

Fall 2024

LiveWell

CEDAR RAPIDS



WELCOMING TRIPLETS

A New Family's NICU Journey

'LUCKY TO BE ALIVE'

36-Year-Old Man
Survives 'Widowmaker'
Heart Attack

MARION ER NOW OPEN

St. Luke's Marion Emergency
Room is Ready to See You

AMPUTATION AVOIDED

Emergency Vascular
Surgery Saves Man's Leg

ASK THE EXPERT

How Do I Know if Bariatric
Surgery is an Option for Me

unitypoint.org



UnityPoint Health
Cedar Rapids

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LiveWell

Fall 2024

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COMMITTED TO QUALITY, LOW-COST HEALTHCARE



Not all healthcare is the same. Community healthcare organizations like UnityPoint Health – Cedar Rapids play an important role in providing high-quality, low-cost healthcare.

DID YOU KNOW?

- The **majority of your healthcare needs** can be addressed right here at UnityPoint Health – Cedar Rapids. There is no need to travel outside of Cedar Rapids for primary or specialty care.
- As a new patient, you can schedule an appointment **within a week** of calling a UnityPoint Health – Cedar Rapids primary care's provider's office. In about **two weeks**, most specialty offices, like our Heart Care Clinic, can see you. If you are looking for a pediatrician, **same-day or same-week appointments** are available.
- **98%** of heart-related issues can be treated at St. Luke's Heart & Vascular Center.
- **60%** of patients seeking heart care in Cedar Rapids choose and prefer St. Luke's Heart & Vascular Center.
- St. Luke's is expanding its Heart & Vascular Center with a **\$25M expansion**, to be completed in 2025.
- St. Luke's and AbbeHealth together, are one of the **largest mental health providers in Iowa**.
- There are **50** UnityPoint Health primary care, specialty, Urgent and Express Care Clinics in Eastern Iowa.
- **90%** of our patients would recommend their providers, and more than 88% of patients recommend our clinics as a whole.
- St. Luke's ER is one of the **busiest in the state** and our ER/Heart Team beats the national average when it comes to opening blocked arteries during heart attacks.
- St. Luke's opened a **Marion ER** in August 2024.
- St. Luke's Cedar Rapids and Marion ERs are the **only accredited Chest Pain Centers** in Cedar Rapids.
- St. Luke's is home to Cedar Rapids' **only medical helicopter**.
- **4 out of 5 babies** born in Cedar Rapids are born at St. Luke's.
- St. Luke's is home to the **area's only Level III Maternal and Neonatal Center** as determined by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP).
- St. Luke's Physical Medicine and Rehab department is one of the **top Rehab Centers in Iowa**.
- UnityPoint Health – St. Luke's has earned **Top 100 Hospital status 9X** by PINC AI™.
- St. Luke's has been named a **Top 50 Heart Hospital** by PINC AI™ 6X.
- St. Luke's is the **only CR Hospital designated as a Magnet Nursing Excellence Hospital**, which we have achieved 4X.

UNDERSTANDING THE DATA

It's important to know what credible data, tools and awards are available to help navigate the complicated world of healthcare so you can make the choice that's right for you and your family.

Here's what you need to know on what's considered the gold standard, credible ratings: [medicare.gov/care-compare](https://www.medicare.gov/care-compare)

Top 100 Hospital Ranking by PINC AI™: [pinc-ai.com/100-top-hospitals](https://www.pinc-ai.com/100-top-hospitals)

ST. LUKE'S HOSPITAL, HEART PROGRAM RECEIVE NATIONAL RECOGNITION

Becker's Hospital Review recently named UnityPoint Health - St. Luke's Hospital to its lists of "100 Great Community Hospitals" and "100 Hospitals and Health Systems with Great Heart Programs" for 2024. St. Luke's is one of only two hospitals in Iowa on Becker's 100 Great Community Hospitals list, which recognizes clinical and academic excellence, personalized care and advancements in cardiovascular services.

St. Luke's represented Iowa again, as the only hospital in the state listed among the 100 Hospitals and Health Systems with Great Heart Programs. According to Becker's, the recognition "showcases healthcare institutions celebrated for their outstanding cardiovascular care, superior patient outcomes and advanced technologies.

"These heart programs are also at the forefront of cardiology research, making impactful discoveries in the field. [They] frequently earn top rankings from U.S. News & World Report, Healthgrades and other prestigious entities. Committed to excellence and growth, [these organizations] provide top-tier care for thousands of patients every year and continually expand their heart care capabilities."

Learn more about St. Luke's other national awards and recognitions at uph.link/CRAwards.



JOIN THE TEAM AT UNITYPOINT HEALTH

UnityPoint Health - Cedar Rapids invites you to become part of a dedicated team that impacts lives every day.

