

Think Wellness

Randy Hermanson

got his life back

BLOOM into
Motherhood

Greetings from
Scrubs Camp

*Healthy
Summer!*



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Summer 2021 Issue - **FREE**



Suffering from pain?

Mankato Clinic Pain Management Center offers advanced, minimally invasive diagnostic therapeutic services to enable patients suffering from pain to restore function, relieve pain and renew hope.

Mankato Clinic Pain Management can help patients who suffer from:

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Contact your primary care provider to discuss if the Pain Management Center would be beneficial for you.

→ mankatoclinic.com/pain-management-center

Meet Our Pain Management Providers



Ifechi Anyadioha, MD



Michael Muchiri, APRN, CNP



Mankato Clinic
Pain Management Center

Madison East Center
1400 Madison Avenue, Suite 402, Mankato | 507-625-7246



A lot can change in your life—and your body—in a year's time. Especially this past year! It's why we're urging you to schedule your annual preventive visit. At this check-in your provider will:

- ensure that you are healthy and well and doing what needs to be done to maintain good health
- check for possible diseases so they can be treated early
- identify any issues that may become medical concerns in the future
- make sure you are aware of and able to schedule any immunizations and screenings that are due

**An annual preventive visit
gives you the chance to live
a healthier life for years to come.**

**Schedule Now
Call 507-625-1811**



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Think Wellness

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CONTENTS

- 5** BLOOM into Motherhood
- 6** Meet Mankato Clinic's new providers
- 8** Here's your Get-Ready-for-School Checklist
- 11** Erin's Kitchen: Salmon is quick and nutritious
- 12** Randy Hermanson got his life back when he got his pain under control
- 15** Drug Free: Joe Harvey finds relief from Pain Management Center
- 17** OUR COMMUNITY: Mankato Clinic Foundation joins OFC to support youth football
- 18** Greetings from Mankato Scrubs Camp
- 20** Top 5 reasons to drink H2O
- 21** Calendar of Events



BLOOM into Motherhood

Greater Mankato Mom presents BLOOM – an event for new and expecting moms – on Thursday evening, August 26, at Snell Motors. BLOOM offers an evening of learning, an expo of products and resources and lots of swag for new moms.

"BLOOM is a wonderful way to connect with other moms, local experts and the best resources, products and services for young families," said Jessica Blais of Greater Mankato Mom. "Becoming a mom is wonderful and exciting so let's learn, grow and BLOOM together!"

Throughout the evening, Mankato Clinic providers will host Baby Talks – casual conversations with a small group of other moms like you. Join up to 3 sessions:

- **Fed is Best:**
Feeding your Baby in Year 1
- **Night Night:**
Safe Sleep Practices for babies
- **Take care of you:**
Postpartum Care
- **Tummy Time:** Tummy to Play

In addition, child passenger safety technicians can answer your questions on car seats. They can also demonstrate how to properly install car seats in vehicles in the Snell Motors showroom.

You will receive a swag bag, healthy snacks, and have time to browse an expo of products, services and resources that make life better for new moms.



Jessica Blais (third from right) leads a passionate team of contributors who make Greater Mankato Mom a local parenting website written by Mankato moms for Mankato moms. All team members are not pictured. They were busy!

Who is Greater Mankato Mom?

Greater Mankato Mom is part of City Mom Collective, a network of locally-focused parenting websites and resources. Jessica Blais, mother of 2 young children, leads Greater Mankato Mom. Her team of contributors are local women who offer different perspectives on parenting, life, beauty, fashion, home, travel and more. The website is filled with family-friendly activities in the Mankato area, blogs on parenting and motherhood and opportunities to connect online and out in the community with other local moms.

Visit Greater Mankato Mom at greatermankatomom.com and get social with them on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest too.

Mankato Clinic is an advertising partner of Greater Mankato Mom.

IF YOU GO:

What: BLOOM – an event for new and expecting moms

When: Thursday, August 26, 6-8:30 p.m.

Where: Snell Motors,
1900 Madison Avenue, Mankato

Sign Up: Visit greatermankatomom.com to register for the event and purchase your tickets.

