



Safety Helmets Do Save Lives

We all know that wearing a safety helmet is recommended for many activities—but did you know that wearing a bicycle helmet reduces the risk for serious head and brain injury by 85%? And that wearing a motorcycle helmet reduces the chance of dying in a crash by 36%?

Head injuries cause about three-fourths of bike deaths each year and are the leading cause of death in motorcycle crashes. These injuries can have serious, costly, and long-lasting consequences. Precautions can help. Wearing a helmet reduces the peak energy of a sharp impact.

It's a smart idea for both children and adults to wear a helmet when participating in any recreational

activity where they are at risk for head injury. If you're between the ages of 15 and 24 and drive a motor vehicle, ride a bicycle, or play sports, you're at the top of the risk list for head injury. Men are nearly twice as likely as women to injure their brains, but all of us are vulnerable.

With nicer weather on the way, many of us will be getting out our bicycles. Here are some helmet tips:

- Make sure your helmet fits comfortably and snugly. Extra foam strips are usually included to make it fit snugly.
 - Improvements have been made in the materials and airflow vents in helmets, and even the lower-priced models meet today's Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) impact standards. Make sure the helmet has this CPSC label inside.
 - Avoid helmets with extremely pointed shapes, inadequate or excessive vents, dark colors, thin straps, and complicated adjustments. Pick a helmet with a smooth shell and a bright color.
 - The helmet should not be tilted forward or backward.
 - Chin straps should go over both ears in the shape of a V.
 - Always replace the helmet after a crash.
 - Replace the helmet every five years, because materials naturally weaken over time.
- Remember, no helmet does its job until it's properly fitted, snapped up, and on your head! ■

LETTER FROM THE CEO



Ron L. Jacobson
President and CEO

Measuring Success

Like other businesses and service industries, health-

care providers strive to respond to the needs of the people they serve. At Avera St. Luke's, we measure our patients' satisfaction with our care and find ways to improve the quality of our services. We use several methods of measuring our success.

- 1) Patient satisfaction surveys give us a local reading on how well we've served patients in our region and give us a comparison to hundreds of other hospitals across the country.
- 2) Quality studies help us continually monitor indicators and outcomes to ensure our care is the best possible.
- 3) Performance improvement studies also are ongoing in all departments, where we review issues, make changes, and measure our improvements to ensure they remain effective.
- 4) Community perception surveys are conducted periodically that ask regional residents about their impressions of healthcare, suggestions for improvement, and their expectations for the future.

Because we are committed to providing high quality healthcare, we will continue to seek ways to measure, compare, and improve our services.

Visit our website at www.averastlukes.org.

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Living Well

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Printed on Recyclable Paper

432M

Avera St. Luke's
305 South State Street
Aberdeen, South Dakota 57401

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LivingWell

We're Caring for Life



Does Self-Help Help Depression?

Depression is more than just feeling down in the dumps. It's a serious problem that can affect how you work, eat, sleep, and parent. It also can impact your overall health—worsening problems such as heart disease, and even upping your risk of death no matter what your age.

True depression isn't something you can just snap out of—it needs to be treated. Two common ways to do this are with medicine and therapy. One type of therapy, cognitive-behavioral therapy, helps you learn to break negative thought patterns that impact depression.

If you suffer from depression, what you do on your own can make a difference in your condition. While self-care is no substitute for medication or therapy, it can greatly complement your treatment. Here are some suggestions:

- Aim to get seven to eight hours of sleep a night.
- Ease up the heat—on you. Stop pressuring yourself to get it all done. Prioritize what you need to accomplish—this will help you feel more in control. Break large tasks into smaller ones. Better yet, ask for help with chores and other tasks that can be overwhelming.
- Take time to play—it can bring satisfaction to your life. Do something you enjoy, such as going to a sporting event or a movie.
- “Sweat” the small stuff—work out when you feel down. There is growing evidence that aerobic exercise may help depression.
- When you're sad, tell a trusted friend or family member how you feel. Or consider joining a support group for depression. Some research shows such groups can help ease the stress that accompanies psychological problems.
- When you feel uneasy, try to relax with a short walk or a few deep breaths.
- Put off major life decisions until you are feeling better. ■

If you're suffering from depression and can't seem to beat it, see page 2 for more information on help available at Avera St. Luke's.

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Treatment Sometimes Needed for Depression

If professional treatment for depression becomes necessary, help can be found at Avera St. Luke's. Experienced nurses, therapists, and psychiatrists work together to form a treatment plan, and social work services and holistic care also play a role.



Marcy Fritz, RN

"The most ideal clinical depression treatment is a combination of drug therapy and counseling," says **Marcy Fritz**, a registered nurse who has worked on Avera St. Luke's Mental Health Unit for 18 years. "The highest rate of success is from a combination of the two." The use of today's newer medications with fewer side effects may help treat people more successfully, so their hospital stay can be shorter.

