

The State of Health Care

» Wisconsin's innovative medical facilities may surprise you. BY NICOLE RESNICK

Wisconsin may be known for its award-winning cheese, loyal football fans and wintry climate, but it can also claim to be a leader in cutting-edge health care. A number of nationally recognized hospitals and health networks dot the state, attracting patients from around the country. Many renowned physicians practicing in the Milwaukee and Madison corridor offer state-of-the-art treatments and specialized services unlike any others in the surrounding regions.

We're fortunate to have so many high-

quality health care options essentially in our own backyard. From cardiac surgery to cancer, arthritis of the hip to malformation of the brain, you're covered. Read on for a sampling of innovative medical treatments and health care specialties available right here in our slice of Wisconsin.

MENDING A BROKEN HEART

One of the region's largest integrated health care systems, **Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare** includes six major hospitals in Southeast Wisconsin. At Wheaton

Franciscan's Wisconsin Heart Hospital, located in Wauwatosa, a revolutionary cardiac procedure called TECAB (shorthand for totally endoscopic coronary artery bypass) is drawing patients from all parts of the nation.

The key word in TECAB – endoscopic – denotes that it's a minimally invasive procedure, and it features a high-tech robotic system called the da Vinci Surgical System. Cardiothoracic surgeon Dr. Husam Balkhy, a pioneer in minimally invasive robotic surgery, was the force behind the system's arrival in Wisconsin.

"This procedure truly benefits coronary bypass patients," says Balkhy. "It eliminates the need for incisions and sutures so that patients are usually home two to three days after surgery and resume normal activity within two to three weeks." TECAB also means a reduced risk of infection, less pain and minimal scarring.

Since the debut of the TECAB procedure at Wisconsin Heart just over two years ago, Balkhy and his colleagues have treated more than 100 cardiac patients, the second-largest patient group in the country. Yet what sets he and his team apart from others using the da Vinci System, says Balkhy, can be described in just two words: closed chest.

"When we do TECAB, the patient's chest remains completely closed – there is no incision," he says. "This allows us to achieve our goal of minimizing surgical trauma while doing a perfect operation."

Jay Brigman may live in South Carolina, but he can vouch for Balkhy's claim. The 54-year-old had no hesitation about traveling to Wisconsin to undergo TECAB when he learned that Balkhy's expertise was like no other surgeon's.

Ironically, Brigman's job in pharmaceutical sales provided the opportunity years before to witness conventional open-heart bypass surgery. He told himself that day that should he ever develop a heart condition, he would never consent to having his chest opened and his heart stopped.

Yet when shortness of breath prompted Brigman to undergo a cardiac workup and he learned one of his main coronary arteries was 100 percent blocked, he had to reconsider the self-promise he made

Sweeta Gandhi George Hoffman Quinn Hogan Elena Holak Judy Kersten Kathryn Lau
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Wheaton Franciscan cardiothoracic surgeon Dr. Husam Balkhy

years before.

His cardiologist in South Carolina encouraged him to undergo an endoscopic procedure and sent his records north to Balkhy. After evaluating Brigman and deeming him an ideal candidate, Balkhy performed TECAB on him last November.

By the end of that day, Brigman was up and walking the hospital halls. Less than a week later, he was back on a plane with his family headed home.

“It really is an incredible procedure, and for someone with my self-imposed limitations, it was ideal,” says Brigman. “I’ve since resumed all activities without feeling short of breath or winded. I feel great.”

HEALING ENVIRONMENT

Patients undergoing chemotherapy often spend long hours receiving treatment as outpatients. While outpatient clinics are common at many health care facilities, **The Day Hospital at Froedtert & The Medical College of Wisconsin** is far from typical. A highly specialized setting for chemotherapy patients, it’s proving to be a model for other centers around the country.

Located at Froedtert’s new **Clinical Cancer Center**, The Day Hospital opened its doors a little more than 18 months ago. Its lead advocate was oncologist Dr. James Wade, the center’s chief of neo-

plastic diseases and related disorders. Explains Wade, the genesis of the facility is rooted in the idea that acutely ill patients who require long hours in an outpatient setting can still go home after treatment.

“This setup means they can get their treatment, yet still sleep in their own bed at night, eat their own food prepared in their home kitchen, and most importantly, be with their family members,” says Wade.

The freedom to go home after treatment provides patients a better sense of control and independence. According to Wade, studies have shown that patients who are required to do more for themselves recover faster and with better outcomes.

