



## Twins doubleheader

PAGE 2

---

## Nichole Koirala's twins

were worth the wait

PAGE 4

---

## Abigail Degner's twins

came early

PAGE 5

---

## Orthopedics expands,

welcomes surgeon  
Greg Erickson, MD

PAGE 8

---

## Jane Shorter

healed her wounds  
(and worry) after surgery

PAGE 10

---

## Hospital Foundation

welcomes . . . you

PAGE 12

---

**Northfield Hospital**  
celebrates 20 years (and 113 years)

PAGE 14





 **Twins doubleheader**

One family is from Cannon Falls. The other is from Lonsdale. They both had twins at Northfield Hospital . . . on the same day. So much in common. Such different experiences.

**READ MORE!**





## Nichole Koirala's twins were worth the wait



**Nichole and Saroj Koirala experienced four miscarriages before getting pregnant with twins.**

"We found out at 5 weeks that it was twins," Nichole says. The Cannon Falls couple chose NH+C's Birth Center early on: "We fell in love with the place when our son Ethan was born here" nearly eight years ago.

Nichole chose the Women's

Health Center for her prenatal care. "They took such great care of me," she says. "They did an ultrasound at each appointment, so we could hear each baby's heartbeat. That was one of my scariest things: Would we hear the heartbeats or not? They took care of me during all of my

miscarriages, so they understood my worries. *They were all so encouraging.*"

OB/GYN Nicole Dohm-Palmer, MD "answered all my crazy questions," Nichole adds. "Anytime I was nervous, she encouraged me to get checked. She told me that all my feelings were valid."

Nichole came to the Birth Center a few times to check on the babies when she felt nervous that they weren't moving much. Staff used a fetal monitor to check heartbeats and movement. "They were so helpful to ease my mind," Nichole recalls. "After so many losses, sometimes you just need that reassurance that everything is okay." Extra appointments and monitoring – standard practice with twins – reassured her, too.

Nichole developed gestational diabetes (slightly more common with twins) – so labor was induced

*continued on page 6 >*



## Abigail and Nick Degner's twins came early

**Abigail Degner had been in pre-term labor for almost 7 weeks, with occasional contractions.**

When she started spotting, she called the Women's Health Center. They sent her and husband Nick to the Birth Center.

"We expected to get monitored and sent home again," Abigail says. Instead, OB/GYN Ngoc Vu, MD started planning a transfer to Abbott Northwestern Hospital, with a neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) for premature babies.

When the ambulance arrived, Abigail was in labor – too painful for her to lie on the stretcher. She had dilated to 8 centimeters in less than an hour. "Dr. Vu said, 'You're not going to Abbott; you're having the babies here,'" Abigail says. "I thought, 'Right now?'"

Yes. Right now. One baby's heart rate was dropping. Abigail needed an emergency cesarean section.



"They kicked Nick out of the room," Abigail recalls, and wheeled her into surgery. "They must have had five nurses out there with me," Nick says. "It meant a lot, because I would have lost my mind otherwise."

Colton and Sterling were born at 31 weeks, 5 days. "They didn't cry at first," Abigail recalls. "I didn't know they were even born, because they were so quiet."

When Nick was brought into the operating room, "*It was tough seeing the boys in two different corners, and Abi in the middle,*" he says. "I didn't know where to be."

Neonatal specialist Sara Gergen, MSN, CPNP-PC, NNP-BC led the team caring for Colton and Sterling. Nick was with them; Abi was still recovering, and wouldn't

*continued on page 7 >*

## **Koirala:** Worth the wait

< *continued from page 4*

at 38 weeks for the babies' health, and her own. She was given Pitocin to start labor.

"Everyone was great at every step of the way," Nichole says. "During labor, they couldn't catch Owen's heartbeat. They wanted to do a probe on his head, but they let me decide. They gave us options, let us talk it over, and let us make the decision." Nurse Chloe Port, RN "let us know that we were in control."

