

Fall 2023

LiveWell

Dubuque



HATS & HOPE

Cancer Patient Uses Hats to Guide Treatment Journey

PERMANENT REMINDER

Cancer Survivor's Tattoo Honors Caregivers

GET CHECKED

Cancer Screening Guidelines Updated

MEET DR. MILLER

Neurosurgeon Returns to Her Roots

 **UnityPoint Health**
Dubuque

WHAT'S INSIDE

1 Health Clips

Health news you can use.

2 Hats & Hope

Area breast cancer patient uses hats to cope with hair loss from cancer treatments.

4 Permanent Reminder

Southwestern Wisconsin cancer survivor honors his caregivers with tattoo.

6 'Second Chance at Life'

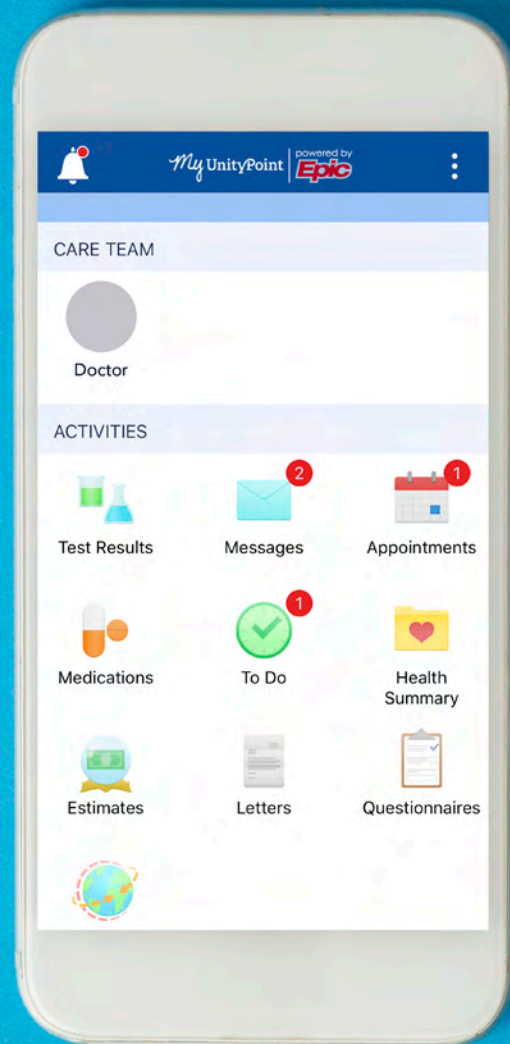
TAVR procedure alleviates patient's fatigue and shortness of breath with minimal recovery time.

8 Meet Dr. Miller

New provider brings neurosurgery services to Dubuque.

9 Ask the Expert

What factors impact wait time in the ER?



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UnityPoint Health
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Time to Schedule Your Flu Shot

Early autumn is the best time to get your annual influenza vaccine (flu shot), according to Pat Lehmkuhl, Finley Hospital infection prevention nurse. Lehmkuhl recommends receiving the vaccine in September or October to ward off the flu during winter months. The vaccine has been proven to reduce the risk of illness, as well as prevent severe cases of influenza.

Lehmkuhl suggests everyone age six months or older receive the vaccine, particularly older adults and individuals with pre-existing medical conditions. The shot is also safe and effective for pregnant women. Any side effects are usually mild and typically limited to soreness or swelling around the injection site. Less than one percent of flu shot recipients have reported mild headache, nausea, muscle aches or fever. To schedule your flu vaccine, visit unitypoint.org/flushot.

Finley Receives State Recognition for Pediatric Emergency Readiness



Finley Hospital became the third hospital in Iowa to be recognized for readiness to provide emergency care for children through the state's new Iowa Pediatric Emergency Assessment and Care (IPEAC) Recognition Program.

IPEAC is a new program designed by the Iowa Health and Human Services (HHS) Emergency Medical Services for Children. It recognizes the work of hospitals to ensure they are prepared to provide initial stabilization, treatment and transfers (if needed) for ill and injured children in Iowa.

To earn the recognition, Finley completed an application that outlined adherence to requirements for equipment, training and support of pediatric patients and their families. The evaluation process also included a site visit from HHS personnel.

