



Licking Memorial Health Systems

1320 West Main Street
Newark, Ohio 43055

Please take a few minutes to read this month's report on **Patient Safety**.

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

Visit us at www.LMHealth.org.

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Quality Report Card

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Health Tips – Using Antibiotics Safely

Since the discovery of penicillin in 1928, antibiotics have had a tremendous impact on health care with their ability to cure bacterial and fungal infections. Unfortunately, improper antibiotic use has potentially dangerous risks. Here are some tips to ensure you are taking antibiotics correctly:

- Take your prescription as directed, and continue taking it until it is completely finished. If you discontinue your prescription as soon as you feel better, the infection may not be entirely cured, and you could suffer a relapse.
- Do not take another person's prescription, and do not share yours. Physicians carefully match the prescription to the patient's body requirements and type of infection. Taking someone else's medicine could be dangerous, even deadly.
- Do not use outdated drugs. The chemicals in some medications can change over time, becoming either weakened or dangerous.
- Do not ask your physician to prescribe an antibiotic for a cold or flu. Antibiotics are not effective against viruses, such as the ones that cause the common cold or flu.
- Never use medications that are intended for pets or livestock. Some animal antibiotics are deadly for humans.

Patient Safety – 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.

1 The Institute of Medicine published a report in 2000 that highlighted the stunning effects of medication errors. The report set forth a national agenda for reducing errors and improving patient safety by designing a safer health system. Although the medication error rate at Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) is significantly better than the national benchmark, we make continuous efforts to improve the process. LMH dispensed approximately 1 million doses of medication in 2010.

	LMH 2008	LMH 2009	LMH 2010	National ⁽¹⁾
Medication errors	0.008%	0.012%	0.014%	0.310%

2 Protecting patients from hospital-acquired infections is a primary patient safety goal. LMH has an ongoing program to prevent and treat infections in patients. Per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations, LMH tracks high-risk patients, including those with an increased risk of infection due to the presence of an invasive device, such as a ventilator, catheter or central venous line. The following data reflects how many infections occurred during 1,000 patient days compared to the national benchmarks.

	LMH 2008	LMH 2009	LMH 2010	National ⁽²⁾
Pneumonia Infection rate of ICU patients on ventilators	1.7	1.3	1.3	1.9
Urinary tract infection rate for ICU patients with urinary catheters	0.8	1.4	0.0	3.7
Bloodstream infection rate for ICU patients with central venous catheters	0	0	1.5	1.9

3 LMH conducts a comprehensive assessment to determine if a patient is at risk for a fall at admission and during the Hospital stay. Personal alarms and bed sensors help alert staff to a potential fall.

	LMH 2008	LMH 2009	LMH 2010	Goal
Inpatient falls	0.23%	0.33%	0.25%	less than 0.30%

4 Coumadin is a blood thinner (anticoagulant) used to help prevent and treat blood clots. The most common side effect of Coumadin is bleeding in any tissue or organ. It is important for patients to have their blood tested regularly. The blood test, called prothrombin time (PT) and International Normalized Ratio (INR), helps the physician determine how fast the blood is clotting and whether the dosage of Coumadin should change. The testing is very important and must be accomplished at recommended periodic intervals in order to keep the PT/INR result in the best and safest range for the medical condition. Licking Memorial Health Professionals (LMHP) has adopted this recommendation as a safety measure.

	LMHP 2008	LMHP 2009	LMHP 2010	Goal
LMHP patients on Coumadin with PT/INR in last two months	97%	96%	96%	greater than 90%

5 Metformin (trade name Glucophage) is a medication that is used in the treatment of diabetes mellitus and polycystic ovarian disease. It is an effective medication for treatment of both of these unrelated disease processes, but must be used cautiously in patients with compromised renal (kidney) function. It is recommended to monitor renal function prior to initiation of therapy and at least annually thereafter. Licking Memorial Health Professionals (LMHP) has adopted this recommendation as a safety measure.