Patients are encouraged to be active participants in their care. While at Avera St. Luke's, they can participate in:

- group therapy
- occupational therapy
- therapeutic recreation
- education groups that focus on stress management
- diagnosis
- medication education.

Three psychiatrists are on staff, and experienced nurses work with patients around the clock. "Our goal is to assist them through this stressful period in their life, to evaluate appropriate coping strategies, and to develop a discharge plan that will assist them in returning to normal life," Fritz says.

Avera St. Luke's Mental Health Unit is a 10-bed secure unit that provides inpatient treatment for adults, and also can provide evaluation services for adolescents. Patients need a doctor's order to be admitted to the unit. ■

Crisis Line

Avera St. Luke's Mental Health Unit, in conjunction with Northeastern Mental Health Center in Aberdeen, offers a free 24-hour Crisis Line where people having urgent emotional or mental difficulties can call and talk with a therapist: 605-229-1000. Avera St. Luke's also provides community services through depression and anxiety screenings and healthcare professionals who are available to speak on mental health topics.

If you're suffering from depression and can't seem to beat it, it's time to contact a doctor or a mental health professional. Hospitalization is sometimes necessary, and Avera St. Luke's Mental Health Unit can provide the help you need.



Check Out Our New Online Gift Shop

There's an easy way to give a gift to a patient at Avera St. Luke's. Go to our Online Gift Shop at www.averastlukes.org and pick it out! Your choices include:

- flowers
- plants
- balloons
- stuffed teddy bears
- candy, and more.



The gift will be delivered to the patient's room by one of Avera St. Luke's volunteers—for free. Items can be conveniently charged to your credit card.

You also can make a donation online to Avera St. Luke's Foundation, buy a cookbook, or sign up for special events like this summer's Charity Golf Tournament. Click on Charitable Giving on Avera St. Luke's home page and follow the link to Give a Gift, Get a Gift. Call 605-622-5887.

Rehabilitation Center Offers Hope

Avera St. Luke's Rehabilitation Center is a separate, independent space within the hospital dedicated to patients recovering from strokes, injuries, or other illnesses that require rehabilitation. More than 70% of our patients return to their homes. To learn more, go to www.averastlukes.org or call 605-622-5700.

At Avera St. Luke's Rehabilitation Center, a large dose of hope is served up to patients as they partner with healthcare professionals on the rehab team.

"We offer comprehensive, adult inpatient rehabilitation, specializing in the care of neurologically impaired and stroke patients," says **Alma Sahli, Nursing Coordinator** of the Rehab Center and a certified rehab registered nurse. "We are committed to integrating a person with a disability back into the community."

The Rehab Center, located within Avera St. Luke's Hospital, welcomes patients from area hospitals who need rehab help. Avera St. Luke's is the only facility within 200 miles that offers the full range of professionals in the rehab field. Physical

medicine and rehab specialists **Sameh Rizkalla, MD**, and **John C. Vidoloff, MD**, lead a team that includes healthcare professionals certified in:

- rehabilitation nursing
- physical, occupational, speech, and recreational therapy
- respiratory care
- pastoral care
- nutrition
- pharmacy
- social work services.

Patients in the Rehab Center stay in their own rooms, wear their own clothes, eat meals together in the Rehab Center dining room, and do several hours of rehab work each day. Treatment includes working with therapists in Avera St. Luke's



Occupational therapist Angela Solseng demonstrates how Dynavision works, as she pushes the correct button after seeing a red light come on. This therapy can help rehab patients work on coordination, scanning patterns, balance, hand/eye coordination, peripheral awareness, and reaction time.

physical therapy gym, where they can also work in a simulated real-life environment that includes a kitchen, bathroom, and bedroom. Patients might go on a community outing with a therapist to handle real-life situations.

These services are offered to people who have suffered strokes or trauma or have neurological problems, brain injuries, spinal cord injuries, Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis, amputations, and other conditions. ■



Elaine Koepple of Veblen gets instructions from Barb Koch, left, a therapeutic recreation specialist, on the correct way to get in and out of a vehicle. They were going on a community outing, which can be part of the rehabilitation process.



Physical therapists Kerri Foss, left, and Jeri Tieszen, right, help stroke patient Dorothy Kensler of Mina Lake with her rehab work in the physical therapy gym.

Other Services

Avera St. Luke's also offers outpatient rehabilitation care in our new Physical & Aquatic Therapy Center, at the Back & Neck Clinic on the Midland campus, and through programs such as Drive Smart, Sports Medicine, WorkSmart, and Cardiac Rehabilitation.