

# life's point

Focus on Health Care

Colorado Plains Medical Center

Colorado Plains Medical Center remains committed to the community, where it has stood for nearly 60 years, and continues to provide the very best in medical care in Northeast Colorado.

*Photo by:*  
**Sandy Schneider-Engle**  
Historical photos from hospital archives.

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COLORADO PLAINS  
MEDICAL CENTER  
1000 LINCOLN



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**Mike Patterson,**  
CEO  
Colorado Plains  
Medical Center



*Dear Friends,*

At Colorado Plains Medical Center, it has always been our goal to make the services our community members need available in a convenient location. Our team members strive to achieve and maintain this goal while presenting a compassionate, friendly demeanor that will help our patients feel comfortable when they walk through our doors.

When we greeted the new year this past winter, we decided to enhance this inherently important part of our patient care efforts even further. Our patient satisfaction scores are currently in the 90th percentile, and we're continuing to implement changes that

will improve the patient experience. For example, our registration staff has made several changes, and their success shines and can be seen in greatly improved satisfaction scores.

In keeping with our efforts to enhance patient satisfaction and convenience, CPMC maintains an after-hours clinic. Both pediatric and adult patients may drop in at Colorado Plains Internal Medicine and Pediatrics from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

As promised in the last issue of *Life's Point*, you'll find more information about osteoporosis and CPMC's new dual-energy X-ray absorptiometry (DXA)

scanner below. We're excited to offer this screening option and feel it is an invaluable resource to community members who may be at risk for osteoporosis.

Like all of our team members, I am proud to be a part of this organization and represent our hospital. With the arrival of warmer weather, I encourage readers to get out, have fun, and be active—and remember: When you need us, we're here.

Mike Patterson  
Chief Executive Officer  
Colorado Plains Medical Center

# HEALTHY to the Bone

Roughly 10 million Americans are living with osteoporosis, and 34 million more may not realize they're at risk for the condition because of low bone density.

Osteoporosis causes bones to deteriorate and increases a sufferer's chance of fractures, especially in the hips, spine, and wrists. Even before fractures occur, signs such as shrinking height or slumping may indicate the condition's presence. While osteoporosis may be difficult to detect before fractures occur, undergoing proper screenings could identify the problem.

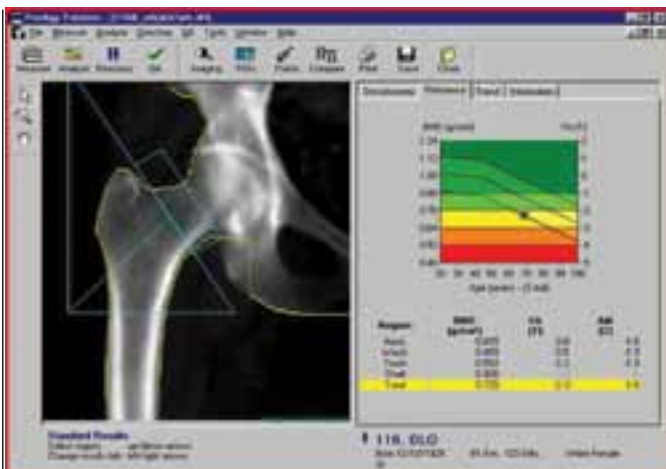
## HOW DO I KNOW?

The most effective bone density screening is a dual-energy X-ray absorptiometry (DXA) scan. DXA scans help physicians determine:

- a person's bone density
- chances of a fracture
- treatment that may help prevent fractures

DXA scans are recommended for women older than 65 and men older than 70. Those who are at increased risk—people who have a family history of osteoporosis, those who have suffered previous bone fractures, smokers, or people who have slender frames—should be screened sooner or as recommended by a physician.

To learn about bone density screenings at Colorado Plains Medical Center, call (970) 542-3341.



DXA bone density scan



caption T/F from client

## Think Small, Think Results

You recently found out surgery is necessary to correct a condition that's been bothering you for years. A minimally invasive approach could be right for you.

**Minimally invasive** surgery is becoming increasingly common for a variety of procedures, such as cardiac surgery.

"Minimally invasive operations are executed through a few tiny incisions versus one large opening," explains Thomas Manchester, MD, general surgeon on staff at Colorado Plains Medical Center. "Thin instruments and viewing equipment are inserted through quarter- to half-inch incisions—rather than eight-inch incisions—and into the body for surgical use."