	LMHP 2008	LMHP 2009	LMHP 2010	Goal
LMHP patients on Metformin with creatinine within last year	95%	91%	91%	greater than 90%

6 Venous thromboembolism (VTE) is a potentially life-threatening condition that results when a blood clot forms within a vein. If the clot becomes dislodged, it can travel to the lungs and cause serious harm or even death. The risk of developing a clot can be high with some studies estimating that approximately 10 to 20 percent of all hospitalized patients develop a clot. Risks are even higher for patients undergoing surgery, those who have suffered a stroke, and in cancer and trauma patients. Often, patients will have no symptoms when a clot has formed. By using preventive measures, such as blood thinners or mechanical devices, the risk for developing a clot can be significantly reduced. One study⁽³⁾ indicated that nationally, only about 34 percent of hospitalized patients at risk for developing clots receive these preventive measures. Due to the great risk of blood clots for patients, LMH has adopted a prevention protocol that applies to nearly all patients admitted to the Hospital to reduce their risk.

	LMH 2008	LMH 2009	LMH 2010 ⁽⁴⁾	Goal
Medical patients receiving VTE prophylaxis by end of Hospital day 2	76%	85%	89%	greater than 85%

7 LMHS recognizes the importance of keeping our staff healthy and lessening the likelihood that they will infect our patients with influenza while under their care. The Health Systems is committed to providing and encouraging free, easily accessible flu vaccines to all employees.

	LMHS 2008	LMHS 2009	LMHS 2010	LMHS Goal	National ⁽⁵⁾
LMHS employees receiving the seasonal influenza vaccine	77%	85%	85%	greater than 80%	62%

Data Footnotes: (1) *To Err Is Human – Building a Safer Health System*, National Academy Press, Washington D.C., 2000. (2) CDC National Healthcare Safety Network pooled median (ICU only) from January 2006 through December 2007, issued November 2008. (3) Anderson, FA *IMPROVE; Blood* 2003. (4) 2009 data reflects only fourth quarter data using new CMS specifications. (5) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Interim Results: Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Coverage Among Health-Care Personnel. *MMWR* April 2, 2010 / 59(12); 357-362.

Patient Story – Michael Sussman

As a senior care provider, Pataskala resident Mike Sussman knows that excellent patient care depends on details. “As soon as you walk into the front lobby of Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH), you notice that the Hospital is very clean, and the place looks so nice that it gives you a good impression right away. You just know the staff is going to take good care of you. Then, when you discover the advanced technology that is available at LMH, you wonder why anyone would travel someplace else for their health care.”



Michael Sussman found that Licking Memorial Hospital has a high level of technology, professionalism and convenience.

Mike has been making monthly visits to LMH’s Anticoagulation Clinic for nearly two years, ever since his Columbus surgeon discontinued monitoring services for the regular blood tests he needs. “I take the anticoagulant drug, warfarin (sold under the brand names: Coumadin and Jantoven), to prevent blood clots. I need monthly monitoring to check the clotting level of my blood, and to ensure that my diet and other medications are not interfering with the warfarin. After my surgeon notified me that he would no longer provide the service, I tried to make other arrangements through a Columbus hospital to have another physician monitor my blood tests, but that hospital’s staff was not helpful at all, and even seemed to be annoyed by my request.”

Mike’s family physician, Megan Miller, D.O., of Licking Memorial Family Practice – Hebron, suggested that he visit the

Anticoagulation Clinic at LMH. “I admit that I was skeptical about going to LMH at first,” Mike said. “I had been there a couple of times back in the 1970s and 1980s, and I was not impressed. However, when I called for an appointment, the staff member who answered the phone sounded really friendly and professional. My next impression of LMH came from the parking lot. It was well maintained and landscaped, and the parking was so convenient and free of charge. The last time I had a test done in Columbus, it took 45 minutes just to find a parking spot.”