"We are proud to be among the first three hospitals in the state to receive this recognition," said Kevin Lynch, Finley Hospital Board Chair. "We are grateful for the support this new program provides, which will help ensure Iowa's health care facilities are ready and able to provide the best emergency care for children."

7 

Number of children under the age of 17 treated at Finley Hospital's Emergency Department for ATV/UTV-accident-related injuries between May 1 and mid-July.



40%

Reduced chance of fatal head injury by wearing a helmet.*

4 per hour



Estimated number of children across the United States who are seen in an Emergency Department for ATV-related injuries every 60 minutes.*



3,000

Number of children under age 16, who have been killed in ATV/UTV accidents from 1982 to 2015. Nearly a million more have required ER visits.*

**Source: American Academy of Pediatrics*

INJURY PREVENTION TIPS

- Wear a helmet and follow the age requirements for ATV/UTV operation to greatly reduce the risk of injury. Development research indicates children and adolescents do not have the physical, mental or cognitive maturity to operate a machine that can cause life-changing injuries in a split second.
- Refrain from operating an ATV/UTV while under the influence of drugs or alcohol, which can impair your judgement and reaction time.
- With most of Dubuque County's roads open to ATV/UTVs, it is important to know, understand and follow the guidelines put into place by Dubuque County's Board of Supervisors, which can be found at bit.ly/3OjmbPJ.

Hats & Hope



Amy Turner began collecting and wearing hats when she experienced hair loss during cancer treatment. She rang the Wendt Regional Cancer Center victory bell in May 2023, after completing 21 sessions of chemo/radiation.

Hair loss can be one of the most discouraging aspects of cancer treatment. For Amy Turner, hats helped her cope during her breast cancer journey, while her large support system cheered her on.

Each morning, there's one item Amy Turner chooses from her wardrobe first: a hat.

It's a habit she began during chemotherapy treatments as a way to feel more comfortable with the side effect of hair loss, and she has continued the tradition ever since.

"I never thought I looked good in hats before, but with a bald head they fit a little better and make me feel good," Turner said. "I probably bought 15 to 20 hats, so I had options to choose from. In the morning when I'm getting dressed, it's not a matter of what I have to wear, it's a matter of what will match my hat."

FROM DIAGNOSIS TO VICTORY

Turner was diagnosed with triple-negative breast cancer after a routine mammogram in November 2022. She was immediately scheduled for a lumpectomy, followed by chemotherapy, then radiation treatments at the Wendt Regional Cancer Center.

"You couldn't ask for a better group of people to walk you through that journey," Turner reflected. "It is uncharted waters and even though I put on a good front, there were times when it was really tough."

Turner completed 21 sessions of radiation in May 2023 and rang the victory bell surrounded by her large support system of friends, family and co-workers. The group, including Wendt Center staff members, all donned purple T-shirts emblazoned with the words "Stronger Together: Amy's Fight is My Fight."

The shirts were created by Turner's co-workers at Hawkeye Care Center as a way to show support during her treatments. A group of longtime friends nicknamed "The Shamrockers" also made shirts in her honor, which said "No Shamrockers Fights Alone."

"It's a relief when you get to that point and it's amazing to see all the people there to help you celebrate," Turner shared. "I had a huge team of people checking in and supporting me, making sure things were going well. They kept telling me to stay home and rest, which I was doing, but being around them is what really helped."

SUPPORTIVE TEAM

One of the Shamrockers, Julie Rundle, certified medical dosimetrist, is part of the Wendt Center radiation oncology team. She ensures radiation treatments are given in the correct dosages. Rundle and Turner have been friends since high school.

"Amy is a very sweet and strong person, so it was easy to guide her through the treatments," Rundle said. "I loved checking in with her and giving encouragement. When she finished with her treatment, it was amazing to see the big crowd showing her support on bell ringing day."

Throughout all her visits to the Wendt Center, Turner said she could feel the support from every team member.

"The staff was wonderful," she recalled. "Everybody had genuine concern and smiles on their faces when you came in day after day. I couldn't ask for a better, more supportive team."

For more information about cancer care at the Wendt Regional Cancer Center, visit uph.link/CancerCare_DBQ.

