



Ashland Health Center
"Your Community Health Center"

THE CONNECTION

NOVEMBER | 2020

Keeping up-to-date with what is going on at Ashland Health Center.



Patient Christmas Fundraiser

It is that time of year when we start thinking about the upcoming holidays. Every year the AHC employees come together to organize a soup supper to raise money for the patient's Christmas gifts. However, due to the many changes with Covid-19 we think it's best to forgo the soup supper this year.

After brainstorming how we could still do a fundraiser for the patients, we have decided to host a Facebook on-line auction. This allows even those not able to travel to still take part in the fun. Our patients will draw themes for each department basket.

The auction will start on Tuesday, November 10th and end Friday, November 20th at 2:00 p.m. We will contact you on Monday, November 23rd to pick up your basket. Please go to the Ashland Health Center Facebook page to see each basket and place your bid.

Donations are welcome if anyone wishes to send a gift towards the Patient Christmas Fundraiser. Our mailing address is P.O. Box 188 Ashland, KS 67831. As always, we appreciate your wonderful gifts that help make our patient's Christmas a success.

AHC Offers Low-Dose Lung Cancer Screenings



In effort to provide multiple cancer screening tools, Ashland Health Center offers Low-Dose Lung Cancer Screening CTs. According to the American Cancer Society, lung cancer is by far the leading cause of cancer death among both men and women, making up almost 25% of all cancer deaths. Lung cancer mainly occurs in older people; a very small number of people diagnosed are younger than 45. In September

of 2002 a trial was launched to determine the benefits of having a low-dose lung cancer screening CT. Over 50,000 people aged 55 to 74 who were current or former smokers and were in fairly good health entered the trial. Participants were required to have at least a 30 pack per year history of smoking or had quit smoking within the past 15 years, they could not have a prior history of lung cancer or lung cancer symptoms. Participants received either three low-dose CTs or three chest x-rays, each a year apart, to look for abnormal areas in the lungs that might be cancer. After several years, the trial found that participants who received the low-dose CTs had a 20% lower chance of dying from lung cancer than those who received the chest x-rays.

There are several benefits to getting an annual low-dose lung cancer screening CT. It is effective for diagnosing lung cancer at its earliest, most treatable stage; CT is fast, painless and noninvasive; and because it is so effective at diagnosing lung cancer at its earliest stage, patients more often undergo minimally invasive surgery and have less lung tissue removed. There are a few draw backs to low-dose lung cancer screenings, false-positive results may occur, which may lead to additional testing; false negative results may occur which means that there may be cancer there that the CT did not detect and cancers may be found that may never have harmed you which means that unnecessary treatment and cost may occur.

Guidelines for qualifying for a low-dose lung cancer screening include:

1. Must be 55 to 77 years old
2. Must be in fairly good health
3. Are a current smoker or former smoker who has quit in the past 15 years
4. Have at least a 30 pack per year smoking history (the number of years you have smoked multiplied by the number of packs of cigarettes per day).
5. Receive counseling to quit smoking if you are current smokers by their provider
6. Have been told by your provider about the possible benefits, limits, and harms of screening with low-dose CT scans.

At this time, most insurances will pay for yearly low-dose lung cancer screenings, provided you meet all the qualifying guidelines. For any additional questions or to schedule a low-dose lung cancer screening contact your AHC provider at the Ashland Health Clinic 620-635-2222 or contact the Radiology Department at 620-635-3124.



**CALL 635-2222 TO SCHEDULE
YOUR FLU SHOT TODAY!**



Allergies, Influenza or COVID-19? by Kim Farris, PA-C



"Achoo! Oh no! It is the dreaded "flu" season of 2020 and we are in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, but I am also allergic to tarantulas and one just crawled across my driveway! How do I know if I need to come to the Ashland Clinic for evaluation? Shall I stay home and enjoy a warm bowl of soup, take an allergy pill, or quarantine for two weeks?"

Well, let me help answer that question for you!

First, let us talk about those ALLERGIES. These will not cause you to have a fever, extreme fatigue, or body aches and pains. You may have sneezing, watery eyes, and if you

have a history or asthma or a reactive airway disease you can develop a dry cough. Go ahead and take that over-the-counter antihistamine.

Next, we will discuss the SEASONAL FLU aka "INFLUENZA." These are a group of viruses that circulate the globe all year long. They are most prevalent in our area usually from December through February and can be tracked seasonally from year to year. Hallmark symptoms of the flu include high fever (up to 102°F) which can last for 3-4 days, intense body aches and pains, extreme exhaustion, and cough which can become severe. Becoming sick with the flu is especially dangerous for children under the age of 2, adults over the age of 65, pregnant women, and anyone with a compromised immune system. Seasonal flu shots help protect against the three or four influenza viruses that research suggests may be most common during the upcoming season.

Finally, let us address COVID-19 aka the "Coronavirus." This virus is tricky. It can cause no symptoms or a myriad of symptoms. You can feel great and still pass it on to others unknowingly or become so sick you must be admitted to an Intensive Care Unit. It may or may not cause fevers, body aches, congestion, cough, sore throat, diarrhea, or fatigue. Distinguishing symptoms include loss of taste and smell. The best advice I have for this season is to get your flu shot, wash your hands frequently, wear a mask if you are going out in public, try to keep your distance with others at least two arms' length (about 6 feet) and cover your mouth/nose if you sneeze followed by washing your hands. If you do not feel good, STAY HOME. The reason for the mask is not for your health, it is to protect people around you from your own germs. Remember, COVID-19 can hide out in your body while you feel perfectly healthy and can travel outside your body to infect someone else. The mask is to ensure you keep all your cooties to yourself.

You may ask, "Why would I need to get my flu shot when the world seems to be concerned by the COVID-19 pandemic?" Some of the symptoms of flu and COVID-19 are similar, making it hard to tell the difference between them based on symptoms alone. It is also possible to test positive for other illnesses such as Influenza A/B, strep, and COVID-19 all at the same time. Remember, even influenza can be deadly. Flu vaccines have been shown to reduce the risk of flu illness, hospitalization, and death. Getting a flu vaccine this fall will be more important than ever, not only to reduce your risk from flu but also to help conserve potentially scarce health care resources. These vaccines are available now at the AHC clinic for a \$10 administrative fee plus: \$29 for the pediatric shot for children between 6months and 35 months, \$33 or the flu shot for children and adults (from 36 months old to 64 years old,) and \$76 dollars for the high dose shot for adults 65 years of age or older.

Last, by not least, if you can't taste your favorite pizza toppings, smell the fact your baby needs a diaper change, or you are just plain worried about your health, call the clinic at 620-635-2222 and make an appointment. We are here for you!

Employee Spotlight



Behind the Mask



Cherie was born in Wichita Falls, Texas. After being adopted at three years old she moved to Mena, Arkansas. During High School the chance to become a CNA was available and Cherie thought that

would be a good career path. She worked at Baptist Health in Arkadelphia Arkansas until her second child was born in 2003 and then took the opportunity to become a stay at home mom.

In 2015 Cherie moved to Ashland and worked at Red Hills convenience store and bar. She started working at AHC in February 2017 in Dietary Food Services. She married David Steele in March 2017. David has worked at Feed & Seed as a truck driver for almost eight years.

Recently Cherie has been working on her associates degree in photography. Her passion for photography comes from her parents because they took photos all the time! These memories are special to her and she wants to create those for others. During her free time... ya right! No free time with school and homework! Cherie and David do like to go fishing at Coldwater Lake and will sometimes have a competition to see who can catch the biggest fish for bragging rights.