Another benefit of The Day Hospital is that multiple cancer specialists can treat and interact with patients more conveniently. Interdisciplinary care, which often includes oncologists, radiologists, surgeons and other specialists, is a critical component of cancer treatment.

“What we’ve achieved is a true patient-focused cancer home,” says Wade. “Our increased accessibility to patients with all kinds of schedules allows us to provide the ideal service.” Maximum accessibility is achieved through the hospital’s generous hours of operation – it’s open 14 hours each weekday and 11 hours on Saturdays and Sundays.

The Day Hospital offers private rooms with baths for patients who are more ill

or prefer to lie down during treatment. Along the outer corridors, where semi-private care is provided, floor-to-ceiling windows provide cheerful light and a soothing scenery of trees, ponds and lawns. Within each treatment bay, comfortable recliner chairs are widely spaced and include privacy curtains and seating for visitors. Wade notes with pride that the design of The Day Hospital is unique to this region.

Melanie Holmes underwent breast cancer treatment 10 years ago, then last July, she learned the cancer had recurred. This time, she’s undergoing chemotherapy at The Day Hospital. Her once-a-week treatment lasts four to five hours, and she resumes work as a senior executive for a national employment services firm three full days each week.

“When I went through chemo here the first time around, I was in a room with no windows and no privacy,” she says. “Here at The Day Hospital, it is so pleasant, and I really appreciate it. One of its best features is that you can see outside from virtually anywhere you are, and it really helps to take my mind off my treatment.”

LETTING KIDS BE KIDS

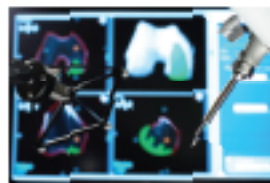
At the **UW Health American Family Children’s Hospital** in Madison, a special service helps children feel good about themselves as they heal. The **Positive Image**

THERE'S NOTHING LIKE A ROBOTIC KNEE REPLACEMENT TO GET YOUR LIFE MOVING AGAIN.



*Paul Komlodi
Waukesha*

And there's only one hospital in Wisconsin where you can find this amazing new technology – **Ozmenarroc Memorial.**



Having had surgery on one knee and ongoing pain in the other, Paul Komlodi lived his entire life on the couch, icing his knees. When his other knee finally

demanded attention, Paul decided to try MAKOplasty, a new robotic surgical technique for partial knee replacement.

Now, just 5 weeks later, he's riding his bike. He's dropping some weight. And he's ready to get back to work.

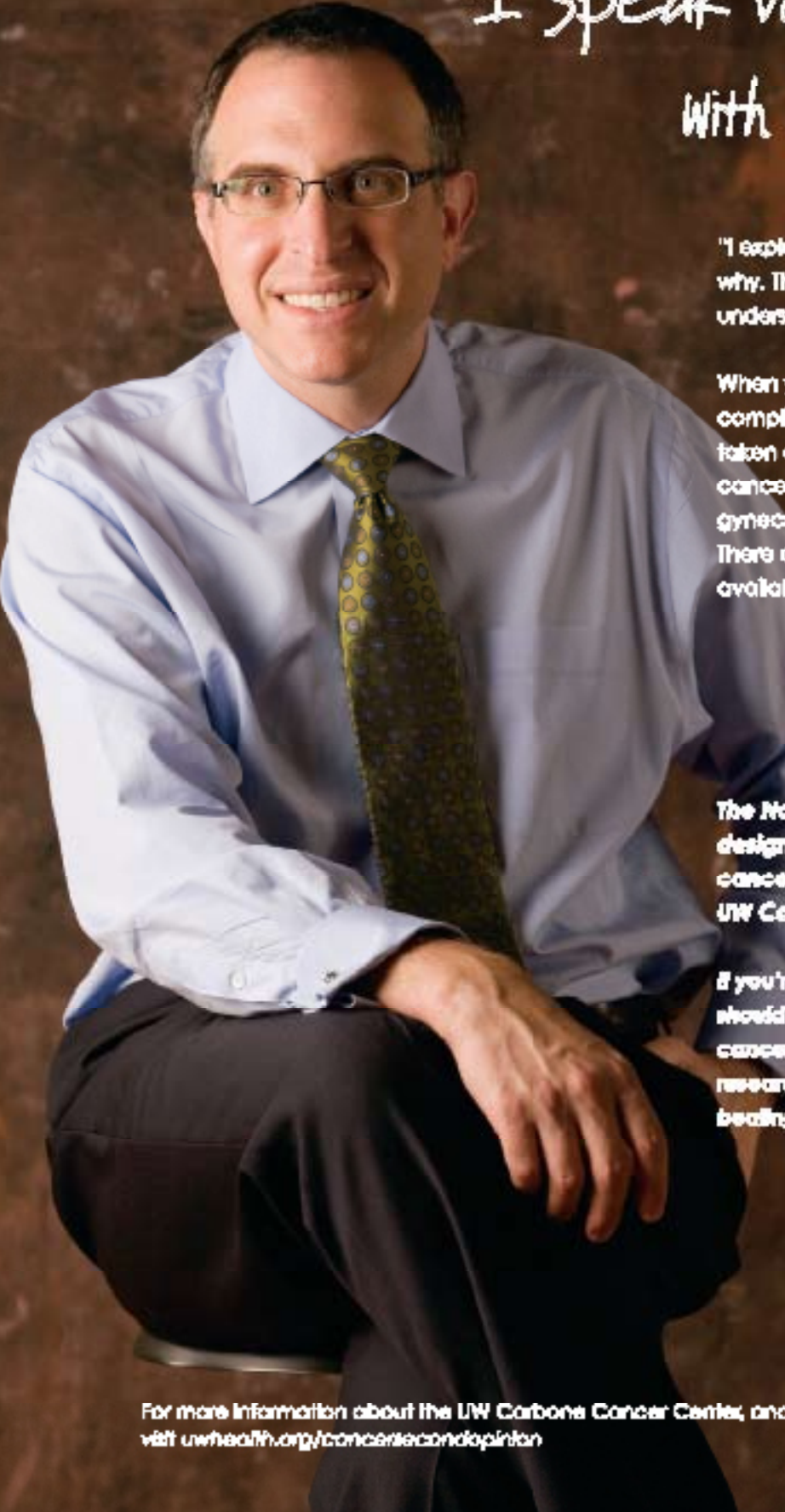
MAKOplasty is more precise, with typically less pain and a quicker recovery time. Because it's a partial knee replacement, the repair lasts longer – making it another option for knee pain sufferers. And a better choice for younger, more active people.