NEW MAMMOGRAM, DENSE BREAST SCREENING GUIDANCE

The United States Preventive Services Task Force recently released new information regarding mammogram screenings. They now recommend individuals whose gender was female at birth be screened for breast cancer on an every-other-year basis beginning at age 40, rather than 50. While less than 10 percent of breast cancer cases are found in patients younger than 45, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention say those cases are more likely to be later-stage diagnoses, when the cancer is more aggressive and difficult to treat.

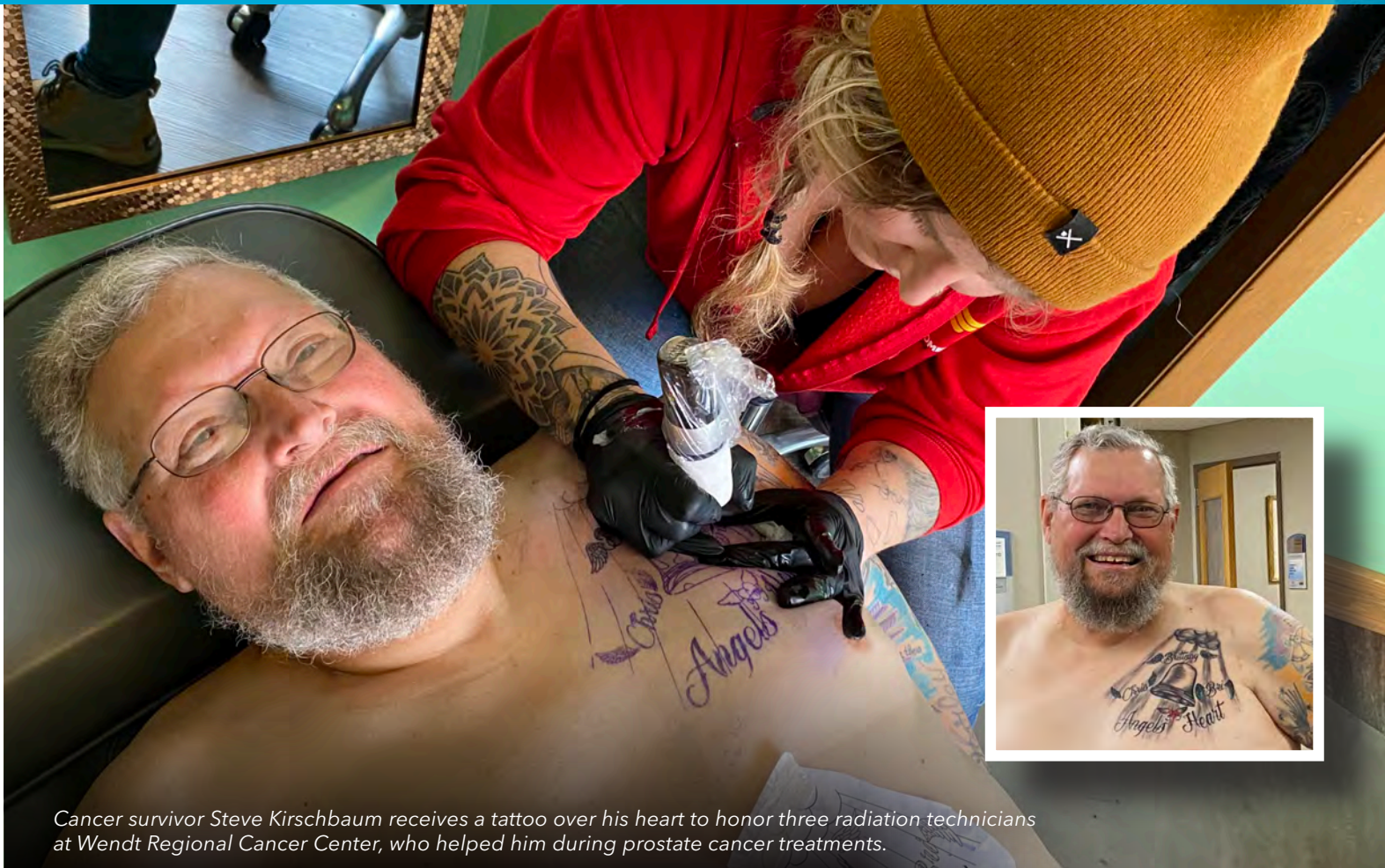
Individuals who have dense breast tissue are encouraged to undergo additional screenings via ultrasound. Dense breast tissue is a risk factor for breast cancer and can make it difficult to recognize in a traditional mammogram.

