

In the News...

by Debra Melani

As long as medicine advances, HealthONE will evolve. From innovative osteoporosis treatments and top-of-the-line MRI machines to enriched programs and expanded facilities, the hospital system's continued changes keep HealthONE in the news. Here's a snapshot of what's going on today.

Setting Things Straight: P/SL Doctor Offers Unique Back Treatment



Dr. Timothy Birney

A doctor at Presbyterian/St. Luke's Medical Center has been helping hundreds of osteoporosis patients stand tall, fixing a painful and common back fracture that once was limited to only a brace for treatment. Called a vertebral compression fracture, the break in the cylindrical spinal bones affects about 750,000 of the estimated 10 million U.S. osteoporosis patients each year.

"Think of it as a soda can, and you crush it," says Dr. Timothy Birney, an orthopedic surgeon who performs the minimally-invasive procedure called Kyphoplasty at P/SL. "And it can result from a minor event, such as bending down to pick something up or turning over in bed," Birney says, illustrating the frailty of osteoporotic bones.

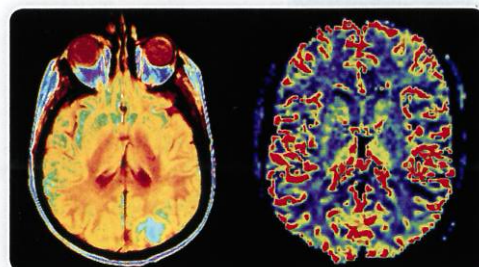
As many as two-thirds of patients don't receive treatment, even today, Birney says. Many end up with height loss and a humped back (kyphosis), which can lead to disability and other health issues. Although not everyone is a candidate, if it's done early enough, Kyphoplasty can restore height and prevent deformity, as well as relieve pain. "Most people notice

immediate pain relief," says Birney, who generally uses IV sedation and local anesthesia for the approximately half-hour procedure.

Kyphoplasty involves inserting two small tubes through tiny incisions in the back. Then, using fluoroscopic guidance, a drill is threaded through to access the compressed bone area. Balloon-like devices are then inserted to restore the area's height on either side of the vertebra. One balloon is withdrawn at a time, and medical cement is injected to set the space. Most patients go home that day and are told to minimize bending, lifting and riding in a car for four weeks.

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HealthONE Imaging Center Offers Advanced MRI



A new MRI machine offers more detail.

The Center for Advanced Diagnostics at Lowry Medical Center, a HealthONE facility focused on providing the latest technology in medical imaging, recently became one of the few outpatient clinics in the Denver area to offer 3T MRIs. The powerful system offers significant improvement in detecting and treating head injuries.

Most Magnetic Resonance Imaging machines today are 1.5T (or Tesla), indicating the field strength of the magnet. "The higher the field strength, the more detail you get out of each picture," says

Natalie Roper, radiology director at Rose Medical Center. "You can see very minute changes and get better, more accurate diagnoses," Roper says, comparing the difference to that of a regular versus a high-definition TV.

With its advanced imaging software, the newer MRI's are spotting subtle changes in the brains of post-concussion patients that might have been previously missed. Concussions have entered the public eye, given relatively recent evidence that repeated concussions can have long-term, cumulative effects, including memory problems and aggressive behavior. "It's extremely important that the MRI's are precise for this and any other condition," Roper says.

Visit: lowryimagingcenter.com
or call 303-340-8439.

Research Doors Open Wide for HealthONE Cancer Patients



The Medical Center of Aurora
North Suburban Medical Center
Presbyterian/St. Luke's Medical Center
Rose Medical Center
Sky Ridge Medical Center
Swedish Medical Center

HealthONECancerCare.com

Cancer patients in Colorado now have new options for innovative treatment at the Sarah Cannon Research Institute at HealthONE. Directed by Dr. Gerald Falchook, SCRI at HealthONE will conduct cancer clinical trials that include promising treatments for patients with advanced cancer. Falchook, who has been the principal investigator or co-investigator on more than 160 cancer clinical studies, comes to SCRI from MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston.

