Colonoscopy remains the test of choice for preventing the number two cancer killer.

Each year almost 50,000 deaths from colon cancer could be prevented with the use of a test known as a "colonoscopy", reports the American Cancer Society (ACS). And, more than 4 million Americans have colonoscopies hoping to avoid colon cancer.

During a colonoscopy, a flexible tube is inserted into the rectum and moves through the colon while a small camera and light allow the doctor to view the entire colon and any abnormalities.

Dr. Steven Kidd, surgeon, ACMC-Benson, says that doctors can remove precancerous lesions during a colonoscopy. These abnormal growths are also known as polyps. "More than 90 percent of colon cancers start as polyps and the great advantage of a colonoscopy is that makes it possible to remove a suspect polyp or cancer during the examination," Kidd added.

Alternative methods to examine the colon are available, such as: sigmoidoscopy, barium enema, "virtual colonoscopy", and fecal occult blood testing. However, none of these is considered more accurate at detecting colon cancer and polyps than a colonoscopy. If an alternative method identifies a polyp or abnormality, the patient would still have to be scheduled for a colonoscopy to remove or biopsy the abnormality.

**What is my risk of developing colon cancer?**

The lifetime risk for colon cancer is about 6% for both men and women. If a parent, sibling or child had colon cancer or polyps after age 50 it doubles, and is still higher if the cancer or polyps were diagnosed at a younger age or if more family members were affected. Obesity, cigarette smoking, inflammatory conditions in the colon such as Crohn’s, colitis and excessive alcohol consumption are other risk factors.
Memorials to the SCBH Hospital Foundation in May through November 2011 totaled $5272. The Foundation uses these gifts in a couple of different ways: to improve hospital facilities and equipment and to help hospital employees further their education. Some donors have chosen to honor a person who has been significant to them by making a donation to the Foundation in their honor. However you wish to make a donation, it is very much appreciated! Donations may be sent to:

Swift County-Benson Hospital Foundation
1815 Wisconsin Ave.
Benson, MN 56215

In Loving Memory of:

Jack Ascheman: Donna Lilleberg
Lucy Bridgland: Donna Lilleberg, Tim and Carol Mattheisen
Ellard Chamberlain: Loen Electric, Tim and Carol Mattheisen, Ann Hawley
Tom Connolly: Chauntel and Brad Rode
Lee Eberley: Gary and Doris Loen, Anamymous
Idella Erickson: Bill and Kay Harrison, Luverne and Arlene Norby, Ann Hawley

Sail into Spring with the Benson "Blues Brothers"

Mark your calendar for the 17th annual Emerald Eve on Saturday, March 31 at McKinney’s in Benson. The evening begins with a social hour at 6:30 pm, followed by dinner at 7 pm and entertainment by Benson’s own “Blues Brothers." No need for tuxedos, Emerald Eve is jeans friendly. You are guaranteed a great evening, great entertainment, great food, dancing, and a chance to pick up some fabulous treasures at the silent auction. And later, have a good time cheering friends on at an auction led by an auctioneer. Don’t miss this! This is the largest fundraiser for SCBH healthcare during the year. Last year we raised $21,000 for a bladder scanner.

Check out SCBH Gear - Good Prices, Awesome Colors!

Sweats, Hoodies, and LS Tees are awash in Great New Spring Colors! Prices are reasonable too. Sizes available for young and not so young. If you’re interested check with Sue at the front desk, 843-4232 or call Michele Samuelson at 314-8060.
Our People and Programs

Electronic Health Records: Securing the Future

Electronic record keeping is not a wave of the future, it's here right now. Almost every sector of business: banking, finance, education, retail, government, credit bureaus have moved from paper to electronic records. The government has recently mandated that health care facilities throughout the U.S. need to be equipped with Electronic Patient Health Records by 2014. Is this good? We think so. Will it take a significant financial outlay to implement Electronic Health Records (EHR) over the next few years? Most definitely. There will be a large line in the SCBH budget for hardware, software, consultants and staff training.

Here are some of the ways the EHR will result in more informed and accessible care for you:

➢ John was in St. Paul helping his son build a garage. He shot his hand with the nail gun and needed to go to the emergency room. The first question the nurse asked was when he had his last tetanus shot. John couldn’t remember. It was easily found in the EHR. EHRs can bring a patient’s total health information together when and where it’s needed. No waiting for charts to be found and read.

➢ Elaine went to the ER with chest pain. She had to wait in the ER until her doctor came from home to treat her. With EHR her doctor could pull up her records from home and consult with the ER staff to order additional testing and tell the ER physician and nurses how to make Elaine comfortable until he or she arrived to treat her. EHR’s enable clinicians secure access to information needed to support high quality and efficient care.