The benefits of undergoing surgery using minimally invasive techniques as compared to traditional surgical methods include:

- less blood loss
- shorter hospital stay
- minimal scarring
- significantly reduced pain
- quicker recovery time

"Instead of requiring six to eight weeks of recovery time, many surgeries performed minimally invasively allow patients to return to their daily routines and activities soon after the procedures are complete," says Edward Lopez, MD, general surgeon on staff at CPMC. "With support from CPMC, we offer a wide range of these surgical services to residents of Northeast Colorado."

*For more information about medical services offered at CPMC, visit [www.ColoradoPlainsMedicalCenter.com](http://www.ColoradoPlainsMedicalCenter.com) or call (970) 867-3391.*

## An Easier Way to Save a Life

According to a recent rule change, saving someone's life may just take effective chest compressions.



Bentley Tate, MD

In fall 2010, the American Heart Association (AHA) changed its guidelines for cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) to make the lifesaving technique more widely accessible, especially to those who haven't been trained in it. The AHA now recommends that if an individual notices an adult exhibiting the signs of cardiac arrest—unconsciousness, unresponsiveness, and labored breathing—the bystander should call 911 immediately, send someone to search for an automatic external defibrillator, and begin administering firm, swift chest compressions.

"Good chest compressions maintain blood circulation remarkably well," says Bentley Tate, MD, Medical Director of the Emergency Room (ER) at Colorado Plains Medical Center. "The lungs don't collapse during cardiac arrest. They retain several minutes of reserve oxygen that can rejuvenate and resupply the body via chest compressions without having to be supplemented with mouth-to-mouth."

### TAKING ACTION

Don't let worrying about pushing too hard on the chest prevent you from administering chest compressions, says Dr. Tate. From the victim's perspective, sore or broken ribs are small prices to pay for survival.

"The importance of knowing CPR has only increased through the years," Dr. Tate says. "Fortunately, the ability to save a life is now more accessible to non-medical individuals than ever before."

*For information about the ER at CPMC, select "Services and Technology" at [www.ColoradoPlainsMedicalCenter.com](http://www.ColoradoPlainsMedicalCenter.com).*



# End the Aches

**Swelling. Stiffness. Pain.** If these complaints sound familiar, you could be experiencing a form of arthritis. However, this condition doesn't have to affect your busy life or keep you from the activities you enjoy.

**Arthritis is** a condition that causes joints in the body to become inflamed and ache. Typical sites for arthritis pain include the knees, shoulders, wrists, and back.

If you think arthritis could be affecting you, you're not alone. In fact, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, approximately two in every nine Americans have a form of arthritis. A type of rheumatic disease, arthritis can affect people of many ages and activity levels. Two of the most common forms of arthritis are:

- **Osteoarthritis**—Also called wear-and-tear arthritis, osteoarthritis is defined by the breakdown of cartilage surrounding the bones, which can lead to pain. This type of arthritis can develop due to aging, because of an injury, or from being overweight, which can place stress on the joints. Treatment may include injections of hyaluronic acid, a substance found naturally in the body that helps lubricate the joints.

- **Rheumatoid arthritis (RA)**—RA is an autoimmune disease that causes the body to attack tissues surrounding the joints (known as the synovium). This condition can affect multiple joints and may move on to affect other tissues and bones in the body. While there is no cure for RA, it can be treated. Treatment plans focus on helping people manage their symptoms and preventing flare-ups.



## Is Arthritis in Your Future?

*By 2030, experts estimate that 67 million Americans will have some form of arthritis, according to a recent Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. To reduce your risk of arthritis, maintain an active lifestyle and perform exercises that enhance joint strength and flexibility.*

### KNOW YOUR OPTIONS

If you are currently coping with a form of arthritis, you may feel overwhelmed or frustrated by the aches and pains you're experiencing. However, you can take steps to soothe your symptoms.



Ken Keller, MD

"If a patient is experiencing joint pain, we first take a nonsurgical approach to treatment," says Ken Keller, MD, orthopedic surgeon on staff at Colorado Plains Medical Center. "Conservative treatment may include educating the patient about stretching exercises, recommending physical therapy, or encouraging the use of hot and cold compresses. Sometimes, simply modifying a patient's lifestyle brings relief."

While joint pain may cause you to feel like staying in bed, remaining active can actually help relieve symptoms.