Most amazingly, this breakthrough technology is available, for the first time in the state, right in your backyard.

Physicians at ProHealth Care are doing some amazing things. If you'd like to get one, visit prohealthcare.org/doctors.



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*"I speak very honestly
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When you have something as serious and complicated as cancer, you want to be taken care of by somebody who treats cancer all the time. We have the largest gynecologic oncology program in the state. There are treatments here that just aren't available anywhere else."

— Dr. David Kushner,
Director, Gynecologic Oncology
UW Carbone Cancer Center

The National Cancer Institute has designated only one comprehensive cancer center in Wisconsin, the UW Carbone Cancer Center in Madison.

If you're facing a cancer diagnosis, you should be at the state's only comprehensive cancer center, where 200 physicians and researchers are focused on one goal—beating cancer.

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For more information about the UW Carbone Cancer Center, and how to get a second opinion, visit uwhealth.org/cancersecondopinion



Iris faces each day with a smile!

Iris Liesch of Watertown is a typical five-year-old... she loves reading, riding her bike and playing with her puppy. She takes on any challenge with a contagious, up-beat personality. And, she's had her share of obstacles. Born with a cleft lip and palate, Iris has had many surgeries in her young life and is a regular visitor to UW's American Family Children's Hospital in Madison.

"When we go to the craniofacial clinic, everybody is there," says her mom Amy Liesch. "Your plastic surgeon, speech therapy, pediatric ENT, social worker, genetics counselor... everybody just makes sure you don't have questions and all your needs are taken care of."

Iris' Watertown pediatrician, Dr. Jeff Meade, is impressed with the pediatric specialty care his patients receive in Madison. "With the American Family Children's Hospital, there is such a breath of caring that you receive that's different from other places," says Dr. Meade. "They talk to the families, they treat the families extraordinarily well and that's really what I'm looking for."

To see what an amazing little girl Iris is, visit uwhealth.org/amazingkids to watch a video of her story.

UWHealth 
American Family
Children's Hospital

Center might be mistaken for an inviting beauty salon, but that's the point. When patients and their families enter, they can forget they're in a hospital and instead focus on a fresh haircut, a makeover or choosing a wig.

The purpose of the innovative program is to help pediatric patients ease any self-

esteem.

Another important objective of the Positive Image Center is to help patients prepare for the transition back to school and society in general, especially if they've been in the hospital or confined to their homes for long periods of time. "School can be a big issue for kids when they first

treatment."