Then a second complication: Levi was breech. OB/GYN Ngoc Vu, MD was able to turn the baby in utero, avoiding breech delivery or a cesarean section.

Meanwhile, another set of twins was being delivered

down the hall. Nichole's team adjusted her Pitocin to coordinate timing as much as possible. Nichole's labor progressed naturally, and Owen and Levi were born a half hour apart, "both great, healthy and happy."



"With twins, you never know what to expect," Nichole says. "We had a plan going in, but knew it might not happen that way." In the end, "it couldn't have gone better."

And big brother Ethan? "He was over the moon," Nichole smiles. "When we came home, he was waiting on the front steps to meet his brothers."

Nichole's advice for nervous new parents: "Ask any questions you have.

There's no such thing as a stupid question.

Northfield Hospital helps any way they can. They're always there to answer."

## **BIRTH CENTER DELIVERS ON TWINS**

The Birth Center at Northfield Hospital is well-prepared to deliver twins.

Like all hospitals, we deliver twins in a surgical suite with enough room for a full care team. The Birth Center has a dedicated surgical suite that's designed for family-centered delivery (vaginal and cesarean section) with your support person as part of the birth. We create a family-centered experience that lets you focus on your babies, and allows for immediate family bonding.

We partner with Abbott Northwestern, M Health and Mayo Clinic for pre-term deliveries or complications,

and with Children's of Minnesota, M Health and Mayo when newborns born here need a higher level of care.

**Our care team includes:**

- Five OB/GYN doctors, experienced in pre-natal care and delivery of twins
- Maternal-fetal medicine specialist Steve Calvin, MD for high-risk pregnancies
- Two neonatal nurse practitioners with special expertise caring for newborns
- OB nurses who balance skilled medical care with a passion for nurturing family bonding

The Birth Center is a comfortable option, close to home, with the expertise that most twins need.

## **Degner:** Service above and beyond

< *continued from page 5*

meet her sons for a few more hours.

"A nurse came running in to me and said, 'Baby B's eyes are open! I need your phone to take a picture for you,'" Abigail says.

Colton and Sterling were transferred to Children's Hospital, where they spent six weeks in NICU. During pre-natal visits, OB/GYN Deb Suppes, MD had prepared Abigail and Nick for this possibility: "She prepared us mentally that if they were born before 35 weeks we'd get separated, so when it happened it wasn't a huge shock."

"It went the best it could for the situation it was," Abigail says.

Abigail and Nick asked to have the twins transferred back to Northfield Hospital, to be closer to their home in Lonsdale. "We felt we would have gotten as good or better care than Children's, based on the experience we had at Northfield Hospital," Nick says. (They stayed at Children's. NH+C partners with Children's and other hospitals for specialized care, so all patients get the right level of care they need.)

Now home and healthy, the twins are growing well,

and growing into their personalities. "Sterling is more serious, and Colton is more chill. They're both happy, and the sweetest babies," Abigail says. Big brother Dominic dotes on them.



Abigail is grateful that Dr. Vu and nurse Jen Schuhmacher, RN paid such close attention to her cues early on: "If they didn't, the boys would have been born in the ambulance."

"For a doctor we never met and who didn't know Abi, I'm blown away that Dr. Vu did this so well," Nick says. "Dr. Vu went above and beyond. She visited Abi afterwards, and gave me a hug several times. She cared about how we were feeling. She's not your typical doctor."

Abigail and Nick also credit Birth Center nurse Davi Carlson, RN; Women's Health Center nurse Katie Matheson, LPN; patient advocate Angelina Holder, RN; and nurse anesthetist Sarah Monson, CRNA with exceptional care and attention.

Their advice for families expecting twins? "Buckle up," Abigail laughs. Nick adds, "Remind yourself that other people have done this too. Remember that it's a blessing."

Times two.

"Dr. Vu went above and beyond. She visited Abi afterwards, and gave me a hug several times. She cared about how we were feeling. She's not your typical doctor."

