



HEALTH SCENE®

A JOURNAL PROMOTING HEALTH EDUCATION AND HEALING • WINTER 2008

IDAHO NEUROLOGICAL INSTITUTE AT SAINT ALPHONSUS RECEIVES

NATIONAL STROKE CERTIFICATION



Saint Alphonus is pleased to announce that its Idaho Neurological Institute (INI) has received the Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval and accreditation as a Primary Stroke Center. Saint Alphonus earned the certification by complying with rigorous national stroke standards and performance measurement expectations, which are designed to produce excellent care experiences, maximize positive outcomes while controlling costs, and improve productivity. Saint Alphonus is the only hospital in Idaho to earn this prestigious distinction.

HIGH-LEVEL CARE "We have always been proud of the awards we've received for superior stroke care outcomes," says President and CEO Sandra Bruce. "This certification further reflects the passion and dedication of our INI staff, nurses and physicians to take stroke care to a higher level. Idaho ranks 35th in the nation for the number of deaths caused by stroke and other cerebrovascular diseases per 100,000 population—53.8 versus a U.S. average of 50. Part of our challenge is to educate residents that they should seek

immediate treatment if they think they are having a stroke. In health care, we say that a stroke is a brain attack—just as serious as a heart attack."

The distinction as a Primary Stroke Center means that the INI at Saint Alphonus offers the best possible care for stroke patients. The stroke program is rooted in nationally recognized standards that include having highly educated and trained stroke care staff; developing protocols for streamlined stroke care from the Emergency Department to outpatient therapy; minimizing complications from stroke; and improving outcomes for a better quality of life.

POWERFUL MEDICINE A clinically proven method to improve stroke outcomes is using a drug called tPA. tPA is a clot-buster that, when administered early in patients suffering from a stroke, can drastically improve outcomes. The national standards and protocols that Saint Alphonus has

adopted have increased the rate of tPA use in patients from 2 to 11 percent. To put this in perspective, the national average for tPA use is 1 to 2 percent. Idaho Neurological Institute Director Nichole Whitener says, "This certification is proof of an organizationwide commitment to provide quality care on an ongoing basis."

Saint Alphonus has the only primary stroke-certified program in Idaho. In addition, we are also the only hospital in southwest Idaho with the physician expertise and advanced technology to provide comprehensive stroke care. Stroke program medical director Barbara Bess, neurologist, says that "the level of physician proficiency is unmatched at any other medical center. We have neurology and neurosurgery physicians available to treat stroke 24/7, as well as interventional neuroradiologists with the capability to do highly sophisticated procedures to treat all

types of stroke."

The INI at Saint Alphonus has been the principal provider of advanced, innovative and interdisciplinary neurological services for the past 15 years. Serving Idaho, eastern Oregon and northern Nevada, the INI is comprised of highly qualified clinicians: neurologists, neuroradiologists, neuroanesthesiologists, traumatologists, physiatrists, psychiatrists, intensivists, vascular surgeons, neuro-certified nurses and other health care professionals.

OUR GOAL IS YOUR HEALTH At the INI, advanced technology is placed in the hands of compassionate staff members who give patients exceptional care. A continuum of neurological care is provided through the coordination of physicians, technology and financial resources to meet the physical, psychological and spiritual needs of each patient.

Neurological illness or injury can occur at many levels, from sleep disorders to strokes to head injuries. Our goal is to return each person to an optimum level of physical and intellectual function. *See page 11 to read how Tom Jones is recovering from his stroke with help from Saint Alphonus.*

Visit www.saintalphonus.org to meet the expert INI team. Choose "Neurosciences" and then "INI Physician Directory."



LOWER BACK PROBLEMS: PAINFUL BUT TREATABLE

NO MATTER HOW different you are from your neighbor, it's likely the two of you have had at least one thing in common: lower back pain.

Four out of five American adults say they've had low-back pain at some point in their lives, according to the American College of Surgeons. When it comes to neurological problems, only headaches are more frequent.

But just because the experience is nearly universal doesn't mean it's inevitable. There are things you can do to avoid back pain as well as effective ways to treat the condition.

WHAT'S TO BLAME? There are many causes of back pain. Sprains, breaks, falls or other types of accidents can certainly result in back pain. Improperly lifting something heavy can put undue stress on your back and leave you hurting. Even something as seemingly innocuous as bending over can lead to a sore back.

The pain may come from a breakdown or rupture in one of the disks that act as cushions between the bones in the spine. Tense muscles or muscle spasms can also be a cause, as can arthritis, bone spurs, infections and tumors.

WHO'S AT RISK? People are more likely to experience back pain as they get older. Others at greater risk include smokers, overweight people and those in poor physical condition.

Your job can also contribute to your back pain. For example, if you work at a desk and have poor posture, you're at risk. Likewise, people whose jobs require lifting, pushing, pulling or twisting actions are more likely to have sore backs.

TREATMENTS Most of the time, back pain can be treated without surgery. Sometimes, just lying down and taking

it easy will reduce the pain. Over-the-counter medications—such as acetaminophen or nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, including aspirin—can also help.

On occasion, your doctor might prescribe a muscle relaxant or narcotic pain reliever for a brief time.

Other remedies may include heat or cold packs applied to the back. Heat reduces muscle spasms and pain, while cold helps reduce swelling.

Some people try back massage, electrical stimulation or traction. Others find relief by wearing a back brace.

PREVENTION You can take steps that will help prevent back pain from starting in the first place.

Save your back when you shovel snow.
At www.saintalphonsus.org, choose "Winter Health" from the Fast Finder.

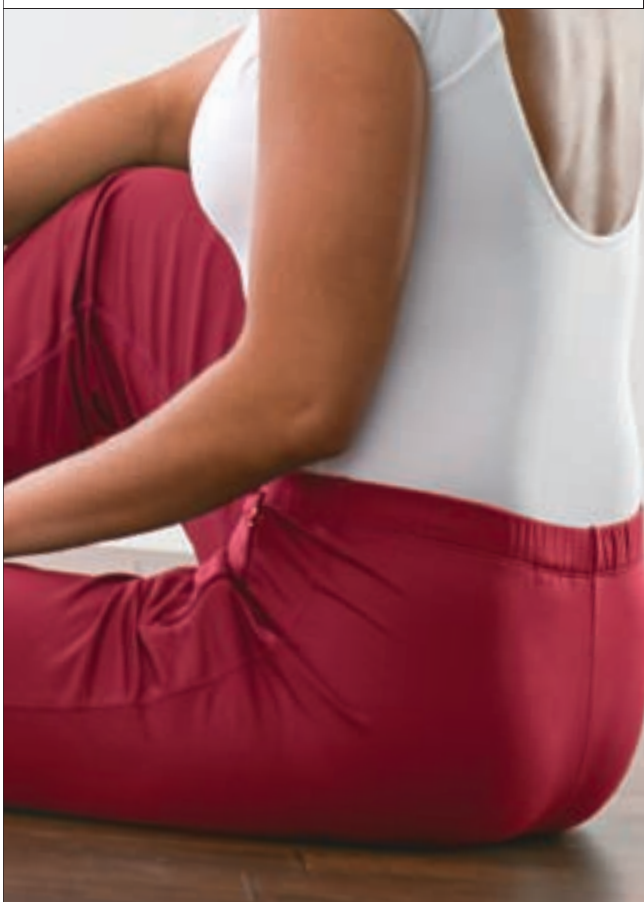
For instance, make sure you get enough exercise so that back muscles remain strong. Keep bones strong by getting enough calcium and vitamin D each day. Lose weight if you need to, and watch your posture.

It's also important to take care when lifting heavy objects. The right way to lift is to bend your knees and keep your back straight.

While most cases of back pain will resolve themselves without extensive treatment, there are times when you should see a doctor.

Call your doctor if you notice numbness or tingling, if severe pain doesn't improve with rest, or if you have pain after a fall or an injury, the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases recommends.

Your doctor should also be told if you are having back pain along with weakness, trouble urinating, fever or unexplained weight loss.



*Do you have
lower-back pain?*

The Spine Medicine Institute at Saint Alphonsus can help!

We provide conservative management of back and neck pain.

We offer:

- Medical evaluation and management
- Back and neck pain management
- Imaging
- Physical therapy and chiropractic care
- Spine neurosurgery
- Orthopaedic spine surgery
- Self-management tools and education
- Prevention and injury recovery

Convenient and easy access to medical services



CALL 208-367-SMII (208-367-7644)

for more information or to schedule an appointment.

1055 N. Curtis Rd., Boise, ID 83706

P: 208-367-7644 F: 208-367-3319

HEART ATTACKS

A PROBLEM NOT JUST FOR SENIORS

IT'S NOT SURPRISING that heart attack seems like an older person's problem. The risk for heart disease—the usual cause of heart attack—does go up as we age.

But being younger doesn't make you immune to having a heart attack. According to the American Heart Association (AHA), certain factors can increase the likelihood of a heart attack, and a related occurrence called sudden cardiac arrest, in younger adults.

EARLY TROUBLE A healthy heart is a powerful organ, ready to beat 2.5 billion times over an average lifetime. But that potential can be undermined when arteries in the heart get clogged with cholesterol. That process is called atherosclerosis, and it can cause a heart attack.