There are countless opportunities to work at UnityPoint Health, whether in the hospital, clinic, through telehealth or in a patient's home.

UnityPoint Health also knows flexibility matters, which is why there are a variety of work schedules, including part-time, evening and weekend openings.

Join UnityPoint Health and its mission to give the healthcare we'd like our loved ones to receive.

Scan the QR code to learn more:



St. Luke's Heart & Vascular Expansion Phase 2: Vascular & Interventional Radiology NEARING COMPLETION



PHASE 1:
ELECTROPHYSIOLOGY
✓ COMPLETED 2023



PHASE 2:
VASCULAR & IR
COMING DECEMBER 2024



PHASE 3:
STRUCTURAL HEART
LATE 2025

Phase 2 of St. Luke's \$25 million Heart & Vascular Expansion is slated for completion around the end of the year. It features a third Vascular and Interventional Radiology Lab and patient prep and recovery space. The project is taking place inside the current Nassif Heart & Vascular Center. The additional lab will help meet the growing need for St. Luke's specialized services, such as imaging, biopsies, aneurysm repair and restoring blood flow to blocked vessels.

Phase 1 added a second electrophysiology lab for pacemakers, implantable defibrillators and ablation procedures to correct Afib (irregular heartbeat). In 2025, the third and final phase will focus on structural heart and add a large hybrid operating room (OR). St. Luke's structural heart team specializes in defects and disorders of the heart's structure, as well as catheter-based valve repair and replacement.

Learn more about St. Luke's Heart & Vascular services and follow our progress at uph.link/CR-Heart.

36-YEAR-OLD MAN SURVIVES 'WIDOWMAKER' & 'TOMBSTONING' HEART ATTACK



Heart attack survivor Daniel Shaw, 36, kayaks at Pleasant Creek Lake in Palo with his children, Savannah and Cameron.

Daniel Shaw of Cedar Rapids travels regularly for work. It was following a recent trip when he suffered a severe heart attack at home. He credits his wife and St. Luke's Hospital heart care and emergency teams for their quick actions in saving his life.

"I was returning from seeing a customer in Sioux City, and I felt a little tired, which is unlike me," Daniel recalls. "I decided I'd take a short nap, then get on the road early in the morning. I drank two extra-large energy drinks to stay awake and got back to my house around two in

the morning. Even though I had those in my system, I was still able to fall asleep when I got home."

The following day, Daniel said his fatigue continued, but he had a virtual meeting at noon. He tried coffee but eventually decided to take another nap mid-morning. His wife, Chelsea, woke him, and he went to his office to join the meeting, but he doesn't remember many details after that.

"I was in the living room and heard a 'bang' in his office," Chelsea describes.

"I went into his office and saw him grabbing his heart. I thought maybe it was acid reflux since he suffers from that, but it went on longer than usual. He started gasping for air, and I ran and called 911."

When she returned, Daniel had collapsed, and Chelsea began CPR. The ambulance arrived soon after, stabilized him and rushed him to St. Luke's Emergency Department.

"Daniel is lucky to be alive," says Subhi Halawa, MD, St. Luke's interventional cardiologist. "He was in full cardiac arrest, which means his heart stopped. The EKG showed signs of a large, front-wall heart attack, often referred to as a 'tombstoning' EKG pattern (because it resembles a gravestone). I knew it was going to be challenging to save his life and open the acutely blocked widowmaker vessel."

Nearly Full Recovery, Just Six Weeks After Complex Procedure

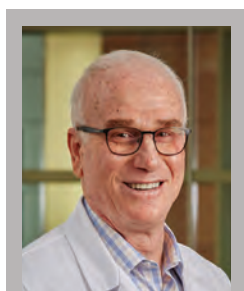
In the cath lab, Dr. Halawa discovered a complete blockage in the main artery of Daniel's heart. This type of heart attack is referred to as the "widowmaker" because it's often the cause of death for those who suffer cardiac arrest outside a hospital.

During Dr. Halawa's first attempt to balloon (expand) the vessel, Daniel went into cardiogenic shock. That occurs when the heart cannot pump enough blood and oxygen to the brain and other organs.

Dr. Halawa used multiple techniques to clear the blockages, placed a stent and quickly restored blood flow to avoid permanent damage. He also implanted a balloon pump to assist the function of Daniel's heart. In addition, Daniel required a life vest, an external device that shocks the heart into rhythm if it detects the need.

"Typically, with a large myocardial infarction (heart attack) like this, there is significant heart damage and a lot of complications,"

Dr. Halawa explains. "I saw him for a couple of follow-up appointments, and at six weeks, to my surprise, his heart function was almost completely recovered."



