



ARTURO FERNANDEZ/THE REGISTER

Dr. Susan Beck is medical director of the Katzmann Breast Center at Mercy Medical Center. She is one of two surgeons who uses a new procedure in which radioactive seeds are implanted to mark small cancerous breast tumors so the tumors can be more accurately removed.

## Procedure uses 'seeds' to pinpoint cancer sites

Then, surgeons are able to remove small breast tumors with increased accuracy.

By PATT JOHNSON  
pjohnson@dmreg.com

**A** new procedure to help locate cancerous breast tumors is giving surgeons a better guide for removing the masses, and patients experience less discomfort.

"I am very excited about this," said surgeon Susan Beck, medical director of the

Katzmann Breast Center at Mercy Medical Center. "I really think this will be the next thing that will sweep across the country. It reduces anxiety and discomfort for the patient, allows for convenient scheduling of surgery, allows for better tumor removal accuracy with less tissue removed."

The procedure uses a small radioactive seed, which is about the size of a grain of rice, that is inserted with a needle into the breast tumor. The seed, which is encased in a titanium receptacle, can be placed several days ahead of or right before the surgery, Beck said. The surgeon uses a hand-held Geiger counter to locate the tumor, which



Tiny seeds (a non-radioactive sample is shown above) help mark breast tumors.

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## From the dietitian 4 healthful life choices can lessen cancer risk



**ELIZABETH POHLMAN** is a dietitian with Hy-Vee stores. Contact her at (515) 967-7676 or epohlman@hy-vee.com

The statistics are frightening; one in eight women in the United States will develop breast cancer. Most women know someone who has been affected by this disease and wonder what they can do to protect themselves. Studies have found that 40 percent of all cases of breast cancer could have been prevented with small lifestyle changes.

The best advice today is to maintain a healthy body weight and a healthy lifestyle.

Studies have found cancer-fighting benefits from eating healthy foods, limiting alcohol consumption, exercising regularly and breast-feeding your baby.

**Healthy foods:** Some foods have been linked to helping prevent breast cancer. These include fruits, vegetables, beans and whole grains. Fill two-thirds of your plate with plant foods — fruits, vegetables, whole grains and beans. Include whole grains, canned tomato products such as pasta sauce and cruciferous vegetables (including cabbage, broccoli and cauliflower) in your diet often as these foods may offer a protective phytochemical against breast cancer.

**Regular exercise:** Women should get 30-45 minutes of exercise or physical activity each day. According to the National Cancer Institute, women can reduce their risk

DIETITIAN, PAGE 4E

### Health Profile

## Social worker helps families when kids are hospitalized

By ESTELA VILLANUEVA-WHITMAN  
Register Correspondent

**J**an Mackey knows how to make a special connection to young patients at Mercy Children's Center.

A pediatric social worker, she helps families find support services during and after their hospital stay. She can also relate as a parent who's made those contacts for her daughter, who

had heart surgery years ago at Mercy and lives successfully with Down Syndrome.

On any given day, Mackey may simply play with or hold a child whose parents are unable to stay due to work or family demands, or make sure that parents are taking care of themselves. The role fits her well, and is what she set out to do since the seventh grade.

PROFILE, PAGE 4E

### Jan Mackey

**AGE:** 50  
**CHILDREN:** Allie, 24; Lauren, 22; Kelly, 19; Connor, 16.  
**YEARS IN PROFESSION:** 28  
**HOMETOWN:** Grew up in Dubuque; now lives in Johnston.



MARY CHIND/THE REGISTER

Jan Mackey, a pediatric social worker, holds Nazeret Kalifa just after the 1-year-old woke from a nap at Mercy Children's Center.

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The Des Moines Register

# Having hobby can be good for health

By PATT JOHNSON  
patjohns@dmreg.com

Nancy Wyatt was about 7 years old when her mother taught her how to knit. She created little rectangles, then turned them into Barbie clothes by sewing them together.

"It was a lot of fun as a kid," Wyatt says. "The only thing I remember really making was a pair of slippers."