“LMH today is nothing like the hospital that I remembered from 30 or 40 years ago,” Mike continued. “The facility is outstanding – comparable to hospitals in larger cities – and the staff is experienced and compassionate. When I arrived at the LMH Anticoagulation Clinic on the sixth floor, the staff greeted me with pleasant smiles. After answering a few questions, I took a seat in the waiting area, and an STNA soon called me back to a patient care room to take my blood pressure, asked some questions about my diet, and encouraged me to ask questions in return. Next, I met with a pharmacist who is very knowledgeable about drug therapy and drug interactions. They are very prompt at the Anticoagulation Clinic – I have never had to wait

Patient Story – Mike Sussman (continued from previous page)

more than five minutes to be seen. I find that all the staff at LMH are genuinely interested in my welfare, and will go out of their way to help me; whereas in Columbus, I felt like a ‘number’ because they were too busy to spend any significant amount of time with me. Every time I leave the Anticoagulation Clinic, I receive a printout of my medication instructions and a sense that the staff is really looking out for me.”

Mike recently had another opportunity to compare hospital services. “I had an ultrasound at one of the Columbus hospitals, but the technician did not seem to know how to operate the equipment well, and just did not seem professional. A couple of months later, I had an ultrasound at LMH for a suspected kidney ailment. That experience was much better. The technician was well-trained, efficient and friendly. Afterward, I met with Dr. Tewolde (Nephrologist Hintsu Tewoldemedhin, M.D.). He diagnosed my condition

immediately, and said that I did not have a kidney problem – I had a medication problem. He advised me to eliminate one of my medications, and the problem cleared up a few months later. Dr. Tewolde is spectacular. He takes more time with patients than any other doctor I know.”

Mike lives in Pataskala with his wife, Vicki, and son, Adam. He retired in 2009 from a commercial mortgage brokerage. Mike provided care for his father who had Alzheimer’s disease, and his mother, who had chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and both experiences influenced him to become a senior care provider. He frequently discusses LMH’s advantages with those he meets because he believes that the Hospital’s technology and convenience, as well as the staff’s professionalism and positive attitude, are valuable resources that should be shared with as many friends and family members as possible.

Drug Safety Depends on Physician, Pharmacist and Patient

Physicians have a long list of brand name and generic prescriptions available to treat their patients’ illnesses. Most of these drugs are generally considered safe after receiving intense scrutiny by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). However, the safety of the drugs may be compromised by the patient’s health, interactions with other drugs or supplements, and the patient’s own compliance. Although physicians receive extensive training in drug therapy, many recommend that patients also take advantage of services offered by pharmacists who specialize in pharmacology.



Matthew J. Farrell,
M.D.

Matthew J. Farrell, M.D., of Licking Memorial Family Practice – Granville, said, “Thousands of drugs are available with varying strengths and forms, and the FDA approve more each month. Physicians have a vast amount of knowledge about the way drugs affect the patient’s body and which work best for each condition. When we prescribe a new medication, we educate the patient on the reason for the drug,

how to take it, and possible side effects. Whenever possible, Licking Memorial Health Professionals physicians now send prescriptions electronically to the patient’s pharmacy to prevent any errors concerning handwritten instructions. We even give our patients a printout of all their current prescriptions at the end of each office visit.”

Dr. Farrell recommends that patients who have questions about their medication following an office visit should consult their pharmacist. “Pharmacists do much more than fill your prescriptions,” he explained. “They have had extensive training in drug therapy and possible interactions. They can often advise patients about the best way to take medications, or whether certain over-the-counter drugs are safe for them to take.”

“A qualified pharmacist has an important role in my patients’ overall health care,” Dr. Farrell added. “Because there is a potential for adverse drug interactions, it is in the patients’ best interest to have a single pharmacy manage their medications. Even though some pharmacies may offer incentives for new or transferred prescriptions, that practice may be contrary to the patients’ well-being. Patients should fill all their prescriptions at just one pharmacy where their medical history, allergies, and medications list are on file so that the pharmacist can oversee the entire drug regimen.”

Medications can become dangerous if they are used incorrectly. To prevent undesired effects and to receive maximum benefit, patients should:

- Check with the pharmacist if a drug looks different than usual
- Follow instructions for dosage amounts and time intervals
- Follow instructions for taking drug with food or water
- Store all medications in a cool, dry place
- Take the entire prescription, unless otherwise instructed
- Avoid sharing prescriptions with others
- Keep an updated list of all your medications at home and take it to all physician and hospital visits