Subhi Halawa, MD,
Interventional
Cardiologist, St. Luke's
Heart Care Clinic

Like Father, Like Son: Two Heart Attacks Under 40

Dr. Halawa noted Daniel had no other health issues. He says the energy drinks could have contributed; however, he believes family history is the primary factor in Daniel's heart attack.

"My dad's first heart attack happened two months after his 36th birthday," shares Daniel. "And now, because of my heart attack, both of my older brothers are getting checked out."

Chelsea says she and Daniel specifically chose St. Luke's for care. "St. Luke's has always done right by me," she asserts. "I have more confidence in St. Luke's than any other hospital in Cedar Rapids."

HOW YOUR HEART GENES CAN FLAG FUTURE PROBLEMS

About five years ago, UnityPoint Health Genetics and Risk Assessment Clinic, located within the Nassif Community Cancer Center, began offering cardiac genetic testing, in addition to providing genetic tests for cancer.

While genetic testing cannot predict if someone will develop a heart condition, it does identify genetic mutations, or variants, present from birth. That means a person has a predisposition to a heart condition or disease.

"If we find a gene mutation, we talk to the patient about other family members who could benefit from genetic testing," explains Melissa Janssen, ARNP, genetic counselor at the Genetics and Risk Assessment Clinic. "If there's no variance in the cardiac genes tested, the patient could still develop a cardiac condition someday. It just wouldn't be due to heredity."

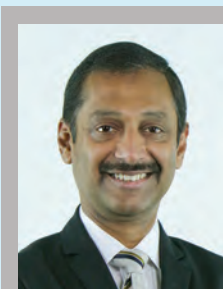
St. Luke's Cardiologist Boothapuri Venkatesh, MD, says cardiac genetic testing has several benefits.

"It can confirm or rule out suspected diagnoses; help determine causes of unexplained fainting, seizures, heart failure before the age of 60 and other heart issues; and recognize medication intolerance," Dr. Venkatesh notes. "If there's a genetic component, it can help us develop or modify a treatment plan for patients with a diagnosed heart condition. It also allows us to follow-up with and screen at-risk family members so we can identify problems early."

Individuals interested in cardiac genetic testing should talk to their primary care provider or cardiologist for a referral to UnityPoint Health Genetics and Risk Assessment Clinic.



Melissa Janssen, ARNP,
Genetic Counselor,
UnityPoint Health
Genetics and Risk
Assessment Clinic



Boothapuri Venkatesh, MD,
Cardiologist,
St. Luke's Heart Care
Clinic

UnityPoint Health - St. Luke's Hospital began Cedar Rapids' first open heart program in 1978 and leads the way with the most advanced treatment options, so there's no need to travel outside the area for heart care. In addition, St. Luke's ERs in Cedar Rapids and Marion are the only Chest Pain Centers accredited by the American College of Cardiology. That means patients receive crucial care sooner with fewer complications and higher survival rates.

Experience matters. Compare heart care in Cedar Rapids at unitypoint.org/cr-heart.

(L-R) Reign, Laylen and Sawyer, triplets of Mackenzie Walker and Matthew Kniffen, required specialty care from St. Luke's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. They arrived about nine weeks early, weighing around three pounds each.



WELCOMING TRIPLETS: A NEW FAMILY'S NICU JOURNEY

When Mackenzie Walker and Matthew Kniffen of Center Point discovered they were expecting triplets, they were shocked but overjoyed to become a family of five. Despite the high-risk nature of Walker's pregnancy, her prenatal appointments went smoothly, showing no signs of complications. However, at her 30-week appointment, concerns about preeclampsia emerged.

Preeclampsia is a pregnancy complication characterized by high blood pressure, swelling of the hands and feet, and the presence of protein in the urine. Risks can include damage to organs, most often the liver and kidneys. Patients with the condition are closely monitored, often asked to record daily blood pressures at home.

When Walker returned for her 31-week appointment, an ultrasound revealed serious concerns with one baby's umbilical cord. Walker's rising blood pressure also confirmed the diagnosis of HELLP syndrome, a severe form of preeclampsia characterized by hemolysis (destruction of red blood cells), elevated liver enzymes and low platelet count, posing significant risks to both Walker and all three babies.

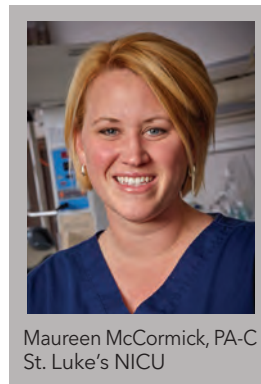
Preparations for Early Delivery Underway

Walker and Kniffen quickly made their way to St. Luke's Center for Women's and Children's Health for an urgent cesarean section. Within four minutes, the couple became parents to Sawyer James, weighing 3 pounds 9.9 ounces; Reign Jensen, weighing 2 pounds 12.4 ounces; and Laylen Blake, weighing 2 pounds 6.8 ounces.