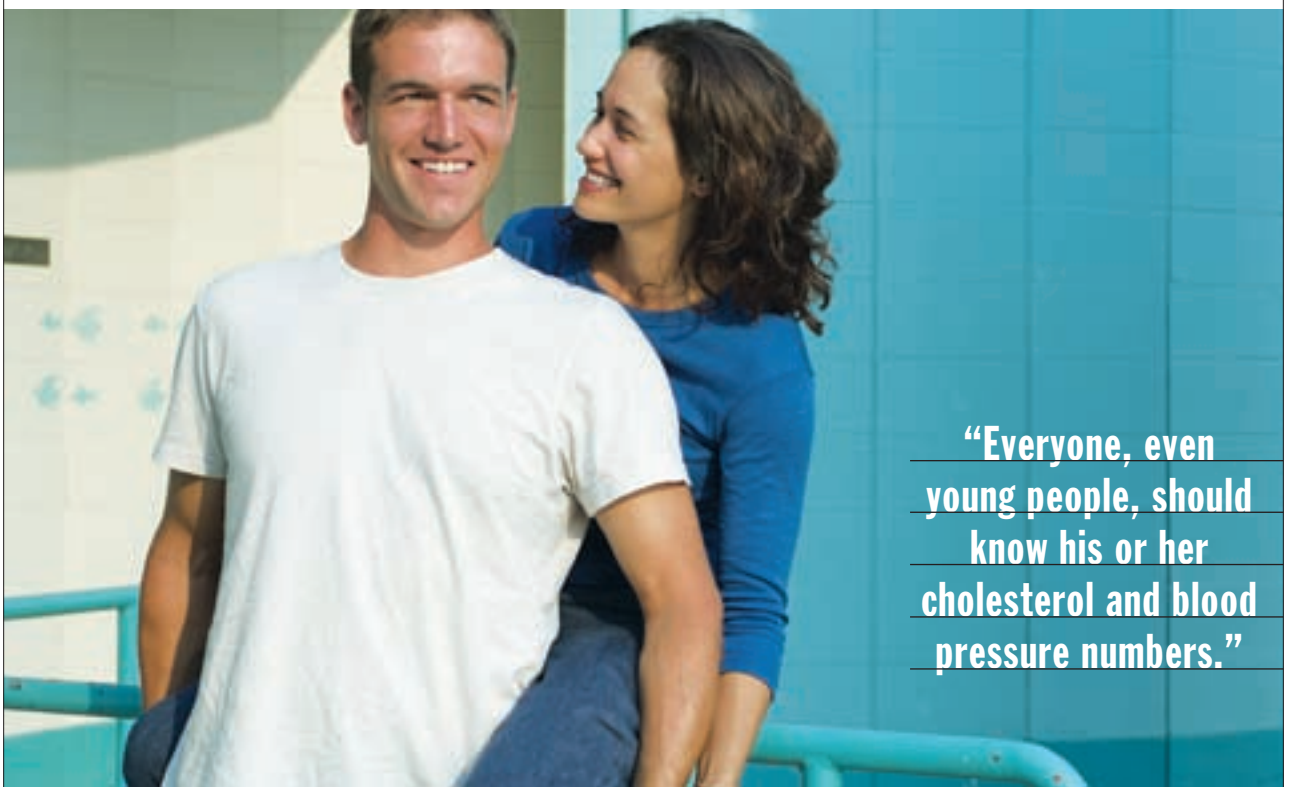
The risk of atherosclerosis increases with age. But younger people aren't in the clear. For one thing, a genetic abnormality called familial hypercholesterolemia can cause very high cholesterol even in teenagers.

Diabetes can also lead to early heart attacks. And certain illegal drugs, especially cocaine, can cause a heart attack—even the first time they are used.

Another important risk for younger people is smoking. A study in the medical journal *Tobacco Control* found that smokers in their mid- to late-30s were five times more likely to have a heart attack than nonsmokers of the same age.

Young hearts may also be vulnerable to sudden cardiac arrest (SCA), a life-threatening event that happens when the heart's electrical system goes awry. "It's basically a short circuit. The heart can no longer pump effectively," says Robert Bonow, MD, past president of the AHA.

According to Dr. Bonow, one common cause of SCA in teenagers and young adults is hypertrophic cardiomy-



"Everyone, even young people, should know his or her cholesterol and blood pressure numbers."

opathy. This inherited disease causes the heart walls to thicken, which can disrupt the heart's electrical system.

Other electrical abnormalities can also lead to SCA, and intense physical activity can bring on SCA in a young person born with abnormalities of the heart's arteries.

To survive SCA, a person must be treated with a defibrillator within minutes after symptoms start.

PROTECTING YOUNG HEARTS Atherosclerosis is a problem that increases over time. The primary causes are years of either eating a diet high in fat, smoking or not exercising. But it can begin early and, according to the AHA, prevention should start by age 20.

First, you have to know your risk factors. "Everyone, even young people, should know his or her cholesterol and blood pressure numbers," says Dr. Bonow.

Screening for blood glucose is also important—high levels can signal diabetes, which can lead to heart disease. You also need to know your family health history, which can help uncover any inherited conditions.

Then work toward a heart-healthy lifestyle by being

physically active every day, staying at a healthy weight and not smoking. Aim for a diet low in fat and high in fruits, vegetables and whole grains.

ACT FAST No matter what your age, you should know the signs of a heart attack:

- Chest discomfort—pressure, squeezing or pain in the center of the chest—that lasts more than a few minutes or that goes away and comes back.
- Discomfort in other areas of the upper body, such as arms, back, neck, jaw or stomach.
- Shortness of breath.
- Cold sweat, nausea or light-headedness.

If you have chest discomfort, especially with one or more of the other signs of a heart attack, don't wait—call 911 immediately.

Heart attack and SCA aren't common among young people, but they can happen.

To learn more about controlling your risk for heart disease, visit www.saintalphonsus.org and choose "Heart Health" in the Fast Finder.

TAKE A SPIN WITH INSIDE RIDE

Cyclists go indoors to celebrate National Heart Month

COME TAKE A spin with Inside Ride to help celebrate National Heart Month. You don't have to be a pro to participate, and event organizers will even provide a bike! Here's how it works: Put together a team of four people, decide if you want to ride a mountain bike or street cycle, sign up, and show up.

Inside Ride takes off on Saturday, Feb. 9, at the Boise Towne Square Mall, to promote cardiac health and fight cardiac disease, which kills more men and women than any other disease.

PEDAL POWER This is Saint Alphonsus' third annual ride, with 120 riders expected to participate. Cyclists will ride stationary trainers at the mall's center court starting at 9 a.m. and take turns until the event ends at 4:30 p.m.

Spectators can cheer for riders and get free tests for blood pressure, bone density, heart rate and body fat



composition. They can also grab some healthy snacks as well as information about promoting cardiac health.

"This is a unique cycling event geared to get everyone's hearts pumping," says Jill Aldape, Saint Alphonsus events

coordinator. "Each of these riders has paid \$50 to enter (\$200 per team) and they will showcase a sport that has terrific cardiac benefits. We hope that their efforts will help inspire others to dust off their bikes and get riding."

Riders will race in 30- and 60-minute intervals for a chance to win prizes for the most miles traveled, the youngest and oldest combined ages, and the most spirited team. Proceeds will support cardiac health education at Saint Alphonsus.

SIGN UP TODAY! Complete and submit the registration form, and your team captain will receive your team's race time and other details. Every rider gets a jersey, refreshments and a great cardio workout.

The team fee is \$200, but if you can't get a team together, don't worry. Individuals can sign up for \$50. You can also find a sponsor for your Inside Ride to help support cardiac services at Saint Alphonsus. The registration form is online at www.saintalphonsus.org.

If you have questions or need a registration form, call Randy Hudspeth at 208-367-6883 or Debbie Hamilton at 208-367-3997.



Arthritis 101

THE NATION AT A GLANCE

- Between 2003 and 2005, 46.4 million Americans reported doctor-diagnosed arthritis.
- During that same time, arthritis was the leading cause of disability, limiting everyday activities for 18.9 million Americans.
- In 2003 arthritis and other rheumatic conditions cost \$127.8 billion.

TRENDS IN IDAHO

- One in four people—256,000 adults—have doctor-diagnosed arthritis. This number equals the population of Boise.
- Arthritis affects 109,000 men and 147,000 women.
- Arthritis affects 52,000 people ages 18 to 44, 118,000 people ages 45 to 64, and 86,000 people age 65 and older.
- There are 2,000 children with juvenile arthritis.
- Arthritis is the leading cause of disability.
- In 2003 arthritis and other rheumatic conditions cost \$563.6 million, and

costs will continue to rise with another 8 million cases anticipated between 2005 and 2015.

EASING PAIN, LOWERING COSTS

Education and self-management can help reduce the pain and lower the expenses associated with arthritis. Research shows that the Arthritis Foundation Self-Help Program helps participants reduce their pain by 20 percent and physician visits by 40 percent.

The program emphasizes the importance of early diagnosis and helps patients manage arthritis appropriately by teaching weight-control and injury-prevention techniques. Unfortunately, less than 1 percent of Americans with doctor-diagnosed arthritis participate in this program.

Saint Alphonse Rehabilitation Services (STARS) sponsors Idaho–Arthritis in Motion (I–AIM). The mission of STARS and I–AIM is to advance arthritis awareness in our community, promote early diagnosis and treatment, and encourage healthy lifestyles. Together we can reduce pain and disability associated with arthritis, thus improving quality of life in the Treasure Valley.



Saint Alphonse
Rehabilitation Services (STARS)

I–AIM has two **FREE** Living With Arthritis monthly informational meetings.

Boise Living With Arthritis

● **First Monday of the month**
6 to 7:30 p.m.

Saint Alphonse Family Learning Center, Liberty Building, 900 N. Liberty, Suite 100, Boise

Meridian Living With Arthritis

● **Third Tuesday of the month**
6 to 7:30 p.m.