Just ask Jeff Kori, once a robust and healthy husband and father living outside of Atlanta. He was just 40 years old when progressively worsening bouts of dizziness, weakness, lethargy and vision problems began to plague him. Despite the support of his family and friends, Kori's mysterious illness slowly sent him into a depression.

One of the many doctors he visited eventually recognized the possibility of a chiari malformation. Seeking a reputable specialist, Kori traveled to Wisconsin to meet with Heffez.

Due to the challenge in correctly diagnosing a chiari malformation, Heffez and his team provide a detailed evaluation of each patient, including highly specific MRI scans to look for telltale signs of the condition. "We designed imaging techniques that focus on the brain stem at the base of skull and can detect brain stem and spinal cord compression."

In Kori's case, his initial workup at the Chiari Center revealed that his brain stem was being compressed. Surgical repair was recommended to correct the problem, and Kori underwent a three-hour operation last June. He was thrilled to notice an improvement immediately after surgery.

"Week by week my health got better until eventually almost all my symptoms had disappeared," he says. "Now everything is great, and I'm so grateful to be enjoying all the things I once did."

In treating patients with such an unusual condition, Heffez is sensitive to the challenges they face. "It's important to know that chiari is not a life-threatening problem, and patients have time to make a careful decision," he says. "But it is a life-altering problem, so we work to develop a treatment plan that offers the greatest benefit and improves the patient's quality of life."

CUTTING EDGE OF CANCER

As the only designated comprehensive cancer center in the state of Wisconsin, the **University of Wisconsin Carbone Cancer Center** has worked hard to earn that designation. The renowned physicians comprising the division of gynecologic oncology have trained, taught

» "It's a very underrecognized medical problem, and these patients often have a constellation of symptoms that baffles their doctors."

— DR. DANIEL HEFEZ

image or self-esteem issues they may suffer due to illness or medical treatments. Loss of hair from chemotherapy, scarring, or disfigurement due to surgery or trauma are just some of the reasons why patients visit the Positive Image Center.

Once they meet with Debi Machotka, the image consultant who directs the center, they feel better about their appearance. Machotka brings to her position a winning combination of expertise as a former surgical technician, laser technician and licensed cosmetologist. She strives to make the center as welcoming as possible so that patients feel comfortable and can best communicate what they're hoping to achieve.

"Every patient is a different and unique individual, and we work hard to provide whatever will make each one feel better," she says. "Initially, many families thought we were strictly about fitting wigs, but now they understand there is much more we can do."

Machotka cuts hair and paints nails to lift patients' spirits. Her cosmetology background is especially useful when helping patients select makeup or blend colors to best mask scars or dermatologic conditions. She's customized hairpieces and headbands and hand-stitched scarves to achieve just the right look — with the ultimate goal of boosting feelings of self-

go back," says Machotka. "When they're in the hospital, there's a certain comfort level, but getting back into the real world is what I try and prepare them for."

NO MORE HEAD GAMES

The **Wisconsin Chiari Center of Columbia St. Mary's Hospital**, located in Milwaukee, has attracted patients from as far away as Alaska and China. The center's director, neurosurgeon Dr. Daniel Heffez, uses highly specialized diagnostic and surgical skills to treat patients with a rare and often misunderstood condition.

Chiari malformation is characterized by a structural defect in the region where the brain and spinal cord connect. This malformation can result in pressure on the cerebellum, the part of the brain that controls balance, and block the flow of cerebrospinal fluid. As a result, patients with a chiari often suffer chronic pain and a host of disabling symptoms, including dizziness, numbness and overwhelming fatigue.

"It's a very underrecognized medical problem, and these patients often have a constellation of symptoms that baffles their doctors," says Heffez. "Many wander from doctor to doctor without anyone recognizing that there is a potential unifying cause, so they don't get effective

and traveled to bring the most effective techniques and knowledge to UW Hospital patients. And through their efforts, a number of cutting-edge procedures are available for the treatment of gynecologic cancers.

Dr. David Kushner, director of the UW gynecologic oncology program, believes this comprehensive approach to cancer care is why his department stands out and attracts patients. "What this really means to patients is that if there are new or innovative treatments in chemotherapy, surgery, radiation or anything else, they are available here," he says. "There is no need to leave the state to get state-of-the-art care."

More than 450 patients seek medical care there each year for common and rare gynecologic cancers, including cervical, ovarian, uterine, vulvar and vaginal cancer. The program is the biggest in the state, according to Kushner, and one of the biggest in the region.