All three babies required oxygen support and specialized care from St. Luke's neonatal intensive care unit (NICU). Laylen and Reign faced challenges from growth restriction during the pregnancy, and Reign also required a higher level of respiratory support. St. Luke's NICU is the only Level III Maternal and Neonatal Center in the Cedar Rapids area, as determined by the American Academy of Pediatrics. With neonatologists available 24/7 to care for babies born as early as 23 weeks gestation, the NICU at St. Luke's was equipped to provide the individualized care Sawyer, Reign and Laylen needed.

Initially uncertain about their role as caregivers in the NICU, the new parents soon found comfort in the supportive environment fostered by the nurses at St. Luke's. "It was overwhelming, and the babies seemed so fragile," Walker recalls. "The nurses and doctors involved us in the care of our babies as much as possible."

Maureen McCormick, PA-C, emphasizes the importance of parental involvement. "Providing care to a baby in the NICU can be intimidating for parents," she explains. "Our bedside nurses, therapists and patient care techs work hard to help parents get involved and feel comfortable and safe caring for their child. A NICU stay is an emotional journey, and we do our best to provide comfort and support along the way."



Maureen McCormick, PA-C
St. Luke's NICU

McCormick adds, "We encourage skin-to-skin holding of all our babies once it is safe. We provide developmentally appropriate ways for parents to read or sing to their children, to touch and comfort their babies and to provide routine cares such as diaper changes and offering drops of milk."

New Parents Embrace Their Role, Reflect on NICU Experience

Walker and Kniffen learned essential caregiving skills as their babies grew stronger each day, such as taking each baby's temperature and participating in feedings. The nurses consistently updated the family on the babies' progress and routines, helping the new parents establish a schedule they could follow as each baby returned home.

The Center for Women's and Children's Health is home to the Ronald McDonald Family Room at St. Luke's. The space, located near the NICU, provides a home-like environment for families and visitors, and offers private sleeping rooms, shower suites, laundry facilities, a fully equipped kitchen, and living area. The room provided a place for Walker and Kniffen to relax and grab a snack or homecooked meal during long days at the hospital.

Choosing St. Luke's was more than just a matter of convenience - it was a decision based on trusted recommendations. "Our loved ones had great experiences here," Walker shares. "We knew St. Luke's had the most advanced NICU in the area, and our babies would get the best care possible."

Reflecting on their journey, Walker's gratitude for St. Luke's is clear. "They turned a terrifying experience into something positive."

McCormick notes, "I think the most important realization that comes from a NICU stay is how strong and resilient both the NICU warriors and their parents are."

Thanks to the exceptional care at St. Luke's, the family was able to all return home in the spring with healthy babies and hearts full of gratitude.

To learn more about Cedar Rapids' only Level III NICU at St. Luke's Hospital, visit bit.ly/StLukesNICU. To take a Birth Care tour, call (319) 369-8129.

ST. LUKE'S MARION EMERGENCY ROOM IS » Ready to See You Now

St. Luke's Hospital has expanded its emergency care capabilities with the opening of a new ER in Marion. Conveniently located at 3301 Armar Dr., just off Marion Blvd., near Highway 100, St. Luke's Marion ER offers a vital resource for timely, lifesaving care to residents of Marion, northeast Cedar Rapids and neighboring communities.

St. Luke's Marion ER is a 10,000-square-foot, full-service emergency room in a remodeled building, with services like those offered at St. Luke's Cedar Rapids ER. St. Luke's Marion ER is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days per year. It is staffed by board-certified emergency medicine providers from East Central Iowa Acute Care, who also serve St. Luke's Cedar Rapids ER, along with a dedicated team of nurses, patient care technicians and other healthcare professionals.

Like any hospital emergency department, St. Luke's Marion ER treats patients with illnesses and injuries that require a higher level of care than urgent care offers.

"We're thrilled to announce the opening of our facility and the extension of our services to the Marion community," says Sarah Hoper, MD, UnityPoint Health - St. Luke's Marion

ER medical director. "We know Marion residents will appreciate having high-quality care close to home and shorter travel time to emergency care."

There are separate entrances for patients who drive to the ER and those who arrive by ambulance. Patients arriving by car benefit from ample parking and a short walk to the entrance. Those arriving by ambulance will be transported inside by EMS crews through a dedicated covered entrance.

Visitors entering the Marion ER are greeted by a warm and welcoming front desk and lobby area, that features local scene photographs by a Marion artist, creating a comforting atmosphere.

