

**Planning a day trip?
Get great ideas on
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Annual mammogram critical for women over 40

Gerri Irvin is a prime example of why women over age 40 should get an annual physical and mammogram.

Irvin's maternal grandmother and mother both died from breast cancer. Because of that history, Irvin says she religiously scheduled an annual Pap test and mammogram. "But I had a total hip replacement in 2000," Irvin says, "so I skipped my annual exam that year."

Runner

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and fell while golfing. This time he not only tore the quadriceps tendon in his other leg, but he also fractured his kneecap. Once again, Dr. Keppler went to work, and Reidy underwent rehabilitation.

"I'm grateful to the terrific doctors and rehab staff at Lutheran Hospital for getting me back on my feet again and again," says Reidy. "I am looking forward to my next marathon run."

For more information on the Cleveland Orthopaedic and Spine Hospital at Lutheran, call 800/220-8202.



When she did get her annual physical in 2001, Irvin was startled by her doctor's discovery. During the breast exam, her doctor said something was "very wrong." Irvin was instructed to get a mammogram immediately. The diagnosis was breast cancer.

Once Irvin grasped the reality of her diagnosis, fear set in. However, she adds, "Not too long after that, the organized part of me said, 'You have to take control of this. You're going to get through this.'"

Just a few weeks later, at the Cleveland Clinic Cancer Center at Fairview Hospital, Irvin underwent a radical mastectomy of one breast and had 12 cancerous lymph nodes removed. Eight chemotherapy sessions and 33 radiation treatments followed.

She says she's tremendously grateful for the support she received from her family and friends during her ordeal. In addition, Irvin created a healing journal. "I just started writing out all my feelings on my

Gerri Irvin used a computer to write her feelings in a healing journal that she shares with others.



computer." Very soon, she started sharing her writings with a long list of family members and friends. "Being able to share my peaks and valleys with people who care about me was a real godsend."

Irvin's last breast cancer treatment was in August 2002. Since then, she has seen Timothy Spiro, M.D., medical director of the Cleveland Clinic Cancer Center at Fairview Hospital, every three months for follow-up appointments.

With the worst behind her, Irvin expresses gratitude. "I feel truly blessed to be alive." (See tips for coping with breast cancer on page 2. For a free breast self-exam kit, call 216/476-4935.)

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NEWS AND HEALTH INFORMATION FOR SENIORS

FALL 2003



Lutheran gets runner on his feet again (and again)

See Bill run. And that's exactly what Bill Reidy has been doing for 28 years. The recent 2003 Rite Aid Cleveland Marathon & 10K Race was the 24th time the Westlake resident participated in the event since it began in 1978. Add to that 46 other marathons. Not bad for a 62-year-old who's had two torn quadriceps tendons and a fractured kneecap in the past five years.

Fortunately, the Cleveland Orthopaedic and Spine Hospital at Lutheran was ready for each of Reidy's mishaps, which began when he twisted his left knee in a sidewalk hole in late 1998. His diagnosis was a ruptured quadriceps tendon that would heal itself in time by taking it easy.

Unfortunately, just a few months later, he slipped on a patch of ice and tore his quadriceps tendon completely. He returned to Lutheran Hospital to see Louis Keppler, M.D., who repaired the injury. By late 1999, after nine months of physical therapy, Reidy was off and running again. But bad luck struck again in 2001, when he slipped

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Lakewood offers specialized stroke care

According to the American Stroke Association, every 53 seconds someone in America has a stroke. About 600,000 Americans will have a stroke this year, and someone dies of a stroke every 3.1 minutes.

Stroke is the third leading cause of death among Americans and a leading cause of severe, long-term disability. Yet most people don't even know the warning signs. And fewer than half of all stroke victims get to the hospital within a day of initial symptoms. (See "Surviving a Stroke" on page 3.)

While many hospitals offer rapid evaluation and treatment of stroke patients, Lakewood Hospital's Neuro Integrated Care Unit (NICU) is the only specialized stroke unit on Cleveland's west side. Staffed by skilled and specially trained physicians and nurses, the NICU is designed to help patients recover as quickly as possible during a critical period of illness. The unit provides multiple levels of care, which enable the patient to remain in the same room until rehabilitation is recommended.

In a recent analysis completed by the Cleveland Clinic Health System,



Lakewood Hospital scored higher than all other area hospitals in a number of performance measures. A few of the strong points were access to the newest treatments, one of the quickest response/treatment times in the emergency department, and immediate access to CAT scan machines and a neuro-radiologist to read the results.

Lakewood's stroke program also was recently cited in the first-ever "Champion of Quality" award, which was given to all members of the Cleveland Clinic Health System's Stroke Quality Team. The award was created by hospital chiefs of staff to recognize an individual or team who has championed a quality-related issue across the nine hospitals that make up the system. Arthur P. Dick, M.D., and Michael Mervart, M.D., co-medical directors of the NICU, were recognized for their role in helping make Lakewood's program the best of the best.

For more information or to receive a free stroke information kit, please call 216/227-2440.