She burned out on slippers and took a hiatus from her hobby until she graduated from college. Then, over the years, she made sweaters, vests, socks, scarves and other items. Her hobby turned into a passion.

Five years ago, Wyatt opened Knitted Together, a knitting shop in the Bridge-wood retail center, west of Jordan Creek Town Center. It's more than a job for her. It's almost a lifestyle.

"I get up in the morning, feed the cats and sit and knit. At night I knit, and it relaxes me," says Wyatt.

Hobbies can be simple, like reading, or intricate, like rebuilding cars. They can be physically challenging, like training for a marathon, or require little movement, like writing poetry.

They can be mentally stimulating, like learning a foreign language, or peaceful, like arranging flowers.

"Hobbies are good to have at any age," says Dr. Yogesh Shah, a geriatrician and associate dean of global health at Des Moines University. As people age, having one or many hobbies helps with maintaining social interaction and assists in cognitive rebuilding, which can postpone or prevent the onset of dementia, he says.

"Anything that is exciting or stimulating for the brain is good," Shah says. Research shows that the brain can grow new cells. And hobbies, in whatever form, can be the charge the brain needs.

"It's never too late to start, and it's always too early to quit a hobby," Shah says.

Wyatt considers knitting a stress reliever and a challenge all at once.

"I can sit down and get lost in my knitting. I can do it while I am watching TV," she says. "I like to have something to show for that time I'm watching television."

Wyatt has other hobbies, most of which are hand-work-related. But her passion is knitting.

"I get new yarns in at the store that I want to try. My house really needs cleaning, but I'd rather knit," she says.



JAMES D. FIDLER/THE REGISTER

Nancy Wyatt's knitting hobby led to her store, Knitted Together, near Jordan Creek Town Center.

Dr. Shah, too, has hobbies. He is learning Spanish, and he gardens, travels and reads.

"When I travel, I like to mingle with the local culture and try out my new language," he says.

## Safe to eat? Or not? Site aims to help consumers

Chicago Tribune

Somewhere along the path toward food safety, we often make a detour toward obsession. An obsession that compels us to throw out food before we really have to. And that, in turn, costs us money.

Before we blame ourselves, let's not forget that the habit is enabled by all those "Use By" and "Sell By" and "God Forbid You Eat This After" package label dates, not to mention recent headlines of good food gone bad.

The challenge: How to be a food-savvy cheap-skate versus a food-sickened cheapskate. A new website wants to help: [www.ShelfLifeAdvice.com](http://www.ShelfLifeAdvice.com) delivers bushels of articles on the topic: how to store food, save food, clean food, freeze food and, yes, clarification of those dates on packaged and fresh foods.

The brainchild of retired professor Ethel Tiersky and her son, Howard, the site also features links to lots of websites, and it has a board of advisers of food-safety pros from across the U.S. A recent lead article was titled, "Soft Cheese: A Delicious Delicacy or a Menace?"

And, as you might imagine, there's plenty here about eggs.

Much of the advice is offered in tones of gray, not black and white. When experts differ on a topic, both sides are given their say.

## How to prepare a child for a first filling at dentist

McClatchy Newspapers

Going to the dentist is scary for many children, especially when they have their first cavity. Here are tips from dentists on getting them through the procedure:

**Answer questions.** If your child wants to know what will happen, give her some honest details: where she'll sit, the noises she'll hear

and how her mouth will feel strange and "sleepy" for a while.

**Emphasize the positive.** Explain how lucky your child is to have a good dentist who can fix his tooth. This isn't the time to blame him for poor brushing or eating habits.

**Use non-scary words.** You don't need to say "needle," "shot" or "hurt." Instead, go

with "little poke," "magic wand" or "sleepy juice for your tooth." Some parents also call cavities "sugar spots" or "boo-boos" and fillings "paint."

**Share your experiences.** Kids should know that cavities are very common and not hard for a dentist to fix. If you've never had a cavity, find someone who has to talk to the child

about how simple the procedure was.