"Each of the Marion ER's 12 private rooms are large enough to accommodate family members or caregivers," explains Sandi McIntosh, UnityPoint Health - St. Luke's Hospital Emergency Department administrative director. "A nurses' station is strategically positioned to enhance workflow efficiency, allowing healthcare professionals quick access to patients and necessary resources."

St. Luke's Marion ER is conveniently located at 3301 Armar Dr., just off Marion Blvd., near Highway 100.



LIFESAVING EQUIPMENT

The ER includes critical care rooms equipped with advanced lifesaving equipment. St. Luke's Marion ER also features an on-site laboratory, providing rapid and accurate test results, which is crucial for timely diagnoses and treatment. Additionally, the facility boasts advanced imaging capabilities, including CT, X-ray and ultrasound, operated by highly skilled technicians.



Marion ER Medical Director Sarah Hoper, MD, and team members are in a critical care room, which is equipped with advanced monitoring and lifesaving equipment.



The Marion ER has advanced imaging like this CT scanner, as well as ultrasound and X-ray capabilities.

Providing exceptional emergency care is a point of pride for St. Luke's Hospital ER team. St. Luke's Cedar Rapids ER is one of the busiest in the state, serving over 50,000 patients annually. The addition of St. Luke's Marion ER marks a significant expansion of the hospital's capabilities, allowing it to serve the community more comprehensively, with two state-of-the-art facilities, in Cedar Rapids and now, in Marion.



The nurses' station is centrally located, allowing for easier access to patients.

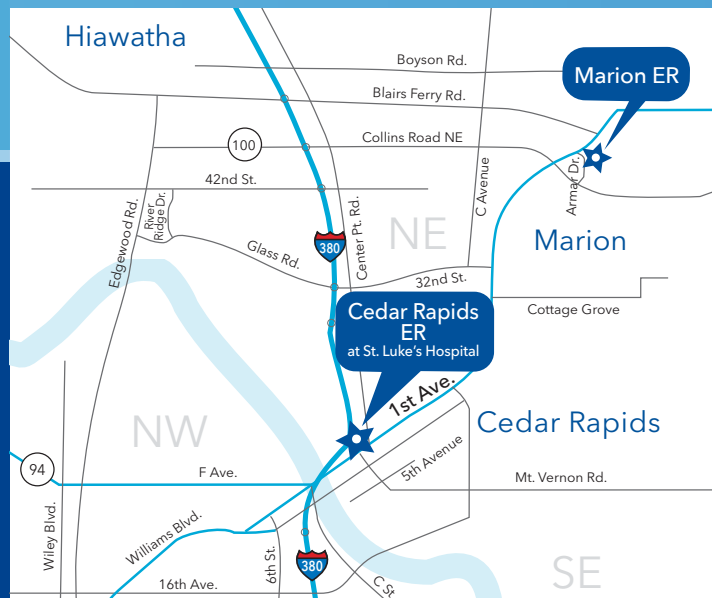
ST. LUKE'S EMERGENCY SERVICES – Two Locations

CEDAR RAPIDS ER

1026 A Ave., NE
(319) 369-7105

MARION ER

3301 Armar Dr.
(319) 451-2700





Steven Thompson, 72, recently underwent emergency vascular surgery to save his right leg due to an aneurysm behind his knee.

It started with tingling in his foot. In the middle of a dermatology appointment, 72-year-old Steven Thompson of Van Horne asked to get up and walk around, thinking his foot was ‘falling asleep.’ After standing for a few minutes, the numbness progressed to his lower leg.

“My foot felt like it was dead,” Thompson recalls. “Then my leg and foot started getting cold, and the clinic called an ambulance.”

Thompson was rushed to St. Luke’s Emergency Room. He met with Jared

Kray, DO, FACS, Physicians’ Clinic of Iowa vascular surgeon with St. Luke’s Vascular Surgery. Dr. Kray ordered an urgent CAT scan and diagnosed Thompson with a popliteal aneurysm, a bulged artery behind his right knee.

“A popliteal aneurysm is not like an aortic aneurysm, where it ruptures,” explains Dr. Kray. “The complications we worry about are blood clots traveling to other parts of the leg or occlusion (near or total blockage) of the artery.”

Unfortunately, Thompson had both, and Dr. Kray had to act quickly to avoid another concern - amputation.

Expanding to Meet Growing Need for Specialized Vascular Treatments

“Normally, with an occlusion, we would find an open artery below the aneurysm and perform a bypass, but Mr. Thompson’s scans showed clots in three vessels below the knee,” Dr. Kray continues. “Our only option to salvage his leg was thrombolysis, which is a minimally invasive, catheter-based

PATIENT GRATEFUL FOR LEG SAVED AFTER ANEURYSM

procedure to bust up clots. Once we restored blood flow, we fixed the aneurysm with an endovascular stent graft to reinforce the weakened artery. The following day, he also required a fasciotomy, a surgical procedure where we make an incision on both sides of the leg to relieve pressure from swelling as blood returns to the muscles.”

