



## Licking Memorial Health Systems

1320 West Main Street  
Newark, OH 43055

Please take a few minutes to read this month's report on **Surgical Care**.

You'll soon discover why Licking Memorial Hospital is measurably different ... for your health!

Visit us at [www.LMHealth.org](http://www.LMHealth.org)

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**THOMSON REUTERS**  
TOP HOSPITALS

NATIONAL

1998, 1999, 2000,  
2001, 2002, 2003,  
2005, 2006,  
2007, 2008



# Quality Report Card

## Licking Memorial Health Systems

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Volume 10, Issue 12

December 2009

## Health Tips – Preparing for Surgery

Thousands of patients have surgery at Licking Memorial Hospital each year. If you are expecting to have surgery, there are steps you can take to facilitate your recovery. The following suggestions will improve your safety during surgery, prevent infection and help you heal more quickly:

- Discuss with your surgeon whether or not “banking” your own blood is indicated for your procedure.
- Quit smoking at least two weeks before surgery.
- Eat a nutritious diet during the two-week period leading up to the surgery.
- Arrange to have someone drive you home from the Hospital and help take care of you for a few days.
- If you have diabetes, carefully monitor your blood sugar levels in the days leading up to the surgery.
- Do not eat or drink anything the morning of your procedure. Your doctor's office will give you specific instructions regarding how long you must fast.
- Ask your doctor if you should take your medications before surgery.
- Do not drink alcoholic beverages during the 24 hours prior to surgery.
- Bathe the night before your surgery, and pay particular attention to good hygiene.
- Do not shave the surgical site area.
- Get eight hours' sleep the night before the surgery.
- Do not wear makeup or nail polish to the Hospital.

# Surgical Care – How do we compare?

At Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS), we take pride in the care we provide. To monitor the quality of that care, we track specific quality measures and compare them to benchmark measures. Then, we publish them so you can draw your own conclusions regarding your health care choices.

Check out  
our Quality  
Report Cards online  
at [www.LMHealth.org](http://www.LMHealth.org).

**1** Conscious sedation allows patients to tolerate unpleasant procedures while maintaining adequate breathing and the ability to respond to stimulation. Most of the drugs used in conscious sedation can be reversed fully or partially if necessary. However, careful patient assessment and monitoring reduce the need for reversal agents and improve patient outcomes. Therefore, minimal use of reversal agents is a good indicator of quality in conscious sedation.

	LMH 2006	LMH 2007	LMH 2008	LMH Goal
Use of reversal agent – GI procedures	0.70%	0.12%	0.08%	less than 0.90%

**2** The health care team at Licking Memorial Hospital follows a multiple-step process to prevent wrong-patient, wrong-procedure or wrong-site surgery (e.g., surgery performed on the left foot instead of the right foot). This process includes left or right designation at the time the surgery is scheduled, verification of the site on the day of surgery with the patient and the patient’s current medical record, marking the site, and final verification in the operating room.

	LMH 2006	LMH 2007	LMH 2008	LMH Goal
Number of surgeries	5,272	6,065	6,579	n/a
Wrong-site surgeries	0	0	0	0
Surgical site verification checklist completed	99%	99%	100%	100%

**3** Receiving the appropriate antibiotic within an hour before surgery reduces a patient’s risk for developing infection. Additionally, discontinuing use of antibiotics within 24 hours after surgery lessens the patient’s risk of developing antibiotic-resistant bacterial infections. Medical studies have shown that the use of certain antibiotics, specific to each surgery type, can be most effective at preventing infections after surgery.

	LMH 2006	LMH 2007	LMH 2008	National <sup>(1)</sup>
Antibiotic received within 1 hour	94%	95%	93% <sup>(2)</sup>	87%
Antibiotic selection accurate per national recommendations	91%	93%	97%	93%
Antibiotic discontinued within 24 hours	87%	94%	88%	86%

**4** The removal of hair from the site of surgery is an important way to prevent infection. Using a razor to remove hair can cause tiny breaks in the skin which increase the risk of infection after surgery. This measure tracks the percentage of times that patients had hair removal performed by clippers or other means which are less likely to cause infection than razors. In certain instances, clippers may not be the ideal form of hair removal, and razors may be used.

	LMH 2006	LMH 2007	LMH 2008	National <sup>(1)</sup>
Appropriate hair removal performed	99%	99%	99%	95%

**5** Medical studies have shown that if patients experience hypothermia (low body temperature) during and after surgery, they have a greater risk of developing complications. Effectively warming patients during surgery can ensure their body temperatures remain in normal range. This measure tracks the percentage of patients at LMH who had a normal body temperature immediately after surgery.

	LMH 2006	LMH 2007	LMH 2008	LMH Goal
Immediate post-operative temperature within normal range	94%	100%	100%	greater than 90%

**6** VTE, or venous thromboembolism, is the medical term for a blood clot that forms in a vein. Surgery increases the risk of VTE, and while most clots can be treated, some can be life-threatening. It is recommended that hospitals use medications and mechanical devices to prevent the formation of blood clots. While all patients receive at least one form of intervention, primarily mechanical, LMH tracks the percentage of patients who correctly had these interventions activated, based on CMS guidelines, within 24 hours of surgery.

	LMH 2006	LMH 2007	LMH 2008	National <sup>(1)</sup>
VTE prophylaxis ordered	82%	92%	86%	<b>86%</b>
VTE prophylaxis started within 24 hours of surgery	74%	81%	75%*	<b>83%</b>

\*All surgery patients receive some form of VTE prevention, either through medication or by mechanical means. In some cases, medications to prevent VTE are not ideal due to an increased risk of bleeding. Although care was appropriate in these cases, the documentation to explain the absence of the medications was sometimes incomplete; therefore, even though the care provided was appropriate, our statistics appear lower than the national average.

