, principal, teacher or other school district representative.

"We are happy to provide more information about Rise Up, and if possible, arrange an in-person visit to any classroom or school assembly," says Carolfi, who can be reached at **(608) 890-9308** or by e-mail at [kcarolfi@uwhealth.org](mailto:kcarolfi@uwhealth.org). More information is also available at [upforkids.org](http://upforkids.org).