**Nick Degner, Lonsdale**





# Orthopedics team welcomes new surgeon

NH+C's orthopedics practice expands with the arrival of surgeon **Greg Erickson, MD**, who joins popular orthopedic surgeons **Hans Bengtson, MD** and **Clinton Muench, MD**

Now, the full orthopedics team can care for more patients and offer more options for surgery.

NH+C's orthopedics care covers a broad region, from the south metro to Faribault, and across southeastern Minnesota from Cannon Falls and Red Wing to Lonsdale and Montgomery. Appointments take place in five clinics across the region. Surgeries take place at Northfield Hospital.



**Greg Erickson, MD**

Dr. Erickson comes to NH+C from Mayo Clinic – and the Air Force. He attended medical school at Wake Forest University in North Carolina on a health profession scholarship through the Air Force. Dr. Erickson interned at Andrews Air Force Base near Washington DC, then completed his orthopedic training and residency at University of California Davis in Sacramento. While on active duty, he practiced as an orthopedic surgeon in the Air Force for seven years. After fulfilling his military commitment, Dr. Erickson completed an orthopedic sports medicine fellowship at the University of Utah, where he received specialized training in shoulder and knee arthroscopy. He has since transitioned to

civilian practice in orthopedics and sports medicine.


"In the Air Force core values, the first one is 'Integrity first,'" Dr. Erickson says. "I try to live by that."

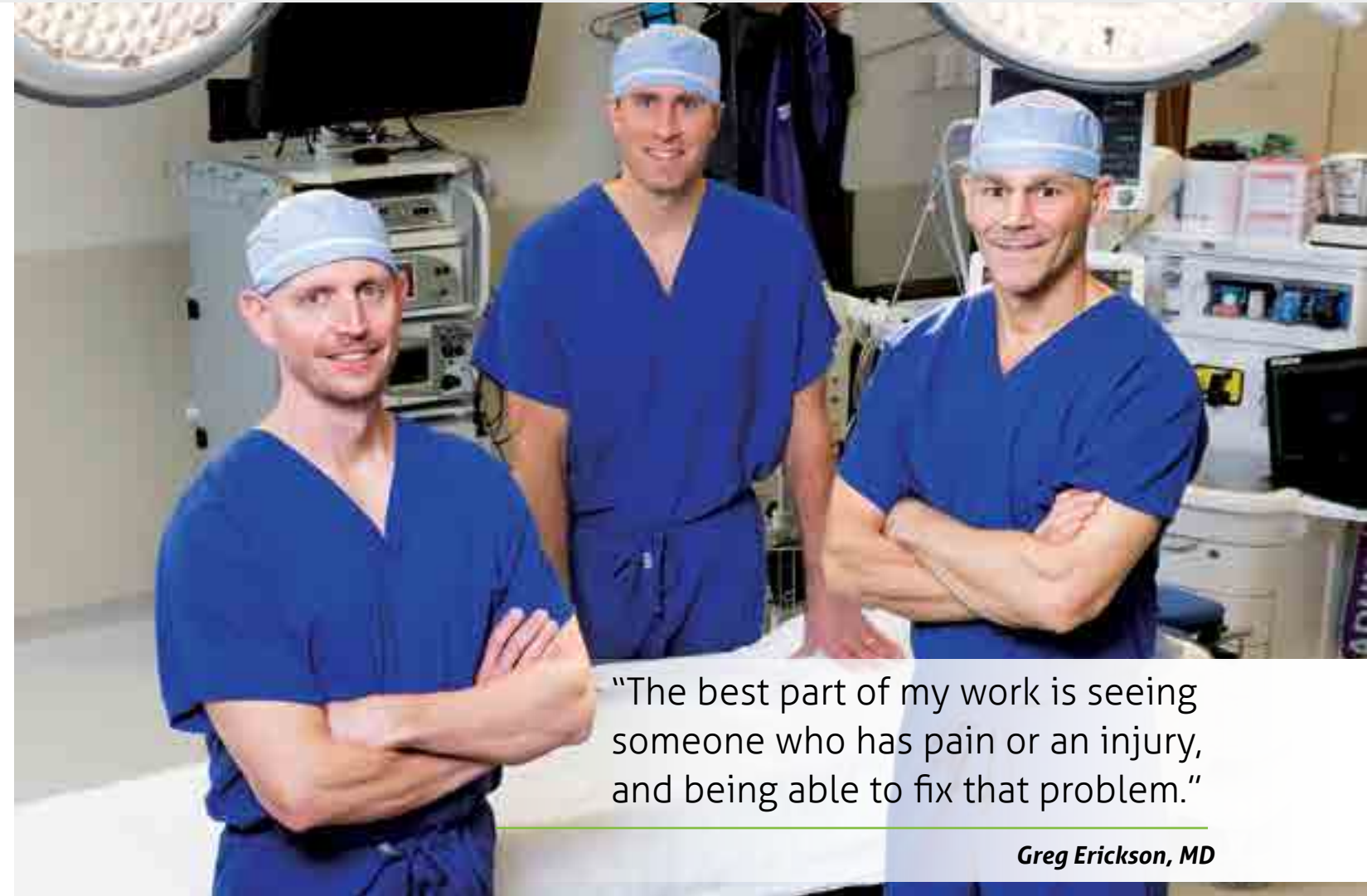
Special interests:

- Knee replacement and knee injuries
- Arm and shoulder injuries (arthroscopy, rotator cuff, shoulder instability, bicep tendons)
- Hand surgeries (carpal tunnel, trigger finger)
- Injections (knee, shoulder)
- Sports medicine

Dr. Erickson was first drawn to surgery during medical school. His interest in sports and sports-related injuries led him to a career in orthopedics.

"Orthopedics is the ability to fix things," he says. "The best part of my work is seeing someone who has pain or an injury, and being able to fix that problem. Seeing someone get back to activities they like to do or improving their quality of life – that's really rewarding."

 **Make an appointment:**  
507-646-8900



"The best part of my work is seeing someone who has pain or an injury, and being able to fix that problem."

**Greg Erickson, MD**

**Greg Erickson, MD, Hans Bengtson, MD and Clinton Muench, MD**

## ORTHO PATIENTS SPEAK FROM EXPERIENCE



**Rebecca Gummow** skated through ankle surgery. "Trust the team. They know what they're doing."



**Teri Knight** is back in top gear. "When you start to get a little older, you get a little more concerned about falling. This makes me a lot more confident."



When **David Sindelar's** arm started looking like Popeye's, it was time for help. "You don't know what you're missing until it's fixed."



When **Eric Lundin** fixed his knee, it helped his whole body. "This gives me hope that my quality of life – and my tennis game – will be lots better."



**Stephanie McCarren's** smile comes easy now, thanks to new joints in her legs. "I'm the happiest I've ever been, and I know it's because of my health."

 **Read more at**  
[northfieldhospital.org/patient-stories](http://northfieldhospital.org/patient-stories)





# Jane Shorter healed the wounds (and worry) that surgery left behind

## Jane developed difficult wounds after cancer surgery and radiation.

To heal them, Jane needed hyperbaric oxygen therapy: This therapy delivers 100% oxygen to the patient inside a pressurized chamber, enabling the lungs to take in more oxygen. The bloodstream carries the extra oxygen to the injured area to fight bacteria and stimulate growth factors and stem cells that promote healing.

Jane needed daily treatments. But after months of traveling from her Lonsdale home to Rochester for surgery and radiation, Jane wanted an option closer to home.

From the first time she met with her care team at NH+C's Wound Healing Center, "they were very caring and considerate," Jane says. "They wanted me to get better. They got me scheduled right away, and worked diligently to get me what I needed," including PE tubes in her ears to protect her ear drums from pressure changes in the oxygen chamber. (ENT specialist Gerard O'Halloran, MD performed the procedure.)

Oxygen therapy appointments are long: Jane was in the chamber about two hours for each 90-minute treatment, with time to bring the pressure inside the chamber up (and then down) gradually. "There's always a nurse there, and they want to make sure you're comfortable," with pillows, water bottle, and TV tuned to the station you want, Jane recalls.