AARP office, 3080 E. Gentry Way, Suite 100, Meridian

If you have questions, contact **Sally Suter at 208-367-5802 or 208-402-5456** or by e-mail at **sallsute@sarmc.org** or **idahoarthritisinmotion@hotmail.com**.

*I–AIM is endorsed by the Idaho Health and Welfare Arthritis Program and collaborates with the Utah/Idaho Arthritis Foundation.

CaringBridge connects families and patients

Saint Alphonse is a funding sponsor of CaringBridge thanks in part to a grant from the Saint Alphonse Foundation and support from Patient Care Services. CaringBridge is the world's oldest, most widely used free online service that keeps patients and loved ones in touch during important life events, including medical treatment, childbirth, rehabilitation and end-of-life care.

SIMPLE, SECURE SUPPORT At www.caringbridge.org, patients and their families can easily create a secure website and sign in any time to post journal entries and photographs. The service allows families to update everyone while focusing their energy on loved ones who are healing. Visitors who have the personal website address and password can read updates and post encouraging messages for families.

“Saint Alphonse believes that CaringBridge is a remarkable resource for our

staff to offer patients and their families during a challenging time,” says Patty Soran, clinical resource manager. “CaringBridge reflects our values to do all we can to support the patient and their family during treatment.”

As a CaringBridge sponsor, Saint Alphonse will share information about CaringBridge with every patient. The hospital name and logo will appear on each personal CaringBridge site created by patients at Saint Alphonse. Of course, CaringBridge is available to the wider community too.

“CaringBridge welcomes Saint Alphonse as a sponsor. I want to thank the leadership and staff for recognizing the value of CaringBridge as a useful tool for families during challenging times,” says Sona Mehring, CaringBridge's founder and executive director.

A BLESSING, A SUCCESS Since 1997, 30,000 CaringBridge sites have been cre-



ated. There have been 170 million visits to those personal sites, and four million visitors have signed the guestbook. Up to 1,200 new sites are being created each month. Approximately 70 percent of the web pages are created for sick or injured children and newborns.

“CaringBridge is a blessing,” says a family member who used the free service

during medical treatment. “We could easily update family and friends without having to field too many phone calls and questions during an exhausting time in our lives. And each day we read what the visitors to our site had written in the guestbook. Their messages of support and encouragement lifted us up at a difficult time, strengthening us so we could keep going.”



Sharing hope: The CaringBridge story

The inspiration for CaringBridge came from a real-life experience. When Sona Mehring's friend developed a life-threatening condition and prematurely delivered her baby during her 24th week of pregnancy, Sona created a website to keep family and friends connected and informed. Although baby Brigid later died, she inspired a remarkable grassroots phenomenon that continues to extend love, encouragement and hope around the world.

FROSTBITE AND
HYPOTHERMIATwo hazards
of winter

Pink cheeks may look healthy, and cold air can even feel refreshing. But that tingle can turn into a bite for cheeks, fingers, toes and other vulnerable areas.

Frozen skin Frostbite happens when the skin, and sometimes the underlying tissues, freeze.

According to the American College of Physicians, frostbite causes the skin to turn white in patches, then tingle and eventually lose feeling. In more severe frostbite, the skin can become hard, blistered and very painful.

Any temperature below freezing can lead to frostbite, and the colder it gets, the faster frostbite happens—especially if it's windy.

For frostbite, follow these steps from the American Medical Association (AMA):

- Until you get out of the cold, cover your frozen skin with clothing or tuck your hands into your armpits.
- Once inside a warm room, gently heat your skin in warm, not hot, water.
- Do not rub frostbitten areas or warm them with direct heat, such as from a campfire, heater or hair dryer.
- Do not walk on frostbitten feet.

If frostbitten skin does not completely recover when it is warmed, go to a hospital as soon as possible.

Cold to the core People who don't dress warmly enough or who are exposed to very cold conditions for a prolonged time are at risk for a life-threatening condition called hypothermia.

People with hypothermia may shiver uncontrollably, be confused or slur their speech. They need immediate emergency care, so call 911 or send someone for help. Then follow these steps from the AMA:

- Shelter the person from the weather, or move him or her to a warm place.
- Once in a warm room, remove any wet clothing from that person.
- Cover the person with warm, dry clothing and blankets. If necessary, use your own body to provide more warmth.

www.saintalphonsus.org



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to a healthier
INTERACTIVE
lifestyle.



The Minds. The Medicines. The Miracles.

At Saint Alphonus, we're dedicated to being your partner in health. That's why we're proud to announce the launch of our newly-enhanced web site with a variety of e-health resources and convenient online tools, including:

- Informative, interactive health videos.
- Free e-pregnancy and e-health newsletters covering a variety of health and wellness categories.
- A comprehensive online health information library.
- Breaking national health news, updated 24/7.
- Information on classes, seminars and events, all featuring convenient online registration.
- Information on a family doctor or specialist that's right for you.
- Virtual tours of our new, state-of-the-art Family Maternity Center and Level III Neonatal Intensive Care unit.
- Online pre-registration prior to your next visit, and much more.
- Online bill pay available.



Saint Alphonus

ADVANCED HEALING BEGINS HERE

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Tough enough
for pink

Breakfast and night rodeo
raise breast cancer awareness

From dawn 'til dusk, pancakes, mobile mammography screenings and rodeo rev-

elries were all part of the annual Caldwell Night Rodeo.

Saint Alphonus and West Valley teamed up to help fight breast cancer in Caldwell and the western Treasure Valley by jointly sponsoring both the Caldwell Chamber of Commerce's Buckaroo Breakfast and the Caldwell Night Rodeo's Tough Enough for Pink breast cancer awareness event.

The Saint Alphonus-West Valley

Health Alliance wants to promote the importance of annual mammography screenings and raised over \$21,000 to support women who can not afford mammograms. In a recent report from the Cancer Data Register of Idaho, women in Idaho ranked last in the U.S. for mammography screening rates.



For more information about free mammograms, please call 208-455-3905.

BREAST CARE CENTER INTRODUCES **DIGITAL** Mammography

To provide patients with optimal breast imaging, comfort and lower x-ray doses, the Saint

Alphonsus Breast Care Center and Mobile Mammography Unit have installed MAMMOMAT Novation^{DR} digital mammography systems from Siemens Medical Solutions.

According to the National Breast Cancer Foundation, Inc., breast cancer in women has increased from one in 20 in 1960 to one in eight today. If detected early the five-year survival rate exceeds 95 percent.

The new digital system enables physicians and clinicians to better pinpoint disease and plan treatment, particularly in certain patient populations. Research shows that digital mammography improves image quality and diagnostic confidence for women under the age of 50, pre- and perimenopausal women, and women with dense breast tissue.

“Breast self-examination is one of the most important tools for early detection, and regularly scheduled mammograms are not only highly recommended but can

often detect a lesion long before it can be felt,” says Jackie Copeland, Saint Alphonsus Breast Care Center manager. “With this innovative new system, screening and diagnostic imaging can be done on the same digital unit, while both image quality and dose exposure reduction are achieved at optimum level.

“Our new mammography system will help Saint Alphonsus provide the women of southwest Idaho with the best possible exams. In addition to updating the mammography suites located in the Boise Breast Care Center, the Saint Alphonsus Mobile Mammography van also received a digital makeover. This will allow women in rural Idaho to receive the same state-of-the-art screenings that women at the comprehensive Breast Care Center do.”

FOR YOUR COMFORT At 24 by 29 centimeters, the size of the MAMMOMAT Novation image detector allows imaging of a wider range of patient breast sizes, and its new paddle design provides easier and more comfortable patient positioning.

“Further, with the utilization of mammo-

pads, our system enables the utmost comfort for our patients during the necessary breast compression associated with mammograms,” Copeland says.

A CLEARER IMAGE

“What’s great about digital mammography is that it improves the visualization in subtle changes in dense tissue better than its film counterpart,” says Howard Schaff, MD, Breast Care Center radiologist. “Digital allows the radiologist to manually manipulate brightness, contrast and magnify a suspicious area of interest. Utilizing this technology reduces the frequency of calling patients back for additional views. This is a huge benefit to our patients.”

For more information about the new

digital mammography system at Saint Alphonsus or to schedule an appointment, call the Saint Alphonsus Breast Care Center at 208-367-3336.



Breast cancer screening is getting better all the time. To learn about ways to detect the disease in its most treatable stages, visit www.saintalphonsus.org and choose “Breast Cancer” from the Fast Finder.

HEALTH CARE HEROES

Hospitals honored for improving quality of life

In September Saint Alphonsus Regional Medical Center and West Valley Medical Center

received the Advancements in Health Care Hero Award from the Idaho Business Review in their annual event honoring heroes in health care. The award, by definition, honors a company or individual primarily responsible for a scientific discovery or development of a new process, device or service that can save lives or improves the quality of life for a large number of people.

The Saint Alphonsus–West Valley Health Alliance was selected for its goal of

improving the quality of life for western Treasure Valley residents by giving them access to a higher level of comprehensive health care services in their community by:

- Improving access to primary care, specialty and sub-specialty physicians
- Providing access to state-of-the-art technology and expanded telemedicine applications
- Enhancing the scope of health care services available in Caldwell so patients don’t have to travel to Boise
- Coordinating care through shared clinical protocols to improve patient outcomes and reduce health care costs.



Idaho Business Review President and Publisher Rick Carpenter (left) presents the Advancements in Health Care Hero Award to Saint Alphonsus President and CEO Sandra Bruce (center) and West Valley Medical Center CEO Kathy Moore.