**Give your child some control.** If she wants to wear certain clothes or bring a comfort item such as a stuffed animal, let her. Also let her decide if she wants you to come into the treatment room with her (assuming the dentist allows it).

**Stay calm.** Even if you're

nervous, your child doesn't need to see that, especially in the waiting room.

Plan something fun afterward. Go to the park or another favorite spot after your appointment, or set up a play date with a good friend. You can also take your child out for a special food treat once the numbness in her mouth wears off.

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## CANCER

FROM PAGE 3E

helps determine where to make the incision. The tumor and the seed can then be removed.

The procedure is only for small masses, generally those less than a centimeter, that are not felt during an exam, Beck said.

Previously, the only way to locate the small tumors for surgery was to use a cumbersome guide wire that was inserted into the breast. It is less comfortable for the patient and doesn't offer the same precise targeting of the tumor.

"The guide wire is pretty accurate, but we were looking for something that was more accurate and did not take as much tissue," Beck said.

Mayo Clinic doctors created the radioactive seed localization procedure, which Beck used for the first time

last August. It was a first for Iowa, too.

Adel schoolteacher Susan Knutzen had a lumpectomy Sept. 20 using the radioactive seed localization procedure. Her tumor was detected during a routine mammogram and determined to be cancerous after a needle biopsy.

The radioactive seed procedure was painless and was done the morning of her lumpectomy surgery. "You couldn't feel it," she said of the seed placement. "I was glad I qualified for it."

Knutzen qualified for the procedure because the tumor was not palpable and was small.

Knutzen had follow-up treatment after the lumpectomy, which also involved radiation therapy called Mammosite, which uses a balloon inserted into the lumpectomy site that contains radioactive material that kills off any

stray cancer cells. Knutzen said that treatment was concentrated to twice a day over five days.

"I am happy there are things out there that are a little less invasive for women," she said.

Beck said there are strict procedures for using the radioactive material, which exposes a woman to about a fourth the amount of radiation of a chest X-ray.

Women are not eligible for the seed procedure when their tumors are too large or they have multiple tumors, she said.

Beck went to the Mayo Clinic to learn the technique. The program took six months to get up and running because of all the regulatory issues involved in using radioactive materials.

For more information on the radioactive seed localization procedure, call the Katzmann Breast Center at (515) 222-7830.

## DIETITIAN

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of developing breast cancer by 25 percent just by incorporating regular exercise into their daily routine.

**Limit alcohol:** Women should limit their alcohol consumption to no more than one or two drinks each day. Women with a higher risk of developing breast cancer may want to consider avoiding it all together.

**Breast-feeding:** There is strong evidence that breast-feeding, for any amount of time, can help lower your chance of developing breast cancer risk.

Most important, remember monthly breast exams and annual mammograms. They are important for early diagnosis and the treatment of breast cancer.

## PROFILE

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**Q. What's your role as a pediatric social worker?**

It's a lot of support to families — getting them hooked up with support and services that will make their transition home successful.

If kids are here more than a few days, there can be a lot of financial issues. Sometimes parents are trying to balance a job, kids at home, being a

parent here. A lot of it is helping them relieve the stress or organize it for them. It's just so much.

It's not always a focus on: "We need to get you out." But "what we can do to support you while you're here."

**Q. What are some of the challenges you face working with children in a medical setting?**

The hardest thing is when they die. It's just so hard when you see parents going through that

grief and there's nothing you can do to make it better, and you want to. I can't even imagine what they go through.

**Q. What are some difficult situations where you might help a patient and family?**

For example, if there has been a motor vehicle accidents where a child may have had a life-changing event, possibly a head injury. Some of those kids need to go to in-patient rehab, so coordinating

that, working with parents' schedules, insurance issues are areas where I can help.

**Q. What type of impact do you hope to have made with patients?**

I hope we have made their stay here as comfortable as can be, given that we have turned their lives upside down. And that when they go home that they feel like the services and supports that they need are in place, that they feel safe and comfortable going home.

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