**7** Licking Memorial Hospital patients who have had total joint surgeries, including hip and knee operations, tend to be able to return home to recover more quickly than patients undergoing the same procedures elsewhere. Offering physical therapy on weekends and new medications are two factors that have lessened hospital stays for these patients.

	LMH 2006	LMH 2007	LMH 2008	National <sup>(3)</sup>
Primary total joint patients with length of stay six days or less	97%	99%	100%	<b>94%</b>

**Data Footnotes:** (1) *Hospitalcompare.hhs.gov national benchmarks.* (2) *Due to changes in data abstraction guidelines, 2008 data omits January information as it is not reflective of process quality.* (3) *Midas+ Comparative Database.*

## Patient Story – William Hassell

When William Hassell of Newark looks in the mirror every morning, he sees a face with a slightly crooked nose looking back at him. The minor malformation is the result of injuries he suffered years ago. “I looked into having the shape fixed, but then decided I could live with it,” William said. “Besides, I think it adds character.”

The part that 35-year-old William decided he could not tolerate was the difficulty he had in breathing. “I had not been able to breathe out of my left nostril for years,” he explained. “It was causing problems while I was sleeping, and it frequently interrupted my sleep because I could not breathe.”

William consulted with Otolaryngologist Kenneth Parker, M.D., who recommended surgery to correct a deviated septum and a sinus cavity problem. The operation was set for August 21, in the Surgery



Sarah McClain and William Hassell enjoy a father-daughter moment at Hocking Hills. They both had surgery at Licking Memorial Hospital and were pleased with the staff’s excellent care.

Department at Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH). “I had already had two unrelated surgeries in the new Surgery Pavilion at Licking Memorial, so I knew I was going to receive excellent care,” William said. “The staff is awesome.”

William was able to return home the same day after his operation, and he noticed the benefits of the surgery immediately. “I could breathe

again,” he remembered, “and as a result, I had a lot more energy.”

Members of the Hassell family need all the energy they can get. William’s wife, Kelly, their 9-year-old daughter, Sarah McClain, and William’s 14-year-old daughter, Samantha, share a passion for travel, exploration and spending as much time as possible in the outdoors. William explained, “We just love the wilderness. We enjoy camping, hiking, fishing and

going to zoos. Kelly and I want the girls to experience as much diversity and new experiences in life as they can.”

William and Sarah McClain have also shared the experience of surgery at LMH. “Sarah McClain has had some problems with her ears for a long time. She had her tonsils and adenoids removed, which helped a lot. Next, she will be returning for surgery to have the tubes in her ears adjusted,” William said. “I think the operations are harder on the parents than on the children, but having Dr. Parker as a doctor makes it easier. He is very genial, and he talks to Sarah McClain, not as a child, but as a person. She really opened up to him – it is a very trusting relationship, so that helps. We feel very comfortable in entrusting our daughter’s care to Dr. Parker because we know he is an excellent surgeon.”

## High-Tech Surgery Offered at Licking Memorial Hospital

When Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) expanded its surgical facilities by moving to the new John & Mary Alford Pavilion in 2007, the scope of patient care expanded as well. The new operating rooms (ORs) in the Pavilion were designed with much larger space, which allows the surgical teams to incorporate more state-of-the-art equipment for faster, more accurate procedures.

Howard Reeves, D.O., FACOS, who is Chief of the Department of Surgery at LMH, explained, “Computer integrated surgery has greatly advanced our capabilities, and the hybrid interventional radiology rooms allow the surgeons to X-ray and perform open surgery at the same time. The bi-plane and fluoroscopy equipment for that technology is very large, so spacious rooms were planned accordingly.”

Dr. Reeves reported the high-tech equipment achieves better outcomes for patients. “The procedures we can do in the hybrid rooms are minimally invasive, so we are seeing significantly less recovery times, less infection, fewer pulmonary complications and less nausea and vomiting, postoperatively.”

One example of an interventional vascular procedure that is now available at LMH due to the Surgery Department expansion is the repair of arterial aneurysms. The procedure formerly required a lengthy patient stay, and now patients can often return home within a couple of days after the surgery. Balloon kyphoplasty, an interventional radiology procedure, provides pain relief and spinal repair for patients with compressed vertebrae. Few other hospitals in central Ohio are able to offer kyphoplasty due to their limited resources.

The Hassells moved to Newark from Kentucky in 2006, and before that, they lived in Mississippi. Both William and Kelly work at Diversified Maintenance. William is the retail technician at JCPenney at Polaris and Kelly is the area manager for central Ohio. Samantha is in the ninth grade in Pearl, Mississippi, and Sarah McClain is a fourth grader at Legend Elementary School in Newark. They are looking forward to playing in the snow this winter, which is a diverse experience to the climate they knew in Mississippi.

“The hybrid OR is wonderful,” Dr. Reeves said. “We are extremely fortunate to have some of the most advanced equipment and facilities anywhere, let alone in a community hospital. Licking Memorial is setting precedents for hybrid ORs. Few hospitals can offer this service because of the cost and space required. They just do not have the space to accommodate it.”

In 2008, more than 6,500 patients had surgery at LMH. A partial list of the common surgeries includes:

- Abdominal procedures – colon, rectum, gall bladder, liver, pancreas, hernia, stomach, and small intestine
- Breast disease
- Cancer surgeries
- Endocrine surgeries – thyroid and parathyroid
- Tonsillectomies
- Intravenous ports
- Laparoscopic – gall bladder and diagnostic
- Skin and soft tissue – “lumps and bumps,” skin cancer and melanoma
- Surgical critical care
- Vascular surgeries – angioplasty, carotid artery surgery, vascular bypass for occluded arteries, venous disease, and vascular studies