ORTHOPAEDIC SERVICES RANKED NO. 1

According to the 10th annual HealthGrades Hospital Quality in America Study, Saint Alphonsus Regional Medical Center ranks No. 1 in Idaho for orthopaedic services. The largest of its kind, the study analyzed patient outcomes at almost all of the nation's 5,000 hospitals from 2004 to 2006.

The study also recognized Saint Alphonsus with the following distinctions:

- Ranked No. 1 in Idaho for overall orthopaedic services—three years in a row
- Only hospital in Idaho to be a recipient of the HealthGrades Joint Surgery Excellence Award—two years in a row
- Ranked among the top 10 percent in the nation for joint replacement surgery—two years in a row
- Five-star rated for joint replacement surgery—two years in a row
- Five-star rated for total knee replacement—two years in a row
- Five-star rated for total hip replacement—five years in a row



- Ranked among the best in Idaho for joint replacement surgery—five years in a row
- Ranked among the best in Idaho for spine surgery—three years in a row

“We are thrilled to be recognized by HealthGrades for our exceptional orthopaedic care,” says Richard Moore, MD. “It is wonderful to be ranked No. 1 in Idaho as well as be recognized nationally for the outstanding orthopaedic care that’s given at Saint Alphonsus. This recognition is well deserved by the many employees who contribute to the great team effort that makes the Saint Alphonsus Joint Care Program a success.”

SEE FOR YOURSELF The 2008 HealthGrades ratings for all hospitals nationwide are available, free of charge, on the organization’s award-winning consumer website, www.healthgrades.com. More than 3 million people and employees of some of the nation’s largest employers and health plans visit HealthGrades each month to access quality information about hospitals, nursing homes and physicians. HealthGrades also provides consumers with detailed assessments of hospitals’ patient-safety outcomes, based on indicators developed by the U.S. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.



CARDIOVASCULAR CARE



SAINT ALPHONSUS AWARDED TOP HONOR

Saint Alphonsus is pleased to announce it has been named one of the nation’s 100 Top Hospitals for cardiovascular care by Thomson Healthcare. The annual award is

based on performance treating congestive heart failure and heart attacks. This is the fourth time Saint Alphonsus has been recognized with this honor. The 2007 winners were announced Nov. 19.

Steven Writer, MD, the medical director for Cardiology Services, says, “Saint Alphonsus is honored to receive this recognition. This national recognition speaks to the high caliber of cardiac care and expertise in the Treasure Valley. We are dedicated to providing excellence in cardiovascular care by following guideline protocols set by the American Heart Association and American College of Cardiology. These national standards applied locally translate into superb outcomes, and we are honored to receive this recognition.”

A MODEL OF EXCELLENCE The Heart and Vascular Center at Saint Alphonsus was established in July 1994 and is a full-service provider of cardiac care in a state-of-the-art environment. The Heart and Vascular Center provides medical expertise in cardiac surgery, catheterization labs, coronary and telemetry care, and diagnostic services, as well as in disease prevention, cardiac rehabilitation and wellness programs.

Among the key findings from the 2007 Thomson 100 Top Hospitals Cardiovascu-



lar Benchmarks for Success:

- If all cardiovascular hospitals achieved the same results as the 100 Top Hospitals award winners, more than 7,000 lives would be saved and nearly 750 medical complications would be avoided annually.
- The award winners reported hospital stays that were an average of 12 percent shorter than peer hospitals (5.14 days compared with 5.85 days).
- The 100 Top Hospitals reported costs that averaged 13 percent—or about \$2,000—less per case than their peer hospitals.
- There was a large difference in the volume of heart procedures performed by the winning hospitals and their peers.
- The 100 Top Hospitals performed nearly two-thirds more coronary artery bypass grafts and percutaneous coronary interventions, such as angioplasty.

Thomson Healthcare scored facilities in eight key performance areas: risk-adjusted medical mortality, risk-adjusted surgical mortality, risk-adjusted complications, core measures, percentage of CABG patients with internal mammary artery use, procedure volume, severity-adjusted average length of stay, and wage- and severity-adjusted average cost.

Find out more about our award-winning care. Visit www.saintalphonsus.org.

A TOUGH BEGINNING

A FUTURE OF HOPE

Healing comes in all forms: dramatic, subtle and, in some cases, sublime.

◆ The story of Sherri Lake is one such inspiring account, though it doesn't begin as an uplifting anecdote—quite the contrary.

As a child Sherri was a victim of emotional and sexual abuse. She recalls growing up in an unhappy home with alcoholic parents and an older brother who was in constant trouble with the law. Memories still linger of being depressed throughout most of her childhood.

Depression followed Sherri through her school years. A poor self-image and lack of self-confidence crippled her emotionally. She never felt good enough for her parents, teachers or friends. When someone finally did pay extra attention to her, she latched on tight. Sherri relied heavily on her first relationship as her source of happiness.

CHOICES A poor self-image often leads to poor choices, as was the case with her first boyfriend. Betrayal ended the young relationship, and Sherri took it hard—maybe too hard. She contemplated suicide but backed down before swallowing a handful of pills. She was 21 years old. A less than sympathetic mother only made matters worse.

The following year Sherri met her first husband—another bad choice. His alcoholism soon surfaced along with his physical and emotional abuse. After one episode of abuse, Sherri attempted again to end her life as she crashed her car into two parked cars. She told her story to her husband, her parents and to the police, but no one suggested professional help. Sherri was 23 years old. Her marriage, the abuse and her depression continued.

GATHERING GLOOM As her depression deepened, she became constantly exhausted. She would get home from work at 4:30 p.m. and sleep until 6:30 the next morning. She spent almost entire weekends in bed. Nearly unable to function,

she sought medical help.

Sherri was 24 years old when she was first diagnosed with depression. She was placed on medication that worked so well that after one year, the drugs were stopped. But one year later the depression returned, and she was back on medication. This time the medication was not as effective.

Sherri's first marriage ended after five years. At 36 Sherri married again. Her second marriage lasted about as long as the first, but that relationship gave her a son—the light of her life. As thrilled as she was to be a mother, the depression worsened. She consulted many doctors and counselors, and tried various medications; nothing seemed to help. She was never told she could get better, and she didn't. So Sherri became discouraged and resigned herself to being depressed the rest of her life.

While in the depths of despair, Sherri still managed to accept the responsibility for her aging mother and father. At 41 Sherri and her son moved home to care for them. Her mother died a few months later as her father's Parkinson's disease complicated their situation. All this became too much for emotionally disabled Sherri. She confessed her thoughts of suicide with her counselor, who referred her to a new therapy group.

INTO THE LIGHT She was actually feeling results when that group ended. Now hoping that recovery might be possible, Sherri sought help again. This time she found Saint Alphonsus. Through Saint Alphonsus Behavioral Health, Sherri began seeing Andrew Olnes, MD, and Damiana Uberuaga, LCSW, outpatient counselor.

Her treatment included medication, individual counseling and group therapy



Sherri Lake

“I have had to do my part and work hard, but I now have the tools and support I need. Thanks to Dr. Olnes and Damiana, I now see the light.”

—SHERRI LAKE

with the Women's Mood Disorders Group. “The group has been my salvation,” Sherri says. For the past two years the group has given her tools to deal with issues in her life, past and present, that contributed to her depression.

Sherri says, “I have been living in a black hole with no glimmer of light. I have had to do my part and work hard, but I now have the tools and support I need. Thanks to Dr. Olnes and Damiana, I now see the light.”

After decades of living with crippling

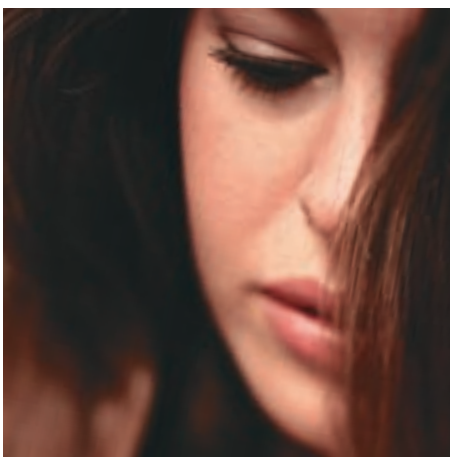
depression, Sherri is recovering. She is still caring for her ailing father, but now she has the strength to deal with that challenge and anything else life can throw at her.

Sherri's healing process may be subtle, but the results are dramatic. While her story is about depression, it is certainly one of hope.

Don't ignore depression. Ask your doctor if treatment is right for you. To learn more about beating the blues, call Saint



Alphonsus Behavioral Health at 208-367-2175.



Life has many ups and downs. And sometimes those “downs” can be life-changing events that can, at the very least, make us feel incredibly sad or discouraged.

Many times those feelings, while intense, may not last for very long.

But when sadness or despair are constant companions, it might be more than a fleeting case of the blues—it might be depression.

Clinical depression is a serious illness that affects some 20 million Americans each year, according to the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). It can linger for weeks, months or even years if not treated, and it can prevent a person from living a normal life.

SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION Depression can happen to anyone, and there may be many reasons for it including biological or emotional factors.

The tendency towards depression seems to run in families. Any stressful event, such as a natural disaster, divorce, financial woes or the death of a loved one can trigger episodes of depression.

Even the holidays, which are often a joyful time for many people, can be a source of depression for others because of stress, fatigue or separation from family.

With depression, you might feel sad, anxious or “empty” most of the time and no longer enjoy things the way you used to. Other signs may include:

- Feelings of hopelessness or pessimism.
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness or helplessness.
- Loss of energy or feeling fatigued.
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering or making decisions.
- Sleeping too little or too much.
- Changes in appetite or weight.

- Feeling restless or irritable.
- Having thoughts of death or suicide.