Dr. Kray performed thrombolysis in one of St. Luke’s Vascular Labs. St. Luke’s will soon have a third Vascular and Interventional Radiology Lab, as part of its \$25 million Heart & Vascular Expansion project (see pg. 1 for more details). This will provide greater patient access for procedures like Thompson’s, to repair aneurysms and restore blood flow, as well as perform imaging and biopsies.



Jared Kray, DO,
Physicians’ Clinic of
Iowa Vascular Surgeon,
St. Luke’s Vascular
Surgery

Full Range of Services in and out of the Hospital

During Thompson’s hospital stay, he participated in occupational and physical therapy through St. Luke’s Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (PM&R). UnityPoint at Home provided initial care for his incisions once he was discharged, followed by St. Luke’s Wound Center to ensure they were healing properly. He also

received outpatient visits from Therapy Plus to resume physical and occupational therapy.

“The therapists in the hospital were very good,” Thompson recalls. “They had to work around two pumps on my leg, but we managed to get some therapy done. I’m really happy I’m able to move my

foot. At home, I started out with a wheelchair for a couple of weeks, then I used a walker and a cane, but now I’m getting around without them.”

Dr. Kray says there is no indication why Thompson developed a popliteal aneurysm.

Most people with the condition tend to be long-time smokers, but Thompson doesn’t smoke. He also leads an active lifestyle, farming with his brother, kayaking and biking.

How to Recognize Symptoms, When to Call 911

While there’s no recommended screening for popliteal aneurysms, Dr. Kray encourages all individuals to see their primary care provider regularly and call 911 immediately to go to one of St. Luke’s Emergency Rooms if they notice any of the following in their legs or feet:

- Unusual tingling
- Loss of feeling
- Coldness
- Pale color

Thompson is grateful for the care he received. He especially mentioned the incredible PM&R team and is particularly thankful for Dr. Kray and the vascular team’s quick work to save his leg.

“If I would have lost my leg above the knee, that would have been tough on me,” he acknowledged. “I’m very fortunate. Everyone at St. Luke’s took good care of me, and I had a lot of people praying for me.”



Vascular surgery patient Steven Thompson continues to farm with his brother, and enjoys kayaking and biking.

To learn more about vascular services offered at St. Luke’s visit [uph.link/StLukesCRVascular](https://www.stluke.org/vascular).



Solon resident Mike Ellis sought heart care at St. Luke's when he didn't find answers at another hospital.

MAN RESTS EASY AFTER AFIB REINED-IN

Mike Ellis hadn't slept well in months. The 66-year-old, Solon, Iowa, man was up several times a night. His heart was racing and wouldn't slow down. "I didn't feel sick," Ellis insists. "I never had chest pain, headaches or any other symptoms, I just knew my heart rate was super high."

Normal heart rate when in a relaxed state is 60-100 beats per minute. However, Ellis said his pulse hovered around 135 beats per minute, even when he was resting. Knowing his heart rate was abnormal, Ellis sought medical attention multiple times at

a hospital closer to his home. After the problem persisted, he decided to go to St. Luke's.

St. Luke's Heart Care Clinic offered him a same-day appointment with Talha Farid, MD, electrophysiologist. Dr. Farid was concerned about Ellis' uncontrolled heart rate and wanted him to be more comfortable. He recommended a cardioversion, which he performed the same afternoon.



Talha Farid, MD,
Electrophysiologist,
St. Luke's Heart Care
Clinic

"Cardioversion is a treatment where we shock the heart, to bring it back into rhythm," Dr. Farid describes. "Along with the cardioversion, we give a strong heart rhythm medication. Cardioversion is more of a temporary solution, but with medication, some people do well and don't need additional treatment."

"A lot of people prefer to have an ablation," he continues. "That is where we insert catheters into the blood vessels, go to the heart and use heat or cold energy to treat the areas causing Afib (irregular heart rhythm). We have a detailed conversation with patients about risks and benefits of each approach and see what they prefer. Mr. Ellis didn't like the idea of being on medication long-term, so we scheduled an ablation."

New EP Lab Added to Meet Growing Need

Within a week, Ellis received his ablation at St. Luke's. He considered having it at his previous hospital, but they couldn't schedule him for a couple of months. St. Luke's recently added a second electrophysiology (EP) lab, as part of its \$25 million heart and vascular expansion project. The new EP lab is a necessity, as a growing number of patients like Ellis require treatment for heart rhythm problems.

Ellis returned home the day of his procedure. He said he had immediate relief. His heart rate is now consistently in the upper 50s and 60s, and he was eventually able to stop taking heart rhythm medications.