"Once it started healing, it healed faster as time went on," Jane says.

Jane had 45 oxygen treatments, plus weekly appointments to manage dressings, treat seepage, and monitor for infection. Wound specialist Jillian Simon, APRN, FNP-BC, CWON, "immediately changed how I was caring for my wounds at home," Jane recalls. "If anything looked at all suspicious, the team made adjustments to keep me going with my care." Surgeon Ellie Cohen, MD examined Jane each week, and coordinated with Mayo surgeons who performed Jane's earlier surgeries.

"I really felt like I was getting taken care of by everybody," Jane says. "They're always upbeat, and very caring. That makes a big difference when you're going through a health challenge."

"It was a very good experience in a bad situation."



Jillian Simon, APRN



Ellie Cohen, MD

Jane Shorter, Lonsdale

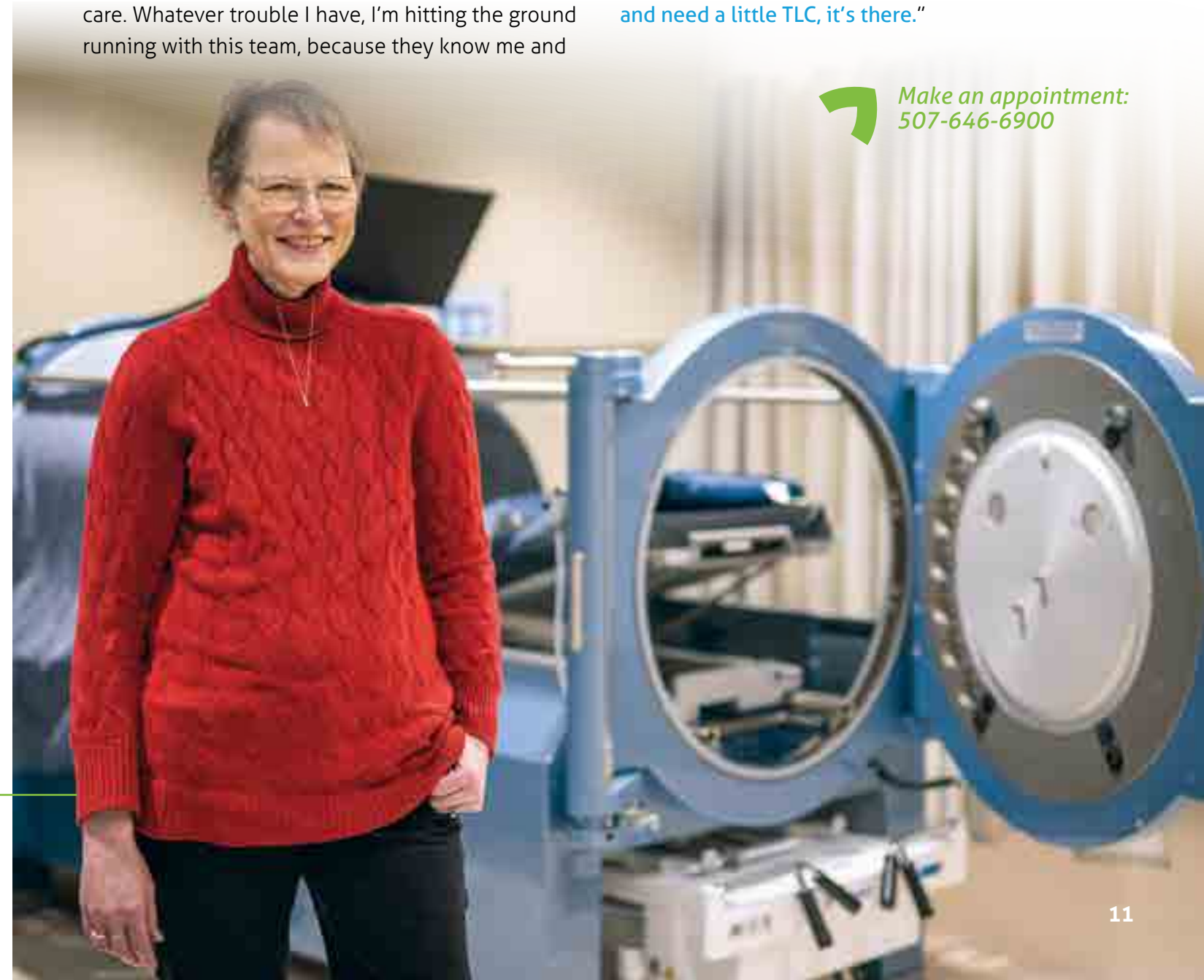
After 3 months, Jane's wounds were fully healed. "It was a very good experience in a bad situation."