KIDS AND DEPRESSION While many of us may think of depression as an adult disorder, kids can experience depression too. Children can become depressed for all the same reasons adults do, such as death, divorce, natural disasters or major financial problems.

Symptoms of depression in kids are similar to those in adults. In addition, the NIMH says a child who is depressed may:

- Complain of headaches, stomachaches, muscle aches or tiredness.
- Perform poorly in school or be frequently absent from school.
- Talk about running away from home.
- Cry for no apparent reason.
- Be extremely sensitive to rejection or failure.

Children who are depressed can be helped to overcome the disorder, just like adults, with the use of medication and therapy.

FINDING YOUR WAY BACK Many people don’t seek help for depression.

DEPRESSION: MORE THAN JUST THE ‘BLUES’

That’s unfortunate because about 80 percent of people who do seek help get better with the right treatment, reports the NIMH.

Common treatments include antidepressant medicines and “talk” therapy. You may need to take antidepressant medicines for several weeks before you feel their full benefits.

Therapy involves sessions with a therapist or counselor who can help you understand and resolve problems.

For milder depression, therapy may be the only treatment needed, according to the American Psychiatric Association. When depression is more severe, a combination of medicine and therapy is often necessary.

TIPS FOR COPING Seeing a doctor is key to a proper diagnosis and treatment of depression.

In addition, these tips from the NIMH may help you cope with depression while you’re undergoing treatment:

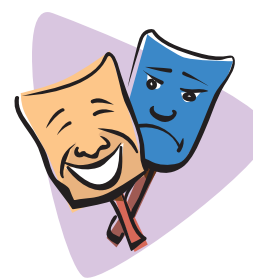
- Set realistic goals in light of the depression. Break large tasks into small ones, set some priorities and do what you can as you’re able.

Reclaim your life

Behavioral health problems can be as disabling to living a full, happy life as any physical problem. From stress management to addiction recovery, therapy to intensive inpatient treatment, Saint Alphonse Behavioral Health Services offers a full range of behavioral health services for patients of all ages.

Through programs that treat patients with dignity and compassion, our patients learn to cope with life’s challenges, return joy and serenity to their lives, and learn to live again.

For more information call Saint Alphonse Behavioral Health at 208-367-2175, or visit www.saintalphonus.org.



MIND AND BODY

- Try to be around other people and to confide in someone.
- Try to do things that make you feel good, such as going to a movie or a ballgame. Exercise may also help.
- Expect gradual, not immediate, improvements in your feelings and mood.
- Try to postpone important decisions until you’re feeling better.

Remember, effective help is available if depression is a problem for you or someone you love. No one should suffer needlessly.



CENTER FOR ADVANCED HEALING OPENS

In October Saint Alphonsus opened its new state-of-the-art facility designed to serve the community's health care needs for generations to come. ♦ The Center for Advanced Healing is one of the most advanced clinical centers in the Northwest, providing 21st-century medicine in a 21st-century healing environment. The new center combines state-of-the-art technology and treatments, evidence-based architectural design principles proven to enhance healing, and highly skilled staff members who help involve patients and their families in the healing process.

Saint Alphonsus President and CEO Sandra Bruce says, "We have based every aspect of construction and design around incorporating the design principles and

concepts from research findings, learning from other hospitals, and including our staff and physicians in their own space design. We did those things to reduce the spread of infection and disease, promote healing, and provide support to clinicians and staff. We are proud to offer our patients an environment where state-of-the-art meets the art of healing—for their physical, emotional and spiritual needs."

At the community open house, visitors got a behind-the-scenes look at the beautiful new facilities before patients and staff moved into their units. Visitors were able to see the main lobby, surgery waiting and operating rooms, Intensive Care Unit (ICU), a patient care room and rooftop garden, and the unique features of the Orthopaedic and Joint Care Center on the ninth floor.

The new, nine-story patient care tower includes:

- A 16-suite surgical operating theatre

New to the area? Find the right physician at www.saintalphonsus.org. Click on "Find a Doctor" to search by city or specialty.

- Kissler Family Library and Research Center
- New McCleary Auditorium and Conference Center
- New preoperative and postoperative holding and recovery rooms
- New 32-bed ICU
- Private rooms with care zones for clinical staff and family members
- Smart beds equipped with features to reduce staff injuries and enhance patient care
- Spacious and private family waiting and conference areas
- New circulation route to improve circulation in and around campus
- Bow-tie shape to increase accessibility of the patient units and improve patient views
- Healing environments that incorporate the benefits of window views and carefully chosen room décor
- Increased square footage and technological enhancements in operating rooms

The main goal of the Center for Advanced Healing is to put patients first by creating a calming environment where they feel more relaxed and able to heal. There are sound panels throughout the center to reduce the noise level, calming

classical music plays throughout the floors, and the private rooms include a sofa with a pull-out bed to help make family visits comfortable.

Researchers studied different ways to make the \$161.2 million tower restful and healing. They found that when people have a connection with nature, their stress levels decrease; when their stress levels are down, healing can begin. Saint Alphonsus used this information to create a healing garden where patients and visitors can be surrounded by natural beauty.

"We're challenged with the explosive growth of our community, the huge wave of baby boomers on the horizon and the growing shortage of skilled health care workers," Bruce says. "The plans [for the new Center for Advanced Healing] were the result of over five years of studying the best ways to deliver health care and the best environments to help patients heal. We believe in involving patients and families in the care process. We believe this project was absolutely crucial to maintain the community's need for safe, quality, state-of-the-art health care services, and to attract and retain highly skilled physicians, nurses and other health professionals."



STROKE: IT'S ALL ABOUT TIME

How preparation and rapid response saved Tom Jones

In March 2007 Tom Jones' life was interrupted by an ischemic stroke—a blocked blood vessel in the brain. The 41-year-old customer service agent's life had been rolling along smoothly. At 6 feet 2 inches and 180 pounds, Tom was in good health and enjoying an active life. He was going about his normal routine of getting ready for work one morning when, without warning, his body suddenly went limp and he collapsed on the bathroom floor. Tom was awake and alert, but when he tried to get up his left arm and left leg would not respond. Stunned, all he could do was lie there.

Tom's roommate heard Tom hit the floor and rushed to check on him. He saw Tom crumpled on the floor, and he asked if he was OK. Tom tried to respond, but he couldn't speak. Grasping the severity of the situation, the roommate instantly called 911—a quick reaction that may have saved Tom's life.

BEAT THE CLOCK Paramedics reached Tom in a matter of minutes. Tom's symptoms instantly told them they were dealing with stroke; this was a medical emergency, and they knew they were in a race against the clock.

As Tom was rushed to Saint Alphonsus Emergency Department, a call alerted the acute stroke team led by Hansel Ashby, MD. The team was ready and standing by when Tom arrived, and they quickly went to work. With a flurry of activity going on around him, but unable to speak, Tom watched in disbelief. He kept thinking to himself, "This really can't be happening to me. There must be something else happening...I can't be having a stroke!"

With the clock ticking, doctors performed a CT angiogram on Tom's brain. The imaging scan located a blockage. The clot in a large artery on the right side of his brain was preventing blood and oxygen from reaching a large section of the brain. Oxygen-starved cells were dying. As the severity of the stroke was revealed, so was the risk of cerebral swelling, which can be fatal.

Did you know? Making sense of strokes

A stroke, or a brain attack, occurs when blood flow to an area of the brain is interrupted by a blockage or break in a blood vessel. Within minutes of stroke, brain cells begin to die as they are deprived of oxygen-rich blood. As brain cells die, the brain begins to lose control over functions such as walking, talking and even breathing. Until recently nothing could be done when a stroke occurred; it simply had to run its course. Each year nearly 750,000 Americans become stroke victims; and of those, almost 250,000 are fatalities—making stroke America's third leading cause of death.

Strokes often have early warning symptoms, such as sudden numbness or weakness of the face or limbs, trouble speaking, vision problems or dizziness. But in Tom Jones' case, there were no such warnings. In an instant his life changed dramatically.

In the past several years, medical advancements have given victims a fighting chance to survive a stroke and to minimize permanent disabilities. However, because of the nature of strokes, these lifesaving weapons are only useful within minutes of a stroke's occurrence. Tom's story underscores the value of quick action and medical response.



Tom Jones

Neurologist Barbara Bess, MD, and interventional neuroradiologist William Taylor, MD, agreed on the course of action: Merci clot retrieval. Dr. Taylor, along with interventional neuroradiologist Dallas Peck, MD, performed this breakthrough procedure—only possible within the last two years. The Merci Retriever is a corkscrew-type device that is delivered into an artery in the brain. Upon reaching the targeted area, the Merci Retriever is designed to restore blood flow by engaging, capturing and removing the blood clot.

BACK TO BASICS For the next six weeks, Tom remained at Saint Alphonsus re-learning how to speak, walk and move his arms. Speech therapy, occupational therapy and physical therapy occupied his days. His recovery was faster than normal, due in part to his age and otherwise good physical condition. The gravity of his situation took an emotional toll on Tom, and he struggled with depression—a condition not uncommon among stroke survivors. But frequent visits from family and friends helped raise his spirits during those first crucial, challenging weeks.

Therapy helped Tom slowly regain most of his speech and movement in his left leg. Though his left arm was not responding as quickly, Tom could now stand for brief periods. So, 20 pounds lighter and with the assistance of an ankle brace and cane, Tom left the hospital ready to face the challenge of regaining his life.

ROAD TO RECOVERY Unable to live without assistance, Tom stayed with his parents for a while. Though grateful for

their support, losing his independence was another emotional blow. But Tom knew continued recovery and the road back to his old life would require patience and determination, as well as ongoing outpatient therapy at Saint Alphonsus Rehabilitation Services (STARS).