"Participating in a low-impact form of physical activity can help keep bones strong and enhance joint flexibility," says Stephen Godar, MD, internist on staff at CPMC. "Patients who do not respond well to the first-

line treatments may require pain management modalities such as nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, steroid and hyaluronic acid injections, or surgery."

### HOPE IS HERE

Pain shouldn't be part of your daily life. If you've tried multiple treatment options but still experience regular, debilitating pain, joint replacement surgery may help.

"Patients should consider surgical options when nonsurgical approaches to treatment no longer provide relief from pain," Dr. Keller says. "Additionally, if patients can no longer perform activities of daily living, such as walking, getting up and out of chairs, or bending, it's time to consult with an orthopedic surgeon."

CPMC currently offers a total joint replacement program to educate patients about their options and prepare them for surgery. Once a patient is referred and scheduled for a total joint replacement operation, he or she meets with a CPMC Orthopedic Clinical Coordinator to:

- learn about the surgery
- find out what type of anesthesia will be used during surgery
- learn more about his or her hospital stay

Following reconstructive joint procedures, patients may also have the opportunity for more prolonged rehabilitation in the hospital if needed. CPMC's goal is to assure that patients are confident in their ability to independently care for themselves at home on discharge from the hospital.

"We want residents of Northeast Colorado dealing with joint pain to know treatment options for arthritis are available locally," Dr. Keller says. "The primary care physicians and orthopedic surgeons at CPMC work collaboratively to offer comprehensive, individualized care. Whether a patient needs conservative pain management or a leading-edge surgical procedure, we work together to ensure that patient achieves the most positive outcome following treatment."

*Ready to live a pain-free life? Call (970) 542-3335 to learn more about the total joint program at CPMC.*

## For Best Results, Use Advanced Technology

In the past, undergoing a joint replacement procedure often meant a long road to recovery. New products and advancing surgical techniques are getting patients back to their daily routines sooner.

Use of materials such as stainless steel and polyethylene offers optimal results for active patients. Additionally, minimally invasive techniques allow patients to heal faster than ever before. Many procedures can be completed through smaller incisions, easing the recovery process for patients. (More information about minimally invasive surgery can be found on page 3.)

"Because of advances in technology during the past few years, patients can now undergo a minimally invasive surgery with lasting results," says Ken Keller, MD, orthopedic surgeon on staff at Colorado Plains Medical Center. "Improved design and quality of materials allow joint replacements to last longer than they did in the past, reducing the need for surgical revisions, as well as the risk of complications."



# Would **YOU** Know the Difference?

**Chest pain** is a common symptom of heart attack and panic attack. Here's how to spot the differences.

A **panic attack** is an unexpected physical rush of anxiety and terror that can be overpowering and even debilitating for 20 to 30 minutes. Roughly 6 million Americans experience panic attacks each year. An attack can manifest as dizziness, heart palpitations, hyperventilation, nausea, or numbness. If some of these symptoms sound familiar, it may be because they are those associated with the signs of a heart attack.

In fact, many young adults younger than age 30 visit emergency rooms every year confusing chest pain caused by panic attacks as heart attacks. According to the American Heart Association, this group's risk of cardiovascular disease is far less than that of adults ages 65 and older, who are at the highest risk.

## SOLVING THE RIDDLE

Experiencing chest discomfort accompanied by situational stress or a sensation of "twisting" chest or shoulder pain most often signals a panic attack. However, if you believe there is any chance you could be suffering from a heart attack, seek emergency care.

Physicians and staff in the Emergency Room (ER) at Colorado Plains Medical Center are well equipped to determine the root cause of pain. Members of the care team in the ER promptly evaluate chest pain with electrocardiograms, which can immediately show a person is having a heart attack. Blood tests that check for heart damage by looking for elevations in cardiac enzymes may be used, and results are available in less than an hour. Other follow-up tests include stress tests that can warn of future heart attack risk.



Bentley Tate, MD

"Patients should always err on the side of caution and seek medical attention when the cause of their pain is unclear," says Bentley Tate, MD, Medical Director of the ER at CPMC. "I'd rather check someone out and give him or her good news than tell the patient he or she has already had a heart attack and damage has been done."

*If an emergency strikes, dial 911 to receive rapid care and transportation to CPMC.*

## In Case of a Panic Attack

**Panic attacks** can be frightening, even if a person experiences them frequently. If you find yourself beginning to have a panic attack, perform exercises that may help calm your nerves.