Yet more important than its size and status is the depth of health care that the department offers. "Our designation as a comprehensive cancer center means that women with gynecologic cancer are offered the full range of what's necessary to beat cancer," says Kushner. "It's not only the treatment, but the process of taking care of the whole patient and her family as well."

Total patient and family care may include psychological support, genetic counseling, social work, dietary advice and alternative approaches to treatment and recovery. "All of these aspects may make a difference in first helping a patient with a cancer diagnosis and then working through to cancer survivorship," adds Kushner.

As for cutting-edge treatments, the gynecologic oncology department has paved the way for robotic surgical procedures to treat cancers. It is also known for its fertility sparing program – a specialized service for women diagnosed with cancer yet intent on remaining able to conceive children. Because cancer treatment can affect fertility, patients are offered options to preserve their fertility should they want to become parents. There's no doubt that more groundbreaking advances in the field of gynecologic cancer will be made at UW Hospital.

“Reaching New Heights Through Hip Resurfacing”



It's an understatement to say Bert Lindquist likes to stay active. So it's understandable he was nervous when he learned he needed to have his hip replaced in January 2007. However, Bert did his homework and decided to go with the FDA-approved Birmingham Hip Resurfacing procedure performed by John Papageorgiou, MD.

Hip resurfacing conserves the bone in the joint and allows a much greater activity level for younger patients who want to remain on-the-go.

“Two years after surgery, I am stronger than I have been in 70 years and nearly as flexible in the hip and lower back as well,” says Bert. “I am doing better than I ever thought I could.”



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Dr. Papageorgiou, an orthopedic surgeon at Harbor Hospital and is a provider for BlueCross, BGA, private insurance carriers, Preferred Plus, HMO Preferred Plus, Medicare and Veterans' Compensation.


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Many conditions have been found to be associated with increased risk of developing glaucoma. The most important risk factors are elevated eye pressure, age (60 or older), African-American ancestry and a family history of glaucoma, especially in brothers and sisters.

Dr. Kalenak, who has privileges at four Milwaukee-area hospitals, is committed to providing the highest quality glaucoma care and services available. Dr. Kalenak undertook his three-year residency in ophthalmology at the Medical College of Wisconsin and completed a one-year fellowship in glaucoma at the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis. Certified by the American Board of Ophthalmology and a member of the American Glaucoma Society, he provides a complete range of medical and surgical glaucoma care. His office is conveniently located in the greater Milwaukee area.



Herma Heart Center patient Hope Petr (left) with her twin sister Abigail.



Hip resurfacing pioneer Dr. John Rogerson

WHAT YOUR KNEES NEED

Oconomowoc Memorial Hospital, one of two hospitals comprising the **ProHealth Care** network, is the only health care facility in the state of Wisconsin to offer an innovative orthopedic procedure for partial knee replacement. Called MAKOplasty, the procedure is powered by the RIO Robotic Arm Interactive Orthopedic System and employs 3-D images for presurgical planning.

One of the many advantages of the robotic system is the accuracy it delivers – a sixfold higher accuracy than traditional surgery. And because the cutting-edge procedure requires a much smaller incision, patients also benefit from a much faster recovery.

Orthopedic surgeon Dr. Daniel Holub helped pioneer the use of MAKOplasty, and he and his associates have so far treated more than 40 patients at Oconomowoc Memorial.

Holub is pleased by the improvement the procedure offers. “Because it allows natural alignment and doesn’t overload the total knee, the overall result is a more natural knee.”

MAKOplasty resurfaces and replaces only the diseased portion of the ailing knee, so a patient’s healthy bone and surrounding tissue are spared. “If we catch

the problem early in patients, we can get by with this less-invasive procedure,” adds Holub. “Yet as we’ve become more experienced, we’ve also been able to perform this on patients who would have needed a total knee replacement.”

Patient testimonials lend support to the important advance this procedure represents. Paul Komlodi, a registered nurse at the Zablocki VA hospital in Milwaukee, relies heavily on his knees for the highly physical demands of his profession. Not surprisingly, it was a workplace injury that initiated the debilitation of his knees more than 25 years ago.

“I was working on an ambulance when I slipped on some ice and cracked both kneecaps,” says Komlodi. “But I was too young to consider any kind of invasive procedure to treat the problem, so I did nothing and eventually developed arthritis.”

Komlodi did have one knee replaced in a conventional procedure, but complications from the surgery forced him to stay off his feet for four months. To make matters worse, the cartilage in his other knee tore during rehabilitation. Not able to put off repair any longer, he consented to a partial knee replacement. This time, at the age of 53, timing was on Komlodi’s side. The MAKOplasty procedure had

just become available, and Holub deemed him an ideal candidate.