At STARS, Tom found a new source of support and motivation: his therapists, Betsy and Connie. Their strong coaching and positive attitudes have helped Tom push himself to new milestones in his recovery. Tom's progress has him ready to live on his own again and planning to return to work soon.

FORTUNE IN MISFORTUNE So why does Tom feel lucky? His ongoing recovery would certainly be more difficult without skilled, determined therapists and supportive parents. He knows the damage caused by the stroke could have been more destructive and potentially fatal had his roommate not been there to call 911. The paramedics' knowledge of stroke symptoms allowed them to alert the acute stroke team at Saint Alphonsus that was prepared to treat Tom at the moment of his arrival. The specialized and highly trained physicians and staff, as well as Stroke Center protocols, provided the level of critical care that started Tom on the road to recovery.

Had Tom's stroke occurred a few years earlier, his doctors at the Saint Alphonsus Stroke Center would not have had the lifesaving tools they relied on to remove his clot.

So, even in his misfortune, Tom has found good reasons to feel lucky.



NOW OPEN! Quick, convenient and affordable medical care



Chances are you already fill prescriptions and pick up over-the-counter medications at a local Albertsons/Sav-On pharmacy or Rite Aid pharmacy. Now you can also get a quick checkup at select locations.

Express Care clinics offer certified Saint Alphonbus nurse practitioners and physician assistants who assess, diagnose and **treat your basic medical conditions for one low, flat fee of \$45**. Medical services are available to adults and children 24 months and older.

- No appointment is needed
- No insurance is required
- You can fill your prescriptions before you leave the store
- A record of your visit will be sent to your primary care physician (with your permission)

Life is busy—we get it. Next time you're sick, visit Saint Alphonbus Express Care. We'll have you In, Out and On Your Way.

BOISE

- Albertsons**
- **Eagle and McMillan**
4700 N. Eagle Road
 - **Columbia Village**
6560 S. Federal Way
- Rite Aid**
- **15th and State**
1515 W. State St.
 - **Apple and Boise**
660 E. Boise Ave.

CALDWELL

- Rite Aid**
- **Linden and Cleveland**
2809 E. Cleveland Blvd.
Opening late February

For more information, visit www.ExpressCareIdaho.com or call **208-367-SAMG (208-367-7264)**.

OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK

Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Saturday and Sunday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Saint Alphonbus medical care services: Where to go for minor to critical care

Type of care	Health conditions treated*	Care provided by	Average visit length	Minimum visit cost+	Locations
Saint Alphonbus Express Care	Care for common minor conditions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ colds ■ flu ■ cough ■ ear or sinus infections ■ cold sores ■ sore throat ■ allergies ■ hives ■ rash ■ insect bites ■ itchy skin ■ sunburn ■ skin infections 	Nurse practitioner or physician assistant	15 minutes	One flat fee of \$45	OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK Albertsons—Boise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 4700 N. Eagle Road ■ 6560 S. Federal Way Rite Aid—Boise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1515 W. State St. ■ 660 E. Boise Ave. Rite Aid—Caldwell <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 2809 E. Cleveland Blvd. For more information, call 208-367-SAMG (208-367-7264) or visit www.ExpressCareIdaho.org .
Saint Alphonbus Medical Group—Urgent Care	Care for minor to moderate conditions Same as Express Care, plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ sports injuries ■ abdominal pain ■ headaches ■ body aches ■ bronchitis ■ back pain ■ pneumonia ■ nausea 	Board-certified physicians Nurse practitioners Physician assistants	30 minutes to 2 hours	Basic visits start at \$80 to \$100	OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK Meridian <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 3025 W. Cherry Lane 208-367-8550 Nampa <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1200 Garrity Blvd 208-466-9092 Caldwell <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 315 E. Elm 208-459-7415 For more information, call 208-367-SAMG (208-367-7264) or visit www.saintalphonbus.org .
Saint Alphonbus Medical Group—Primary Care	Central point of care for preventive, routine, chronic and acute conditions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ health and wellness care ■ preventive screenings ■ annual physicals ■ immunizations and shots ■ management of chronic conditions ■ workplace injuries ■ referrals to specialists ■ coordination of patient hospital stay, rehab and long-term care 	Board-certified physicians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pediatrics ■ Internal medicine ■ Family medicine ■ Obstetrics and gynecology ■ Occupational medicine Nurse practitioners Physician assistants Nurse midwives	30 minutes to 1 hour	Basic visits start at \$80 to \$100	Over 85 providers at 18 Treasure Valley Clinics For same-day appointments or to find a physician, call 208-367-SAMG (208-367-7264) or visit www.saintalphonbus.org .
Saint Alphonbus Emergency Department	Care for minor, moderate, serious, critical and life-threatening conditions Same conditions as Express Care and Urgent Care; proceed directly and immediately to the emergency department if the following warning signs are present: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ chest pain ■ uncontrolled bleeding ■ sudden or severe pain ■ coughing or vomiting blood ■ difficulty breathing or shortness of breath ■ sudden dizziness or weakness ■ change in vision ■ severe or persistent vomiting or diarrhea ■ change in mental status, such as difficulty arousing 	Board-certified emergency physicians	1 to 4 hours	Cost will vary widely depending upon extent of diagnostic and medical services provided and health insurance coverage.	OPEN 24 HOURS Boise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1005 N. Curtis Road 208-367-3221 Eagle <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Eagle Health Plaza 323 E. Riverside Drive 208-367-5355
Saint Alphonbus Health Plaza	Community health center offers a broad range of same-day medical services and outpatient surgical care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Emergency Department (Eagle) ■ Urgent Care (Meridian) ■ Radiology and imaging ■ Lab ■ Primary and specialty care physicians ■ Physical therapy ■ Outpatient surgery and procedures ■ Allergy and Orthopaedic Care ■ Pharmacy (Eagle) 	Board-certified physicians Nurse practitioners Physician assistants			Eagle <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 323 E. Riverside Drive 208-367-5355 Emergency open 24 hours a day Meridian <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 3025 W. Cherry Lane 208-367-8500 Urgent Care open 7 days a week

*Health conditions listed are intended to be a simple, quick reference guide and not a complete list of medical services provided.

+Costs listed are only intended to be a guide and will vary widely depending upon medical condition, extent of medical services provided and insurance coverage. For more information about your specific costs, please consult your health insurance benefit plan representative regarding your coverage and out-of-pocket expenses.

cut out and save



PRIME TIME FOR 'BUGS'

Colds, flu and pneumonia are common during winter

If something seasonal is bugging you, it should be no surprise. Fall and winter are prime times for the spread of viruses and bacteria that cause colds, flu and pneumonia.

◆ Fortunately, you can lessen the impact of these microscopic invaders by using commonsense tactics and reasonable care.

THE UBIQUITOUS COLD Colds are spread by airborne viruses—from sneezing and coughing, for example—and by contact with infected materials, explains William E. Golden, MD, a spokesman for the American College of Physicians.

A stuffy nose and sore throat are hallmarks of a cold. You could also have mild to moderate chest discomfort, a hacking cough, weakness, a low-grade fever and some fatigue.

Headache, fever, and general aches and pains are rare with colds.

Despite what many people believe, antibiotics won't cure a cold—colds are caused by viruses, and antibiotics are effective only against bacterial infections. Taking antibiotics when you don't need them may make any future infection more resistant to effective treatment.

Over-the-counter medicines can help relieve cold symptoms, though they won't necessarily shorten the course of your cold, Dr. Golden says.

Choose a cold remedy that is specific to your symptoms. For example, if you want to unplug a stuffy nose, select a nasal decongestant. Have a cough? Pick a cough suppressant.

For safety's sake:

- Don't take two (or more) medicines that contain the same active ingredient. Taking too much of a drug, such as

an antihistamine, can do more harm than good, according to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

- Don't give aspirin to children or teens. Young people can get sick or die from a rare condition called Reye's syndrome if they take aspirin while they have symptoms of a cold or flu.

- Don't overlook home remedies. Gargle with warm salt water to help ease throat discomfort. Use petroleum jelly to soothe a raw nose. Try to drink plenty of fluids, such as water or juice.

THE MIGHTY FLU Flu symptoms tend to be more severe than cold symptoms, and complications due to flu—including bacterial pneumonia—are more serious. About 36,000 people in the U.S. die from the flu each year, reports the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Flu usually strikes suddenly, bringing with it headache, body aches and pains, and fevers of 100 degrees to 102 degrees. Children may have even higher fevers.

Chest discomfort and cough are also common. Stuffy

nose, sneezing and sore throat are less frequent. You may experience extreme exhaustion in flu's early stages, followed by weakness and fatigue for up to three weeks.

See a doctor if you have difficulty breathing, chest pain, bluish skin color, a high or prolonged fever, or if you make loud sounds when breathing, Dr. Golden advises.

Also tell your doctor if you have a cough that lingers after the flu is gone.

As with colds, antibiotics are ineffective against the flu. However, your doctor may prescribe an antiviral medicine, such as Tamiflu or Relenza. Treatment with antivirals within 48 to 72 hours after flu symptoms start may reduce the severity of your illness and shorten your recovery time, Dr. Golden says.

To minimize discomfort, you can use over-the-counter medicines for symptoms such as fever. Rest in bed, drink plenty of fluids and try to eat well. Stay home from work or school and avoid running errands until your symptoms are gone.

THE POWERFUL PNEUMONIA Pneumonia is a lung infection that is caused mainly by bacteria, viruses and other organisms.