The size and weight of the breast is not a factor in a diagnosis of dense breast tissue; instead, it has to do with the kind of tissue contained within the breast. Those with higher amounts of connective and glandular tissue are considered to have dense breasts. According to the National Cancer Institute, nearly half of all mammograms performed in the United States note the presence of dense breast tissue. Most states - including Iowa, Illinois and Wisconsin - require doctors to notify patients when dense breast tissue is found through a mammogram.

For more information about breast cancer screenings, including mammograms and ultrasounds, visit uph.link/Mammograms.

PERMANENT REMINDER

Cancer Survivor Receives Tattoo to Honor Care Givers



Cancer survivor Steve Kirschbaum receives a tattoo over his heart to honor three radiation technicians at Wendt Regional Cancer Center, who helped him during prostate cancer treatments.

Steve Kirschbaum wears more than his heart on his sleeve. The dozens of tattoos that adorn his arms are a tapestry of his life. There's a rose honoring his wife, a raccoon representing his motorcycle club, and a target commemorating his platelet donations. For his latest addition, Kirschbaum chose a different location for what he says may be his most meaningful tattoo yet.

In April 2023, Kirschbaum traveled from his home near Cassville, Wis., to Galena, Ill., to have a large tattoo inked over his heart. The design includes the phrase, "Angels of My Heart" and the names of the three radiation technicians who worked with Kirschbaum as he underwent treatment for an aggressive form of prostate

cancer in the fall of 2022. Each name is accompanied by a pair of angels' wings, all surrounding a large bell, representing the one Kirschbaum rang at UnityPoint Health - Finley Hospital's Wendt Regional Cancer Center after he completed his treatments.

"I wanted a place that was closer to home, so I chose to have treatment at Finley," Kirschbaum said. "I was apprehensive and didn't know what to expect, but within three or four visits, I was more comfortable." Kirschbaum credits his radiation technicians - Christina Brimeyer, Brittany Rausch and Briana Temperley - with putting him at ease during his treatments.

CARE TEAM MADE TREATMENT ENJOYABLE

"They were so great, and I actually liked coming in," he remembered. "It made treatments kind of fun when I got to see them." Because of their outstanding care, Kirschbaum chose to honor the three technicians with the tattoo.

"I still get emotional about what I had to go through," he admitted. "But they made my experience the best I could have asked for. That's why I wanted to honor them."

Tattoo artist Lexx McCarville of Emerald Buddha Tattoo in Galena helped Steve finalize the design. She says it's not uncommon for cancer survivors to get tattoos, but this was the first she did that incorporated a survivor's care team. About a week after receiving the tattoo, Kirschbaum returned to the Wendt Center to show it off to the technicians, who were astonished that someone would go to such lengths to honor their work.

"I couldn't have asked for a better place for prostate cancer treatment," Kirschbaum shared. "I highly recommend the Wendt Center for anyone who needs cancer treatment. The staff especially - everyone was so caring and helped you feel comfortable. They were unbelievable."

For more information about cancer care at UnityPoint Health, visit [unitypoint.org/cancer](https://www.unitypoint.org/cancer).

COLONOSCOPY SCREENINGS RECOMMENDED EARLIER

The American Cancer Society (ACS) updated its guidance for colorectal cancer screenings, recommending those at average risk undergo a regular screening at age 45, rather than 50. The screening can include either a high-sensitivity stool-based test or an exam that looks at the colon and rectum (a visual exam).

ACS research shows colorectal cancer cases among younger patients are on the rise. As of 2018, colorectal cancer was the fourth most common type of cancer in American adults and the second leading cause of cancer deaths. An estimated 140,000 American adults are diagnosed with colorectal cancer each year. Research from the American College of Gastroenterology suggests a colonoscopy with polyp removal can reduce the risk of colon cancer by up to 90 percent.

For more on what to expect at your colonoscopy appointment, visit [unitypoint.org/colonoscopy](https://www.unitypoint.org/colonoscopy).