"They always know me at Northfield Hospital, and that makes me feel good," Jane adds. "It is such quality care. Whatever trouble I have, I'm hitting the ground running with this team, because they know me and

that helps physically as well as emotionally."

Jane's advice for others facing post-surgical wounds: "If you don't think it's healing right, get to the Wound Healing Center. **When you've had trauma in your life and need a little TLC, it's there.**"

 **Make an appointment:**  
507-646-6900





# Northfield Hospital Foundation: A healthier future for all

## At Northfield Hospital, we touch lives every day.

Now, you have a new opportunity, through your caring and generosity, to help support the power of the healing touch.

The new Northfield Hospital Foundation puts donations to work to enhance care in large and small ways, from the comfort of therapeutic blankets for patients to the purchase of high-tech equipment.

While healthcare is mostly funded through insurance and other sources, some needs are not covered. Your gift to the Foundation can help pay for patient care items, services, and equipment that enhance care.

### The little things that make all the difference:

- Monitors for hospice families to hear their loved one from another room
- iPads to keep connected to loved ones far away

**Donate online:** Donate by credit card, debit care or bank account at [northfieldhospital.org/donate](http://northfieldhospital.org/donate)

**Donate by check:** Checks made out to Northfield Hospital Foundation can be mailed to:  
Northfield Hospital Foundation  
2000 North Ave., Northfield MN 55057

**More information:** 507-646-1036 and [nfhfoundation@northfieldhospital.org](mailto:nfhfoundation@northfieldhospital.org)



- Weighted blankets to soothe and provide comfort during treatment
- Clothing and slippers for those who can't afford them
- Life enrichment activities for residents of Long Term Care

### The things that improve patient care for all:

- New technology and medical equipment
- New building projects
- Innovative programs to benefit patient care

Foundation gifts are not used for routine business operations.

The Foundation helps Northfield Hospital to exceed the normal boundaries of care for those touched by emergencies, illness, childbirth, long term care, and end of life. For those who have been touched by Northfield Hospital's exceptional care, it creates a path to say thank you in a way that allows other patients to experience this care.

"The Foundation gives us a way to support the jewel that we have in our own backyard," says Foundation board member Robert Morrison.

### The Foundation manages four funds:

- General Fund applies donations to areas of greatest need
- Hospice Fund helps patients and their families at the end of life
- Cancer Care Fund helps patients and families dealing with cancer

- Long Term Care Fund helps enrich the lives of Long Term Care residents

"The benefits of donations to the unrestricted general fund are limitless, supporting the longevity of NH+C and increasing the system's effectiveness," says Foundation board member CC Linstroth.

### Keep an Independent Hospital in Your Community

Since 1910, Northfield Hospital has been providing care for the communities we serve. As an independent organization, NH+C counts on the Foundation to enhance the personalized care we provide, and to position NH+C to deliver exceptional healthcare for generations.

When you contribute to the Northfield Hospital Foundation, you strengthen your community and improve health care for you, your friends and neighbors. We are grateful for your generosity.

Together, we touch the human spirit.



