



News Release

Contact: Amy Blaser, Vice President

Phone: 402-562-3371

Email: aebblaser@columbushosp.org

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CCH's anesthesia services department reduces patient pain and opioid use

For Immediate Release

(COLUMBUS, Neb.) – Columbus Community Hospital's anesthesia department is committed to managing pain in new ways. That's why its team uses the latest anesthesia techniques.

"While most of our services occur in the operating room, the anesthesia team takes care of patients wherever we are needed," said Joshua Wenande, MSN, director of anesthesia.

CCH's anesthesia department provides epidurals and spinal anesthesia for laboring mothers, administers sedation for radiology procedures, performs spinal taps and places IVs under ultrasound. Caregivers also work closely with emergency department staff during traumas and other emergencies, and with patients through the SURGE Center for joint replacement.

The department's certified registered nurse anesthetists perform more than a dozen different nerve blocks (a type of pain management procedure) and practice enhanced recovery after surgery, promoting improved healing for patients following their procedures.

CCH's anesthesia department was also one of the first in the state to offer the iovera[®] treatment. This clinically proven, non-opioid pain management solution uses the body's natural response to cold to relieve pain.

Almost 50% of CCH patients who undergo a major procedure receive a regional nerve block, which interrupts pain signals traveling along a nerve. Thanks to the anesthesia team's medication, many of these blocks last several days, with some lasting as long as five to seven days. The treatment allows patients to receive less medication during their procedures, and limits the amount of pain medication they may have to take afterward.

"The regional anesthetic techniques the anesthesia department can provide are unique," said Wenande. "Over the last five years, the team has developed this program to be a leader in the state of Nebraska."

The program allows nurse anesthetists to limit or completely avoid opioids during an anesthetic procedure. This decreases both side effects and the risk of opioid dependence.



The use of opioid-free anesthesia is part of the anesthesia department's efforts to address the nation's ongoing opioid crisis. In recent years, CCH's anesthesia department has significantly reduced its use of opioids by replacing them with other medications and therapies without sacrificing pain relief for patients.

"The services offered to patients through the Columbus Community Hospital anesthesia department are at a level that is competitive or exceeding the services anywhere else in the state," Wenande said. "Patients can be assured they are receiving the highest level of care available."

To learn more about the cutting-edge services provided by the CCH anesthesia department, visit www.columbushosp.org.

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