LUNG CANCER SCREENING COVERAGE EXPANDED

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has expanded coverage for a lung cancer screening that uses low dose computed tomography (LDCT). The minimum age for coverage has been lowered from 55 to 50. CMS has also reduced the tobacco smoking history component of coverage from 30 packs per year to 20.

The LDCT test is CMS's only recommended screening for lung cancer. It uses a low dose CT scan that combines a special X-ray with highly sophisticated computers to produce multiple cross-sectional images. UnityPoint Health - Finley Hospital is one of the few regional facilities with the low dose CT scan capabilities required for the screening. The scan is a quick, easy and painless exam that can detect lung cancer in its early stages, a key step in maximizing treatment effectiveness. Lung cancer remains the leading cause of cancer death among both men and women in the United States.

To learn more, talk with our Wendt Regional Cancer Center lung screening coordinator at (563) 589-2549 or visit bit.ly/DBQCancer.

'SECOND CHANCE AT LIFE'

New Catheter-Implanted Heart Valve Relieves Symptoms,
Reduces Recovery Time For Edgewood Resident



Edgewood resident Becky Lange received a new heart valve through a catheter. The procedure restored her breathing, and saved her from open heart surgery and weeks of recovery time.



When Becky Lange's mother, Lois Balk, needed a valve replacement in the 90s, it required open heart surgery and weeks of recovery time.

The Edgewood, Iowa, resident was shocked when doctors were able to implant a cow valve into her heart through a catheter.

"It was amazing," Lange said. "When the doctor told me I'd only be in the hospital one night I thought, 'How can that be?' But it was as easy as they said."

Lange's cardiologist, Tauseef Khan, MD, UnityPoint Clinic Cardiology - Dubuque, recommended the procedure in May 2023 as a solution for her worsening shortness of breath and fatigue. He referred her to UnityPoint Health - St. Luke's Hospital in Cedar Rapids, where Structural Cardiologist Richard Kettelkamp, DO, performed a transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR) alongside Cardiothoracic Surgeon Garry Weide, DO.

TAVR allows the cardiologist to implant a new aortic valve through a catheter instead of requiring open heart surgery. The catheter is typically inserted through an artery in the groin, but it can also be delivered to the heart through an artery in the neck or arm. The procedure took less than two hours and required just one overnight stay in the hospital.

BREATHING EASIER AFTER PROCEDURE

"When I woke up and they took me to my room, I couldn't believe it - immediately I could feel my breathing was so much lighter," Lange said. "They told me not to expect all my symptoms to disappear right away, but I did notice my breathing improved almost immediately. It was really neat."

She is now back to her normal activities: enjoying retirement and helping around her granddaughter Megan's antiques and craft store, Edgy Meg's.

"It was getting harder just to do housework, and it got to the point where it was difficult to walk from the kitchen to my living room," Lange shared, about what life had been like before the TAVR procedure. "I'd be out of breath, and it was really difficult. TAVR gave me a second chance at life."

She credits Dr. Khan's expertise and excellent bedside manner for the great care she received.

"I can't say enough about Dr. Khan - he is absolutely amazing," Lange said. "My husband sees him too, and he has always been so good to us."

For more information about heart care at Finley Hospital, visit uph.link/HeartCare_DBO.



*Tauseef Khan, MD
Cardiologist, UnityPoint Clinic
Cardiology - Dubuque*



MEET NEUROSURGEON Catherine Miller, MD

*Catherine Miller, MD
Neurosurgeon, UnityPoint Health - Dubuque*

After spending several years as an assistant professor of neurosurgery at the University of California - San Francisco and successfully running her own practice, Catherine (Cati) Miller, MD, felt a strong desire to return to her Midwest roots. Recognizing the need for neurosurgery care in the tri-state area since the mid-90s, she knew she could make a positive impact for the local community. Last year, she reached out to Finley Hospital to explore opportunities, marking the beginning of her journey to establish a groundbreaking neurosurgery program at UnityPoint Health - Dubuque.

Dr. Miller fell in love with neurosurgery during her sophomore year at Galena High School after job-shadowing a neurosurgical procedure.

"I was in awe of the human brain," she remembered. "The complex, challenging and delicate nature of the specialty drew me in and has kept me engaged for the past twenty-plus years."