"There are two major concerns with untreated Afib," Dr. Farid cautions. "One is the risk of a serious, life-changing stroke. Second, if the rapid heart rate remains uncontrolled for too long, it affects the heart in the long run. It creates scar tissue, decreases pumping function and weakens the muscle."

For any signs of Afib, Dr. Farid advises seeking medical attention. Symptoms may include heart palpitations/pounding, feeling of anxiety, chest pain, lightheadedness and extremely high blood pressure. The latter two are the most severe and should be seen in the ER.

If you have any sign of Afib, contact your primary care provider. For serious symptoms such as chest pain or lightheadedness with heart palpitations, call 911 to go to one of St. Luke's ERs. To connect with a cardiologist, call St. Luke's Heart Care Clinic at (319) 364-7101.

HOW ABBEHEALTH'S CRISIS SERVICES, SAME-DAY ACCESS MEET COMMUNITY NEEDS



The future home of AbbeHealth Services is at 615 5th St. SE, Cedar Rapids.



UnityPoint Health - AbbeHealth Services is celebrating 75 years of serving Eastern Iowans and improving their mental health and well-being. Serving Linn, Johnson, Benton, Jones, Delaware, Buchanan, Iowa and Cedar counties, AbbeHealth has prioritized rapid support through its crisis services and same-day outpatient assessments.

Community Mental Health Partnerships

For individuals facing a mental health or substance use crisis, AbbeHealth team members partner with both the Linn County Mental Health Access Center, (501 13th St. NW, Cedar Rapids), and the Guidelink Center, (300 Southgate Ave., Iowa City). The goal of an access center is to provide immediate support while reducing unnecessary hospitalizations and arrests, to foster a healthier community. Walk-in services are available 24/7 to anyone 18 years or older. The centers also provide sobering units, peer support or referrals to community resources. A typical stay may vary from a few hours to several days.

Outpatient Therapy

AbbeHealth is proud to also offer same-day access to outpatient assessment services. Whether someone is facing anxiety, depression, stress or other mental health challenges, our

licensed therapists provide personalized treatment plans to guide patients on a path to healing. Outpatient therapy, along with psychiatry services and medication management, is available at all Abbe Center for Community Mental Health Clinic locations.

New Location and Improved Access

In the spring of 2025, AbbeHealth will relocate its Cedar Rapids Abbe Center for Community Mental Health location to the former Stamats building at 615 Fifth Street SE. This new downtown location offers 31,000 square feet of space, ideal for the launch of Abbe Center's new integrated care model known as the Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC).

The CCBHC model is designed to improve access to community-based behavioral health and substance use disorder treatment and support.

With a dedicated team of over 450, AbbeHealth serves thousands of children and adults annually, making a significant impact on the overall well-being of the community. Help is available for individuals who need support. For emergency mental health services, call (319) 398-3562 or visit abbehealth.org.

SUPPORT MENTAL HEALTH IN EASTERN IOWA

In Iowa, one in five individuals struggles with a mental health condition, and an alarming 20% of eighth graders experience suicidal thoughts.

AbbeHealth Services plays a vital role in providing care and support to Eastern Iowans facing mental health challenges.

Please consider a gift to St. Luke's Foundation to support the crucial work of AbbeHealth Services.

HOW YOU CAN HELP:

Call (319) 369-7716

Scan the QR code or [visit uph.link/AbbeHealth_Oct2024](http://visit.uph.link/AbbeHealth_Oct2024) to donate online.



HOW DO I KNOW IF BARIATRIC SURGERY IS AN OPTION FOR ME?

If you are considering bariatric surgery, you're likely wondering if it's the right option for you. Rebecca Milburn, MD, a surgeon from Physicians' Clinic of Iowa, who leads the joint Bariatric Surgery Program offered by St. Luke's Hospital and Physicians' Clinic of Iowa, provides insights into this life-changing procedure.

Understanding Bariatric Surgery

"Bariatric surgery is not just about losing weight; it's about changing a person's metabolism," explains Dr. Milburn. "By removing part of the stomach or rerouting the intestine, we address the underlying disease process, which helps in weight loss and improves metabolic health."

Who Qualifies for Bariatric Surgery?

The path to bariatric surgery is extensive and thorough. A patient's healthcare provider can make a referral to Dr. Milburn and the Bariatric Surgery Program after discussing it with the patient.

"Bariatric surgery is appropriate for patients who have weight and body fat concerns and a body mass index (BMI) over 40 or a BMI over 35 with health conditions like type 2 diabetes, some heart conditions, COPD or sleep apnea," notes Dr. Milburn. "We conduct an in-depth consultation to discuss options, complete a thorough health history and all needed evaluations and education."