➢ Or have you kept a running record of your blood pressure numbers over the years? How about records for your glucose levels or all of your cholesterol numbers? Or paps smears, PSAs, X-Ray and lab information? Your doctor can easily access your individual health history and prescribe tests or order medications directly from the pharmacy. It will be easy for your doctor to pull up your record and see the changes over the years.

➢ At your annual physical or a hospital stay, you could get a print out of your overall results and everything that you discussed with your physician for your records. Your individual instructions and information can be printed with reminders for follow-up care.

With EHR, all information is held on-site, but it is also backed up and held off-site in a central system to allow record sharing. The records will instantly be there for you and your health care providers. They can be shared with other providers and result in fewer duplicated tests.

"When this is accomplished, providers should be able to access our electronic records from anywhere in the U.S. This will affect thousands of patients having to travel to see a specialist (at the Mayo Clinic, for example) as well as the "snow birds" that go south for the winter," added Janine Ellingson, RHIT, Health Information Manager.

Does all this come with privacy concerns? Yes, certainly. However, do you remember when the patient records were hung on the end of the hospital bed? Or put in a holder outside your door in the hospital hallway? Change is inevitable. With greater access to data, there is always going to be risk and concern about moving away from the old and embracing the future. Yes, we have a long way to go, and yes, we will remain vigilant to this change and patient privacy. Overall, in 2014 when Electronic Health Records are in place, you should be able to see an improvement in the safety, quality and efficiency of your care.

Golf Classic Helps Fund the Electronic Health Record System

The 13th Annual Golf Classic raised $11,500 for the new Patient Care System. This system allows medical and hospital staff to access patients' electronic health records for information and to record treatment provided. All patient rooms at SCBH will be equipped with a PC computer.

Thank you to our donors of large raffle items and congratulations the winners of the raffle items:

- IPAD (Jennifer Houston Foundation) - Kathy Weber
- The Crossings Golf Package - Kory Johnson
- Thumper Pond Golf Package - Rick Minor
- Lillehaugen Inn Meal (Char Haugen) - Joyce Rhode

The Auxiliary would like to thank everyone who participated, volunteered and donated to help make this event successful. Your support is greatly appreciated.
In our last newsletter, I commented on the updating of our master facility plan and the anticipated new clinic project. The new clinic would provide additional, larger exam rooms that would facilitate improved access for wheelchair patients and help in recruitment efforts for additional practitioners.

As you are aware, we acquired the property on McKinney Avenue that will be needed for the clinic building and accompanying parking space. Houses were sold and moved by the end of November and Kennedy Excavation removed the basements and filled the holes as specified. The schematic design for the clinic and hospital was finalized and approved last November and the project manager received authorization to complete the design development phase of the project so that bid specifications can be developed. It is anticipated that the designs will be finalized by the end of January and the construction documents and bid specifications completed so that bids for the project can be advertised by the end of March and approved by the SCBH Governing Board in April, 2012. Affiliated Community Medical Centers (ACMC) approved the schematic design for the clinic prior to hospital board approval and has expressed intent to lease the clinic building should bids come in within the budget parameters agreed to by ACMC. The governing board has treated the hospital portion of the project in the same manner; bids received must be within the budget parameters established before the board would take action to move ahead with the project. The most significant change from the earlier schematic design is the location of the physical therapy department. Our initial plan was to move the physical therapy department up to the vacated clinic space after ACMC moved into the new clinic building. A desire to make the PT department more accessible to PT patients, along with reassessment of the need for an in-house MRI scanner in the near future, led to a design change that will locate the PT department on the main floor with outside access for patients. Within the project, we'll also be looking at the feasibility of incorporating a therapy pool. We feel this will be more accommodating for our therapy patients.

As previously mentioned earlier this year, another significant ongoing project is our conversion to an electronic medical record. SCBH has been working on this project since July of 2009 and we implemented our PCS (Patient Care System) and Bedside Medication Management modules this past September. As a result of this implementation, all nursing documentation takes place electronically. In order to accomplish this, computer equipment was installed in each of our patient rooms which also enable the providers and hospital staff to access the patient’s health record at the bedside for needed information. Proceeds from the SCBH Annual Auxiliary Golf Outing, held in August, were donated toward the purchase of that computer equipment. We so appreciate the support of the SCBH Auxiliary and the SCBH Foundation.

We have had some changes in the SCBH Governing Board. Bob Claussen’s term expired the end of last year and Deb Moorse was appointed by the Benson City Council to fill his position. Bob has been on the governing board for 6 years and we have very much appreciated his insight and input as we have completed some major renovations during his tenure. Deb has provided service to SCBH as a speech therapist in the past and we look forward to her involvement on the board. I also want to acknowledge Chuck Koenigs’ for having received the MHA Governing Board Certification recognition.

As always, SCBH is pleased to be of service to the Benson community. Your trust and support of our organization has enabled us to continually improve our facility and our services. We hope you have a very blessed Christmas, a successful new year in 2012 and we look forward to serving you in the future.