

Congratulations, Mercy Nurses!

Mercy Medical Center is proud to salute 11 nurses who made the list of 100 Great Iowa Nurses for 2009.

This prestigious designation is a tribute to the high standard of care our nurses carry out every day.

Seated (from left): Kathleen Swift, Clinical Outcomes & Research; Linda Glandorf, Behavioral Health. Second row: Catherine Kane, Orthopaedics; Brooke Moore, Wound Healing Center; Aimee Bell, Cardiovascular Services; Tawnya Salsbery, Dialysis. Back row: Kathy Smelser, Clinical Outcomes & Research; Susan Desmet, Oncology/Neurology Services; Molly Newhouse, Post-Anesthesia Care Unit; (Not pictured: Sharon Boekenstedt, Surgical Inpatient Unit, and Carla Menge, Intensive Care Center).

Healthy lifestyles in an unhealthy economy

When times are tough, taking care of your health becomes even more important.

The best way to prevent higher health-care costs is to wash hands frequently, stay on schedule for regular health exams and practice healthy living by taking medications as prescribed, relieving stress, eating right, exercising and/or losing weight.

A study by the American Hospital Association reports more than 30 percent of hospitals surveyed have seen a moderate to significant decline in patients seeking elective procedures and nearly 40 percent of respondents reported a drop in overall admissions.

At the end of the third quarter of this fiscal year, Mercy has provided more than \$6,615,725 in charity care and it is anticipated the need for charity care will continue to rise due to the economy.

In tough times, individuals who are cutting costs may also be cutting back on prescription drug use.

Desmond Waters, Mercy Pharmacy Director, warns, "It is dangerous to split tablets, skip doses or not fill prescriptions in order to save money. Even though you may think you are saving money, you are greatly risking your overall health in the long run. Taking the correct amount of the prescribed

medication at the proper time is important, as medicine is only effective when taken as prescribed. Most studies show at least one-third of patients are non-compliant with drug regimens."

Desmond points out many options are available when money is tight. Physicians may be able to provide samples or prescribe generic equivalents or alternative drugs. If generics are unavailable, you may qualify for a drug manufacturer's prescription assistance program. Also, some retail pharmacies have a list of generic drugs available for less than \$10 for a 30-day supply.

Making healthy lifestyle choices is the best way to keep down health-care costs. Eating healthy helps keep immunities up and bodies strong. Reducing stress also is important, as 80 percent of visits to primary care physicians are due to chronic stress.

Experts at Mercy Fitness Center recommend practicing yoga, working out or even simply walking outdoors to relieve stress. Sign up for classes, or download the form to join Mercy's free community walking program, Steps2Health,™ at www.mercycare.org.