About half of all pneumonia cases are triggered by viruses, according to the American Lung Association. Viral pneumonia tends to be less severe than bacterial pneumonia and usually heals on its own.

Symptoms of viral pneumonia are similar to the flu and include fever, dry cough, headache, muscle pain, weakness and increasing breathlessness.

Bacterial pneumonia is another matter. It can be a serious—and deadly—disease, especially for older adults, very young children, and people with diseases that weaken the immune system, such as chronic lung and heart disease, diabetes, AIDS and sickle cell anemia.

Pneumococcal pneumonia is one of the most common causes of bacterial pneumonia. Pneumococcal pneumonia is spread through contact with people who are ill or who carry the bacteria in their throat. You can get this pneumonia from inhaling droplets that come from a cough or sneeze of an infected person.

According to the American Medical Association, pneumococcal pneumonia is usually treated with antibiotics. Symptoms typically go away within 12 to 36 hours after you start taking antibiotics.

A vaccine to prevent severe pneumococcal pneumonia—and other, less common types of bacterial pneumonia—is available for kids and adults, says Dr. Golden.

One shot of pneumococcal vaccine is recommended at age 65. A repeat vaccination may be needed if you were last vaccinated before age 65, says Dr. Golden.

The CDC also recommends the vaccine for children younger than 2 or anyone with a serious, long-term health problem.

No fooling: You need to wear sunscreen in the winter

It might sound like a snow job, but it's not: Wearing sunscreen in winter may be just as important as it is in summer—and in some cases, perhaps even more so.

It's easy to think that wintertime sun is less dangerous than sunshine encountered in warmer weather. But skin damage from the sun can happen any time of the year.

Skiers, in particular, face the risk of sunburn during the winter

because snow reflects the sun's damaging rays even on cloudy days. Plus, radiation exposure increases at high elevations.

The American Academy of Dermatology offers these year-round sun safety tips:

- Use a broad-spectrum sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15 whenever you'll be in the sun for more than 20 minutes.
- Apply sunscreen to dry skin

15 to 30 minutes before going outside. Reapply it every two hours or after strenuous activity. Be sure to use sunscreen on your face, ears, hands, arms and any other skin that won't be covered by clothing.

■ **Shield your skin with protective clothing. And don't forget to wear sunglasses.**

Remember, a sunburn harms your skin no matter what the outdoor temperature. So try to avoid it.



INSET: Corrie Cron before weight-loss surgery ABOVE: Corrie, 131 pounds lighter

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO FEEL GREAT

Corrie Cron—LAP-BAND® surgery patient: January 2005. ♦ Corrie battled obesity for 40 years. At 280 pounds she lived in constant pain—physical and emotional. Her joints would strain under the load of even short walks, but it was her low self-esteem that kept her home. After losing 131 pounds, her suffering is gone. Now a frequent traveler, Corrie enjoys hiking in national parks, climbing ruins in Mexico and being the happiest she's ever been.

In the fight against obesity, Saint Alphonsus is proud to be the first hospital in Idaho to offer LAP-BAND weight-loss surgery—the safest, least invasive surgical option to help patients dramatically improve their lives. Since 2003 we've cared for more than 350 LAP-BAND surgery patients. Our comprehensive bariatric weight-loss surgery program is designed to support you before, during and after your procedure. To read Corrie's complete story and to learn more, visit www.saintalphonus.org.

Free LAP-BAND Seminars

■ Feb. 11, 4:30 p.m.

■ Feb. 27, 6:30 p.m.

McCleary Conference Center, in the Central Tower of Saint Alphonsus Regional Medical Center

To register please call 208-367-3454 or visit www.saintalphonus.org.

MAKING GOOD ON NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

You make them, then break them. ♦ If this pretty much describes your track record with New Year's resolutions, keep reading. You're about to learn from psychologist John

Norcross, PhD, of the University of Scranton, what specific steps you can take to turn your resolutions into reality.

Dr. Norcross has studied the habits and success rates of hundreds of New Year's resolvers, and thus his advice is based on hard data and published studies.

Avoid people, places and things that could cause a setback.

His insights are especially important if—as his research suggests—you're like most American adults and resolve to lose weight, exercise

regularly or quit smoking. "These are potentially lifesaving lifestyle changes," he emphasizes.

Here's what Dr. Norcross suggests:

- Be realistic. Resolving to lose 10 pounds and keep them off is a more attainable goal than resolving to shed 50. "If you tackle too much, you're likely to give up in two weeks," Dr. Norcross cautions.
- Line up support before you begin. Tell your friends and family what your goal is and ask for their encouragement.
- Don't rely on willpower alone. Even the most determined dieter will raid a cookie jar if it's there. So avoid people, places and things that could cause a setback.
- Substitute. Find healthy alternatives for habits you want to break. "You can't just say, 'I won't eat as much,'" says Dr. Norcross. "You have to say, 'Instead of eating when I'm upset, I'll exercise.'"
- Finally, keep lapses in perspective. Successful resolvers view their behavior as merely a momentary slipup and recommit to their goal. Learn from them.





Saint Alphonus

For more information or to register for any of our classes, please call the Saint Alphonus Resource Line at **208-367-3454** or register online at www.saintalphonus.org.

CLASSES AND SUPPORT GROUPS FOR YOUR HEALTH

The following classes are held at the Saint Alphonus Family Center, 900 N. Liberty, in Boise.



Toddler Time

Feb. 12 through March 4, April 1 through 22
6:30 to 7:30 p.m.
\$25/toddler and parents
Designed for parents and their toddlers (12 to 24 months). Learn how play helps your toddler's language and motor skills, as well as your toddler's ability to think, solve problems and build confidence. Toddlers of all abilities are welcome to attend.

ADOLESCENT HEALTH Babysitting Safely

Feb. 2, March 28, April 19
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
\$30 per person

CPR for Babysitters

Mondays, Feb. 11, March 17
6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
\$20 per person

CHILDBIRTH EDUCATION ABCs of Early Pregnancy

Thursday, March 13
6 to 9 p.m.
\$10 per couple

Breastfeeding for Beginners

● Tuesdays, Feb. 12, April 1
● Wednesdays, March 12, April 30
7 to 9 p.m.
\$15 per couple

Childbirth Preparation

\$60 per couple
● Tuesdays, Feb. 26 through April 1, April 15 through May 20
7 to 9 p.m.
● Wednesdays, Feb. 6 through March 12, Feb. 27 through March 12, March 26 through April 30
7 to 9 p.m.
● Saturdays, Feb. 23, March 15, April 26
9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Childbirth Preparation for Young Mothers

Call **208-367-7386** for more information.

Childbirth Preparation Refresher Class

Thursdays, Feb. 21, April 3
6 to 9 p.m.
\$20 per couple

Happiest Baby on the Block

Thursday, March 20
6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
\$30 per couple; includes DVD
This class is certified by Idaho STARS for child-care providers.

Hypnobirthing

● Thursdays, March 6 through March 27
6:30 to 9 p.m.
● Saturdays, Feb. 9 and 16, or March 29 and April 5
9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
\$175 per couple

Music Birth

Feb. 19 through March 11, April 15 through May 6
6:30 to 9 p.m.
\$100 per couple

Newborn Care and Parenting

Saturdays, Feb. 2, April 12
9 a.m. to noon,
\$20 per couple

Prenatal Tour

● Tuesdays, Feb. 12, March 11, April 8
● Thursdays, Feb. 21, March 20, April 17
6:30 to 7:30 p.m.
FREE

Sibling Preparation

\$15/child and parents
● Saturdays, Jan. 26, Feb. 23, March 15, April 12
● Thursday, March 13
10 a.m. to noon

CHILDCARE PROVIDER COURSES

See "Happiest Baby on the Block" (Childbirth Education category), and all classes in the Family/Parenting category except "CPR for Parents."

FAMILY/PARENTING

All classes in this category are certified by Idaho STARS except "CPR for Parents" and "Toddler Time."

Baby Signing

Wednesday, April 16
6:30 to 8 p.m.
\$20/baby and parents

CPR for Parents

Tuesday, March 11
6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
\$20 per person

Love and Logic

Feb. 5 through March 4
6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
\$53 per couple; includes workbook

Taming the Toddler

Wednesdays, Jan. 16 through Feb. 13
7 to 9 p.m.
\$50 per couple

Toddler Time

Feb. 12 through March 4, April 1 through 22, FREE
6:30 to 7:30 p.m.
\$25/ toddler and parents

HEALTH SEMINARS LAP-BAND System for Severe Obesity

● Feb. 11, April 14
4:30 to 6:30 p.m.
● Feb. 27, March 11, March 31
6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
FREE. Call **208-367-3454** to RSVP.

SENIORS AARP Driver Safety

Wednesdays and Thursdays, Feb. 13 and 14, March 12 and 13, April 9 and 10
9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
\$10 per person

SUPPORT GROUPS Baby and Me

Tuesdays, 10 to 11 a.m.
FREE
Family Center

Breastfeeding Support and Encouragement

Tuesdays, 11 a.m. to noon
FREE
Family Center

Eating Disorders Support Group

Mondays, 7:30 to 9 p.m.
FREE
Call **208-343-3131**.

Infertility Support Group

Call **208-367-7380**.

LAP-BAND Weight-Loss Post-Surgery Support Group

Fourth Monday of each month, 7 to 8:30 p.m.
McCleary Center

POPS (Parents of Premies Support)

Thursdays, 6 to 7 p.m.
FREE
Call **208-367-7386**.

Share Miscarriage and Infant Loss Support Group

First Tuesday of each month, 6:30 to 8 p.m.
FREE
Breast Care Center
Lobby of Liberty
Medical Park building

Toddler & Me

Mondays, 10 to 11 a.m.
FREE
Family Center

WELLNESS Massage Therapy

Call **208-367-7380** for an appointment.