Komlodi describes his surgery last August as a complete success. He was up on his feet with the aid of a walker 12 hours after surgery and back to work only a few weeks later. He’s grateful to be fully active and resuming his studies for a master’s degree in nursing education.

Komlodi marvels at the technology behind MAKOplasty. “It’s similar to GPS now used in automobiles,” he explains. “It helped align my new prosthesis as it went in and resulted in a perfect fit.”

HEART OF A CHILD

Angela and Paul Petr of Appleton, Wis., were shocked to find out via ultrasound back in 2004 that Angela was pregnant with two babies, rather than the expected one. However, the biggest shock came just weeks later, when the family learned that one of her twin fetuses harbored a severe congenital heart defect.

The diagnosis of hypoplastic left heart syndrome was “absolutely crushing,” recalls Angela. When family members researched the condition to determine where the Petrs might go for help, everything pointed them in the direction of Milwaukee and the **Herma Heart Center**



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at Children's Hospital of Wisconsin.

"We learned that it is considered the best facility in the country for problems like these," says Angela, "and we just felt so lucky that we happened to live so close."

Indeed, as one of the largest pediatric cardiac programs in the nation, the Herma Heart Center was well-equipped to help the Petr family. The center performs nearly 13,000 diagnostic, therapeutic and surgical procedures annually, including 700 cardiothoracic surgeries.

Hope and Abigail were delivered at Children's Hospital in April 2005, and Hope had her first of three planned sur-

geries on day six of her life. She was able to go home for the first time at age 7 weeks. There, she was carefully monitored by her family.

bringing together the highest-quality people. He describes them as a phenomenal team that includes not only cardiac surgeons, but also critical care physicians, anesthesiologists, operating room staff, catheter lab techs and echocardiogram lab techs.

"We're a multidisciplinary group that understands and respects one another. While we all have critical roles and abilities, together we provide the best possible care for the kids that we treat," says Berger. "It's always been a team effort by a team that works very well together."

Angela Petr couldn't agree more. She is thankful for all the physicians and special-

gies on day six of her life. She was able to go home for the first time at age 7 weeks. There, she was carefully monitored by her family.

ists she grew to know during their family's ongoing relationship with Children's Hospital of Wisconsin. If not for them, Hope might not be the happy, healthy little girl she is today.

With more than 450 of these procedures under his belt since it became available in 2006, Rogerson says that the results, quite frankly, are amazing. "Following this procedure, I've had patients able to resume Ironman competitions, barefoot skiing, surfing, mountain climbing, you name it."

An important component of Rogerson's treatment is an innovative rehabilitation program he designed that's called HipHab. Patients typically leave the hospital within two days after surgery and then transition directly into rehab, also located at Meriter Hospital. The seven-day program includes accommodations in an apartment that is close to the Hospital's Aquatic and Wellness Center for water- and land-based therapy.

"Our HipHab program is another element that really sets us apart from other programs offering this procedure," says Rogerson. "It has really enhanced patient recovery, and six months after undergoing hip resurfacing, their activities are free of restrictions." ■

Nicole Resnick is a Madison-based freelance writer.

» Now approaching age 5, Hope wears her scars like badges of courage, according to her mom. "It's amazing that she has no restrictions, and she can do whatever she wants," says Angela Petr.

ing the following years were successful, and despite the time she spent recovering, she met every milestone, including sitting, crawling and walking alongside her twin sister.

Now approaching age 5, Hope wears her scars like badges of courage, according to her mom. "It's amazing that she has no restrictions, and she can do whatever she wants," says Angela. "Her heart may be replumbed so that it works differently than a normal heart, but it's going strong."

The key to the Herma Heart Center's success, according to Dr. Stuart Berger, medical director of cardiology at Children's Hospital, is its long history of

FIXING UP THE JOINT

While most consider arthritis a condition that afflicts older, sedentary people, young and active individuals may be forced to give up the physical activities they love when their joints become worn out. Orthopedic surgeon Dr. John S. Rogerson, who regularly practices in Madison at **Meriter Hospital**, is the physician many turn to in this case.

Rogerson provides state-of-the-art, comprehensive treatment of the hip, shoulder and knee, and he was the first surgeon in Wisconsin to offer patients an innovative hip resurfacing procedure. The Birmingham hip resurfacing technique is an attractive option because it replaces the worn joint while allowing patients to resume high-impact activities, free of restrictions.



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