Preparation and Support

Once it's determined to pursue bariatric surgery, the patient goes through further steps, which include lab checks, referrals to specialists for sleep apnea, cardiology, pulmonology and psychological evaluations.

"We also refer patients to dietitians to help them start making healthy changes even before surgery," says Dr. Milburn. "Dietitians guide patients through pre- and post-surgery diets and long-term healthy eating habits."

Lifelong Commitment

Dr. Milburn emphasizes that bariatric surgery patients become lifelong patients.

"I follow them closely the first few months after surgery and then annually after two years," she explains. "It's about ensuring long-term success and health."

Dr. Milburn is passionate about dispelling misconceptions surrounding bariatric surgery.

"It's not the easy way out, and it's very safe," she explains. "Studies show procedures like the sleeve and bypass are as safe as, or safer than, getting a gallbladder out. The success rate is about 80% at five years, compared to just 4-6% for traditional diet and exercise."

Patient Advice

When asked what advice her patients would give their pre-surgery selves, Dr. Milburn shares, "Overwhelmingly, they say, 'Go for it' or 'Do it sooner.' The positive impact on their lives is profound, from increased activity to better overall health."



Rebecca Milburn, MD,
Surgeon, Physicians'
Clinic of Iowa

NEXT STEPS

Bariatric surgery can be a transformative journey, and with the right support and information, you can make the best choice for your health.

Dr. Milburn is performing several bariatric surgeries at St. Luke's. They include:

- Sleeve gastrectomy
- Gastric bypass
- Revision
- Single Anastomosis Duodenal Ileal Bypass (SADI)
- Lap Band Maintenance

Patients are encouraged to talk with their family healthcare provider to determine if bariatric surgery is right for them.

To learn more about bariatric surgery visit, bit.ly/BariatricSurgeryCedarRapids.

OCTOBER IS BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

Schedule Your Mammogram Today!



Nearly one in eight women (13%) is diagnosed with breast cancer.* The American Cancer Society recommends screening mammograms starting at age 40, or earlier if there is family history of breast cancer. St. Luke's is your partner for early detection and treatment.

- **Walk-in mammograms** are offered at three St. Luke's Breast & Bone Health locations, Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. (doctor's order required):
 - o Downtown Cedar Rapids, PCI Medical Pavilion I, 202 10th St. SE, Suite 265
 - o Marion Campus, 2996 7th Ave., Marion
 - o Westdale Campus, 4325 Williams Blvd. SW, Cedar Rapids
- **State-of-the-art technology** is used to screen and diagnose breast health issues.
- **Additional tests** (ultrasounds, biopsies, needle localizations, cyst aspirations, bone density tests) are available.

Talk to your primary care provider about any breast health concerns, and ask for a referral to St. Luke's Breast and Bone Health for your next mammogram. To schedule ahead call (319) 369-7216.

*Source: American Cancer Society Breast Cancer Facts & Figures 2022-2024.

ST. LUKE'S HOSPITAL NATIONALLY HONORED FOR HEART ATTACK TREATMENT

St. Luke's Hospital recently received the American College of Cardiology's NCDR Chest Pain - Myocardial Infarction (MI) Registry Platinum Performance Achievement Award for 2024. St. Luke's Hospital is among 259 hospitals nationwide, and the only hospital in Cedar Rapids to receive the honor.

The award recognizes St. Luke's commitment and success in implementing a higher standard of care for MI (heart attack) patients. It also signifies St. Luke's ER and heart teams meet the clinical guidelines and recommendations for heart attack care outlined by the American College of Cardiology/American Heart Association.

To receive the Chest Pain - MI Registry Platinum Performance Achievement Award, St. Luke's has demonstrated sustained achievement in the registry for two consecutive years (2022 and 2023) and performed at the highest level for required performance measures.

Learn more about St. Luke's nationally recognized Heart & Vascular care at uph.link/CR-Heart.



ST. LUKE'S PHARMACY OFFERS FREE DELIVERY & PRESCRIPTION MAIL SERVICE



UnityPoint Health - St. Luke's Pharmacy, located in the lower level of St. Luke's Hospital, now offers free delivery within a 20-mile radius of St. Luke's, as well as free prescription mail delivery. To transfer your prescription to St. Luke's Pharmacy, call (319) 369-7528. Patients must be home at the time of delivery.

St. Luke's Pharmacy is open Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturday, 7:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

We apologize for mailing problems such as duplicate copies. If you have questions or concerns about LiveWell magazine, please call (319) 369-7395 or email stlukescr@unitypoint.org.

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- ▶ Full-service emergency care
- ▶ 12 private treatment rooms
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- ▶ Advanced imaging for diagnostics and testing including CT, X-ray and ultrasound

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