## DONORS SAY "THANK YOU"

Patients and their loved ones express their gratitude to Northfield Hospital through the Foundation:

"Northfield Hospital has been my family's go-to for all our health-care. I wanted to give something back as a thanks for all the years of service. **I gave to the general fund because it supports every area of Northfield Hospital.** The staff knows where it is most needed."

"Hospice came into our lives at just the right time. Our mother was dying, and they provided comfort,

reassurance, and everything we needed to make her remaining time the best. **I want every family facing the end of life to have what they need so they can focus on their loved one.**"

"The cancer was brutal. There was a lot of comfort to know that we could stay here in our own town and get the care that we needed. We were prosperous and insured. Maybe not everybody is as lucky. **Perhaps our donations can help somebody who needs help.** If the nurses need to get a new tooth-

brush for someone, they can. They know what is most needed."

"We wanted to be sure that if the Long Term Care Center staff came up with an idea for activities, or music programs, or other entertainment, **nothing would prevent them from doing things to take care of the residents.**"

*Donations are tax deductible. They can be made in memory or in honor of a special person.*

> [northfieldhospital.org/northfield-hospital-foundation](http://northfieldhospital.org/northfield-hospital-foundation)





# Northfield Hospital celebrates proud past, hopeful future

## In May, we celebrate the 20th anniversary of Northfield Hospital.

The current hospital on North Avenue in Dakota County was built in 2003.

We celebrate our 113th anniversary, too: Since 1910, Northfield Hospital has been caring for our community. It's been quite a ride – especially the last three years.

We're proud of our past, a tradition of exceptional care. We're optimistic for the future too, as we grow across the region, add and expand services, and care for an ever-increasing number of patients across the communities we serve.

Thank you for trusting us with your care.

### Time to Begin Again

After 64 years in its neighborhood home on West Second Street, Northfield Hospital needed more. The land-locked hospital that was built in 1939 could no longer accommodate emerging trends in healthcare: more outpatient services, a growing surgical practice, advanced technology.

Leaders envisioned an integrated medical campus on a 60-acre site. The hospital could consolidate services in one location, expand primary and

specialty care, have space and flexibility to adapt to future needs. St. Olaf College offered in 1996 to lease in virtual perpetuity a 60-acre site north of its campus. Hospital CEO Ken Bank said: "It is now time to begin again."

The new hospital would be built on the northwest edge of Northfield. Planners took advantage of rolling fields to provide calm and healing views of nature. The distinctive clock tower would become a reference point for visitors. At every turn, planners designed the facility with the patient experience in mind.

A groundbreaking ceremony was scheduled for September 13, 2001 to mark the investment in 21st century medicine, and commitment to the future of the community. And then the country was blindsided by 9/11, shaking the nation to its core. Hospital leaders considered postponing the groundbreaking but chose to go forward: A new hospital became a symbol of hope and healing.

In April 2003, the hospital staff symbolically walked from the hospital on West Second Street to the new hospital on North Avenue. It was only a few miles, but it was a path that ushered in an era of opportunity for Northfield Hospital to extend its unique combination of state-of-the-art care in a tranquil environment that's always welcoming: Healthcare that feels like home.



By May 2003, the move was complete. Babies were being born; patients were being treated; advanced diagnostics were employed. The new Northfield Hospital began earning its reputation as a regional medical destination.

Next, NH+C built a network of clinics to bring primary and specialty care, plus rehabilitation services, to communities across the region: Lonsdale, Farmington, Lakeville, Faribault, Kenyon.