- **Focus on your breathing** by inhaling deeply through your nose and exhaling through your mouth.
- **Lie down** if your legs are shaking.
- **Meditate** on something that represents a safe space for you.
- **Relax** your muscles.
- **Remove yourself** from the stressful situation that could have triggered the attack.

# The First-Aid Essentials

When an accident occurs, having the proper components in your first-aid kit can help you find fast relief.

## ✦ Bandages and Antibiotic Ointment

You never know when a severe paper cut or blister could hinder your productivity. Bandages prevent germs and dirt from entering a cut, and antibiotic ointment helps the wound heal without infection.

## ✦ Antibacterial Gel or Wipes and Latex Gloves

Before treating a cut, use antibacterial gel or wipes on your hands and put on latex gloves.

## ✦ Gauze

Even minor injuries to certain areas of the body can cause excessive bleeding. Stock your first-aid kit with gauze in case a typical adhesive bandage is too small.

## ✦ Instant Ice Pack

A bump or sprain can happen anywhere—even in locations where ice isn't readily available. An instant ice pack can provide relief in just a matter of seconds.

## ✦ Ibuprofen

Ibuprofen is an effective over-the-counter painkiller that also reduces fever and muscle inflammation.

## ✦ Antihistamine

Bee stings, environmental factors, food allergies—almost anything can cause an allergic reaction. Stash an antihistamine medication in your first-aid kit in case you or a loved one displays symptoms of an allergic reaction, such as itchy eyes, runny nose, or hives.

*Call (970) 542-3346 for a free purse-sized first-aid kit (available for the first 50 callers) from Colorado Plains Medical Center.*



## Put Me in, Coach!

The playing field can be a dangerous place for young athletes. From sprains to broken bones and even concussions, injuries associated with sports are a real danger.

**Ask any parent**—an injured child is nothing short of heart wrenching.

Unfortunately, the court or field can be a troublesome place for young athletes. Particularly in contact sports, the chances of injury are high, and the effects of a sports injury can be quite serious.

“In recent years, childhood sports injuries have become more common,” says Beth Thompson, RNFA, Orthopedic Clinical Coordinator at Colorado Plains Medical Center. “Fortunately, many of these injuries are preventable and can be avoided entirely.”

### STRIKING BACK AGAINST INJURIES

To decrease childhood sports injuries and make sports safer for kids, CPMC introduced Coaches' Camp, a program designed to help athletic coaches understand common injuries and ways to avoid them. The program touches on many educational points, from performing adequate first aid to the importance of hydration and emergency planning.

“Injury prevention starts with education,” explains Sue Glazier, RN, CEN, Emergency Room nurse at CPMC. “Educating coaches has a trickle-down effect, and children can learn how to be safer from their on-field leaders.”

*To learn more about Coaches' Camp, visit [www.ColoradoPlainsMedicalCenter.com](http://www.ColoradoPlainsMedicalCenter.com) or call (970) 542-3335 to find out when the next Coaches' Camp program is scheduled.*

## Adding to Our Team

Colorado Plains Medical Center recently welcomed therapist and athletic trainer, Marla Tappy, to its staff. With more than XX years of professional experience working in the field of sports medicine, Tappy can help assess injuries and make recommendations for improved performance. Clinics are available at the Center for Rehab and Wellness on the CPMC campus. Call (XXX) XXX-XXXX for more information.



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# When You Need Us



**No one wants to imagine** the unthinkable.

If an emergency strikes, know your care will be in the best hands at Colorado Plains Medical Center's Level III Trauma Center and Emergency Room.

Emergency experts and physicians, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. CPMC.



[www.ColoradoPlainsMedicalCenter.com](http://www.ColoradoPlainsMedicalCenter.com)

This publication in no way seeks to serve as a substitute for professional medical care. Consult your physician before undertaking any form of medical treatment or adopting any exercise program or dietary guidelines. If you have any comments or questions regarding this publication, please contact the Colorado Plains Medical Center Marketing Director at (970) 542-3346.



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Too bad the CPMC emergency staff couldn't take care of this mishap to XXXX, owned by Charity Woodward. However, the hospital's 24-hour Level III Trauma Center can provide treatment to human companions.

*Photo by Sandy Schneider-Engle*

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