After high school, Dr. Miller attended the University of Wisconsin-Madison and completed her medical education at Rush University Medical College in Chicago. She finished a seven-year residency at the University of Minnesota before spending a year at the University of California-San Francisco for a minimally invasive and complex spine fellowship. She worked in San Francisco for four more years before returning to the area.

DELIVERING PERSONALIZED CARE

Dr. Miller is now practicing at UnityPoint Clinic Neurosurgery - Dubuque in the Delhi Medical Center, adjacent to Finley Hospital. She focuses on spinal conditions and treatment, specifically minimally invasive spine surgery. She provides individualized care and treatment plans for all patients, in both a clinical and surgical setting.

"The brain and spine are extremely complex, so every patient will have different symptoms, problems and treatment plans," Dr. Miller explained. "For some, surgery might not be the right option. For others, it might be the only option."

Beyond her professional pursuits, Dr. Miller cherishes quality time with her loved ones, including her three young children, parents and brother. She also enjoys exercising and playing sports, traveling and crafting.

With her passion for neurosurgery and dedication to personalized care, she stands as an example of love for her hometown roots and commitment to her patients' well-being.

Talk to your primary care provider if you need a referral to UnityPoint Clinic Neurosurgery - Dubuque or call **(563) 557-5971**.

BEAT THE BUGS

Ways to Keep Your Immune System Strong this Winter

Your immune system is a series of checks and balances that help protect the body from disease and illness. There are several ways to naturally boost the immune system, and many of them are probably easier than you think!

Eat a Well-Balanced Diet. Try to eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, dairy products and lean protein. Foods that are high in omega-3 fatty acids, such as eggs, salmon and avocados, have been shown to assist the immune system. These foods can also help you maintain a healthy weight over the winter months.



Drink Plenty of Water.

Increased hydration can lead to a wide variety of health benefits, including improved digestion. Staying hydrated also helps keep viruses and bacteria from getting into your eyes, nose and mouth.

Exercise. Even though the cold Midwestern winters can make it difficult to maintain usual activity levels, prioritizing an exercise routine also helps your immune system. Remember to keep your exercise level moderate, because workouts that are too intense can have the opposite effect and actually make you more prone to illness.

Prioritize Your Sleep. Getting a proper amount of sleep each night helps you fend off possible illness. It's recommended for adults to sleep seven to nine hours each night.

Increase Vitamin Intake. Taking vitamins is another time-tested way to help your immune system. Vitamins B₆, C and E are all known for their immune-boosting properties. Many of these vitamins can be found in a well-balanced diet, or through over-the-counter supplements. Some vitamin-rich foods to look for include eggs, bell peppers, spinach and almonds.

Avoid things that work against your immune system, including tobacco, excessive alcohol intake, eating too much sugar, stress and taking too many antibiotics.

Learn more about improving your immune system by visiting uph.link/ImmuneBoosters.



Jeff Baker, BSN, RN, Director of Emergency and Cardiopulmonary Medicine

WHAT FACTORS IMPACT EMERGENCY ROOM WAIT TIME?

Delays are difficult, especially when you're in pain or not feeling well. Finley Hospital is committed to providing quality care as quickly as possible.

Every patient who enters our Emergency Department is first evaluated by a triage nurse. These nurses are specially trained to determine the severity of a patient's situation. Those with life-threatening injuries will be cared for first, however, we take all care just as seriously.

Not all illnesses or symptoms have significant external impacts. Someone who receives care ahead of you may seem perfectly healthy on the outside, but dangerous underlying symptoms can make conditions more complicated than they appear.

Once the triage nurses evaluate an illness or injury, our team members consult with a variety of caregivers to provide input on symptoms and perform tests to arrive at a diagnosis. The wait times for these tests can be long, but we can assure you that our team members are actively gathering information and communicating about your care behind the scenes.

EMERGENCY OR URGENT CARE?

The information collected, as well as what is contained within your personal medical history, is communicated to a doctor and other members of your care team. Those details help form a complete treatment plan so you can be on your way as soon as possible.

While our Emergency Department personnel are trained to treat a wide range of injuries and illnesses, it's important to remember the Emergency Room is designed for life-threatening situations. If your situation is not life-threatening, you may be seen faster by visiting a UnityPoint Health Urgent Care Clinic.

For information about where to go for care, visit unitypoint.org/emergency.

DETECT TO PROTECT.



Talk to your doctor
about screening options.