Then, NH+C expanded and enhanced services on its hospital campus, including:

- Women's Health Center (2005)
- Breast Care Center (2010)
- Sleep Center (2011)
- Cancer Care & Infusion Center (2012)
- Surgery Center (2015)
- Wound Healing Center (2021)
- Birth Center expansion (2020-21)

Services also grew with new locations across the region:

- Urgent Care Lakeville (2013)
- Kenyon Clinic (2021)
- Urgent Care Northfield (2022)

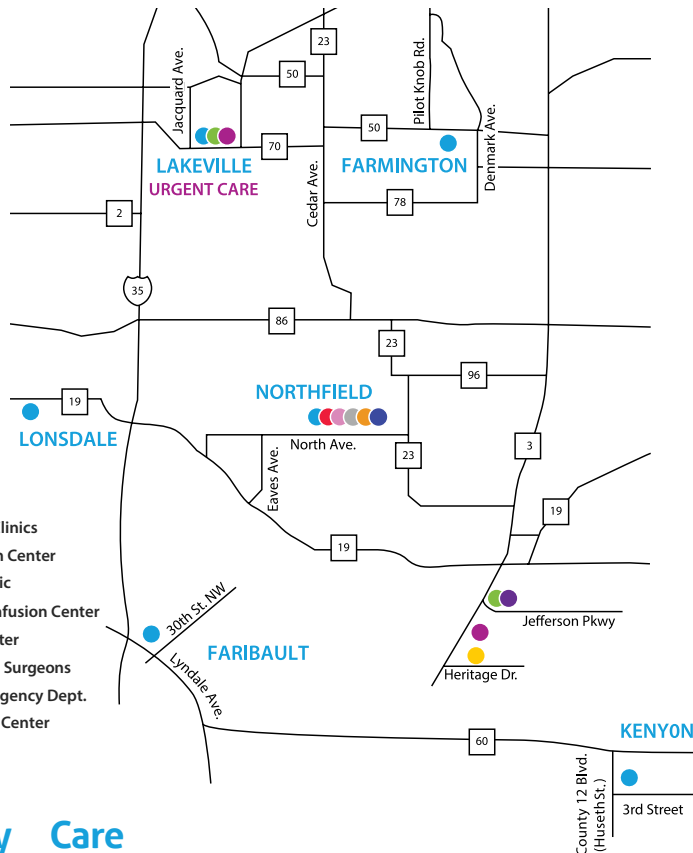
Whatever shape the future takes, NH+C's longstanding spirit of compassionate care will continue to guide the mission, the vision, and our dedication to caring for our communities.





2000 North Avenue  
Northfield, MN 55057

## Clinics, Hospital + Specialty Care close to you



### Hospital + Emergency

#### Northfield Hospital + Emergency

2000 North Avenue, Tel: 507-646-1000

### Clinics + Urgent Care

#### Faribault Clinic

1980 30th St. NW (at Lyndale Ave.), Tel: 507-334-1601

#### Farmington Clinic

4645 Knutsen Drive, Tel: 651-460-2300

#### Kenyon Clinic

225 Huseth Street, Tel: 507-623-0123

#### Lakeville Clinic + URGENT CARE

9974 214th Street W., Tel: 952-469-0500

#### Lonsdale Clinic

103 15th Avenue SE, Tel: 507-744-3245

#### Northfield Clinic

2000 North Avenue, Tel: 507-646-1494

#### Northfield URGENT CARE

2014 Jefferson Road (Hwy 3), Tel: 507-646-6700

*Specialty care available at multiple clinic locations*

## Specialty Care

**Breast Care Center – Northfield**  
2000 North Avenue, Tel: 507-646-1143

**Cancer Care & Infusion Center – Northfield**  
2000 North Avenue, Tel: 507-646-6979

**Endoscopy – Northfield**  
2000 North Avenue, Tel: 507-646-1201

**Northfield Eye Physicians + Surgeons**  
2019 Jefferson Road, Tel: 507-645-9202

**Orthopedics Clinic – Northfield**  
1381 Jefferson Road, Tel: 507-646-8900

**Rehabilitation Clinics**  
Northfield: 1381 Jefferson Road  
Tel: 507-646-8800  
Lakeville: 9913 – 214th Street West  
Tel: 952-985-2020

**Sleep Center – Northfield**  
2000 North Avenue, Tel: 507-646-1099

**Women's Health Center – Northfield**  
2000 North Avenue, Tel: 507-646-1478

**Wound Healing Center – Northfield**  
2000 North Avenue, Tel: 507-646-6900



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WE'RE ONLINE