The following classes are held at the Meridian Fire Safety Center, 1901 E. Leighfield Drive, in Meridian.

ADOLESCENT HEALTH Babysitting Safely

Feb. 15, March 29, April 26
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Includes essential fire safety information.

CHILDCARE PROVIDER COURSES Heartsaver First Aid and Pediatric CPR with AED

Saturdays, Feb. 23, March 8
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
\$50 per person; includes book
Provides essential fire safety information.

The following class is held at Saint Alphonus Rehabilitation Services, 901 N. Curtis, Suite 204, in Boise.

WELLNESS Healthy Back Class

Thursdays, noon to 1:30 p.m., FREE
Register by calling **208-367-3315**.

The following classes are held at the Meridian Health Plaza, 3025 Cherry Lane, in Meridian.

CHILDBIRTH EDUCATION Childbirth Preparation

Saturday, March 1
9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
\$60 per couple

FAMILY/PARENTING Lifetime Love

Divorce prevention and relationship enhancement by Promising Horizons Counseling Center. Call **208-350-0330** to register.

Massage Therapy Services

April 16 through May 14
7 to 9 p.m.
\$50 per couple

SENIORS AARP Driver Safety

Tuesdays and Wednesdays, Feb. 12 and 13, March 11 and 12, April 8 and 9
9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
\$10 per person

WELLNESS Foot Clinic

Fridays
For an appointment, call **208-367-6569**.

Massage Therapy Services

For an appointment, call **208-367-7380**.

The following classes are held at the West YMCA, 5959 N. Discovery Way, in Boise.

ADOLESCENT HEALTH Babysitting Safely

Feb. 23, March 28, April 12
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
\$30 per person

Taming the Toddler

April 16 through May 14
7 to 9 p.m.
\$50 per couple



Saint Alphonsus Medical Group

Today more than ever, people are making a commitment to their health. Eating right, exercising and seeing a physician on a regular basis are proven to help fight disease and maintain good health.

The Saint Alphonsus Medical Group can care for all of your primary health and wellness needs. Whether you focus on maintaining a healthy lifestyle or need support for routine or chronic conditions, we have more than 80 board-certified physicians and providers who listen to your needs and provide you with the respect, compassion and high-quality care you deserve.

To find a physician who best meets your needs, contact a clinic near you or call **208-367-SAMG (208-367-7264)**. For quick, convenient care after hours, visit one of our urgent care locations.



Saint Alphonsus Medical Group Clinics

BOISE		MERIDIAN	NAMPA
1673 Shoreline, Suite 120 208-429-8311 Family Medicine	6094 Emerald St. 208-367-6575 Internal Medicine	Meridian Health Plaza 3025 W. Cherry Lane 208-367-8550 Urgent Care, Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, OB/GYN, Occupational Medicine	211 W. Iowa 208-465-7377 Family Medicine
471 Baybrook Court 208-367-4250 Internal Medicine	6533 Emerald St. 208-367-4170 Family Medicine, Occupational Medicine	1200 Garrity Blvd. 208-466-9092 Urgent Care, Family Medicine, Occupational Medicine	
999 N. Curtis, Suite 407 208-367-4321 Pediatrics	12273 W. McMillan Road 208-367-6330 Internal Medicine, Family Medicine	1001 Meridian Road 208-888-5406 Family Medicine	CALDWELL
6140 W. Curtisian, Suite 100 208-367-4224 OB/GYN	1525 S. Owyhee 208-367-6910 Family Medicine	EAGLE	315 Elm St. 208-459-7415 Urgent Care, Family Medicine, Pediatrics, Occupational Medicine
900 N. Liberty, Suite 206 208-367-5544 Maternal-Fetal Medicine		Eagle Health Plaza 323 E. Riverside Drive 208-367-5750 Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, Pediatrics	

Saint Alphonsus EXPRESS Care

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|----------------------------|--|
| Albertsons | Rite Aid |
| Eagle and McMillan | 15th and State |
| 4700 N. Eagle Road, Boise | 1515 W. State St., Boise |
| Columbia Village | Apple and Boise |
| 6560 S. Federal Way, Boise | 660 E. Boise Ave., Boise |
| | Linden and Cleveland |
| | 2809 E. Cleveland Blvd.,
Caldwell (opening late February) |

Diagnose and treat basic medical conditions for one low, flat fee of \$45. No appointment or insurance required. For more information, visit www.ExpressCareIdaho.com or call **208-367-SAMG (208-367-7264)**.

Home Health & Hospice Services

With Saint Alphonsus Home Health and Four Rivers Hospice, patients will experience:

- End-of-life care
- Access to care 24 hours a day
- Pain management
- Easy-to-use service
- Excellent quality of care

For more information, please call **208-367-3040** or **800-253-7518**.

Saint Alphonsus Health Plazas

Meridian—3025 W. Cherry Lane, 208-367-8500

Services offered:

- Urgent Care
- Primary Care
- Lab, X-Ray, Mammography, Ultrasound and Bone Density
- Physical, Speech and Occupational Therapy
- Cardiac and Pulmonary Rehabilitation
- Same-Day Outpatient Surgery
- Foot Care Clinic

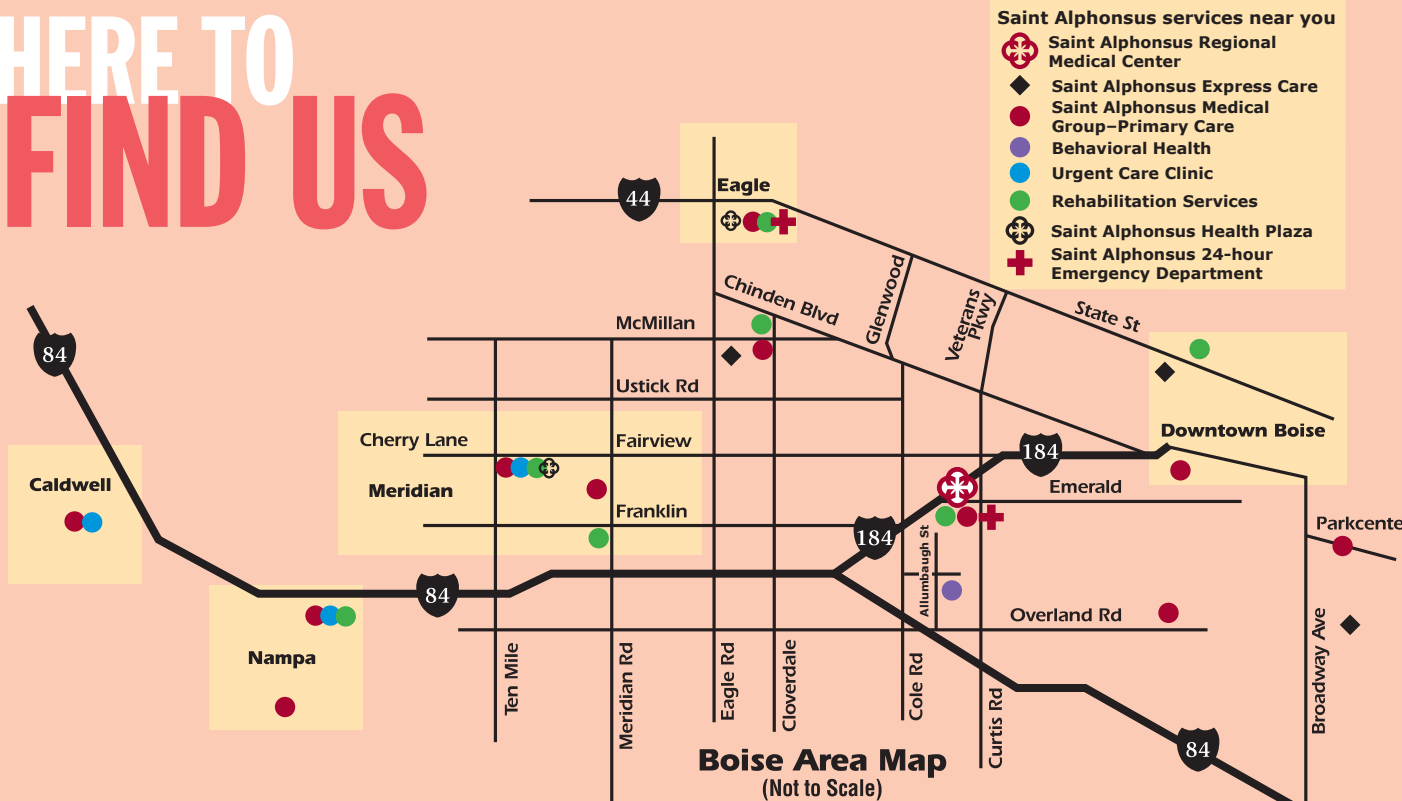
Eagle—323 E. Riverside Drive, 208-367-5750

Services offered:

- Full-Service Emergency Department—Open 24 Hours
- Primary Care and Specialty Physician Offices
- MRI, CT, X-Ray and Ultrasound
- Physical Therapy
- Lab Services
- Pharmacy and Home Medical Equipment
- Vision Care
- Allergy Care
- Orthopaedic Care
- Outpatient Surgery Center (*now open*)

For more information, visit www.saintalphonsus.org.

WHERE TO FIND US



HEALTH SCENE is published as a community service for the friends and patrons of SAINT ALPHONSUS REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER, 1055 N. Curtis, Boise, ID 83706, telephone 208-367-2121, website www.saintalphonsus.org.

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HEALTH SCENE

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