Cost: \$25

The venue allows for social distancing and CDC masking guidelines will be followed.

Virtual: A Virtual BLOOM Baby Talk with Mankato Clinic providers will be held at 7 p.m. Tuesday, August 31.

Meet Mankato Clinic's new providers



Paul Otteson,
PA-C, joins Dermatology

Paul Otteson, PA-C, joins Mankato Clinic Dermatology at Madison East Center. He earned his physician assistant degree at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina. Paul's clinical interests include skin cancer, moles, psoriasis, hair loss and acne.

"I think it is important to make patients feel as comfortable as possible during office visits, while at the same time, being thorough and addressing all of their concerns," Paul said.

Paul began his career in pediatrics at a children's clinic in North Carolina. He trained in a comprehensive dermatology clinic at the University of Iowa Hospital and Clinics in Iowa City. He also completed the Society of Dermatology Physician Assistants fellowship, a specialized training program for PAs working in dermatology.

Originally from Thousand Oaks, California, he received his bachelor's degree from St. Olaf College in Northfield and completed post-graduate courses at Minnesota State University, Mankato.

"Although I was not born in Minnesota, it has felt like home since my years at St. Olaf College. I now have family in the area and my wife is a true native with strong Minnesota roots," Paul said.

Paul and Natasha have two children who keep them on their toes. They enjoy cooking, hiking and relaxing lakeside. They are looking forward to going up north this summer and someday hope to travel to Norway. He is happy to be back in Minnesota to work and raise a family.

"We enjoy eating good lefse, which is not easy to find outside of the state," Paul added.

To make an appointment with Mankato Clinic Dermatology, call 507-389-8538. To learn more, visit www.mankatoclinic.com/dermatology.



Hope Hartig,
APRN, CNP, CDCES, joins
the Diabetes Care Center

A nurse practitioner, Hope Hartig is also a certified diabetes care and education specialist who joined the Diabetes Care Center at the Mankato Clinic Main Street location. A certified diabetes care and

education specialist helps patients make a realistic plan to best manage diabetes. Working one-on-one with patients, Hope shows patients how to eat a healthy and balanced diet, get physical activity and monitor their blood sugar levels. Sometimes this can feel overwhelming. That's why she makes sure the plan suits their lifestyles. She also educates patients on medications, blood glucose monitoring devices and insulin use.

"Diabetes is complex, using a team approach, the goal is to empower patients through knowledge and support to make healthy steps towards better health and better outcomes," Hope said.

Hope is part of the Diabetes Care Center, which brings together a team of diabetes specialists and physicians to help patients thrive with diabetes. The Diabetes Care Center team works closely with our

patients' primary care physicians and other specialists throughout the clinic.

Hope earned her master's degree as a certified nurse practitioner at Purdue University Global, Urbandale, Iowa. She holds a bachelor's degree in nursing from Kaplan University, Urbandale, Iowa, and an associate's degree in nursing from Iowa Central Community College, Fort Dodge. She is originally from Fort Dodge, Iowa.

Hope enjoys spending time with her husband and children. In her spare time, she likes playing games, reading and traveling.

To learn more about the Diabetes Care Center, visit www.mankatoclinic.com/diabetes-care-center or call 507-385-4114.



Natasha Choiniere,
PT, DPT,
joins Physical Therapy

Physical therapist Natasha Choiniere, a board-certified clinical specialist in orthopedics, has joined the Physical Therapy team. Natasha's clinical interests include orthopedics, return to sports, Parkinson's disease and manual therapy of the spine.

"As a physical therapist, I strive to provide customized, evidence-based care to each individual patient to help them achieve their goals," Natasha said.

Natasha also treats TMD or temporomandibular joint disorder. The temporomandibular joints are the 2 joints that connect the jaw to the skull. TMD limits the natural functions of the jaw – opening the mouth, chewing, talking and yawning. Symptoms include jaw pain and fatigue, ringing in the ears, dizziness, headache, neck pain, difficulty eating or talking and locking of the jaw.

A very common disorder, TMD affects more than 10 million Americans and is seen more often in women than men and people age 20 to 40. Natasha treats TMD by helping to ease the pain, regain normal jaw movement and reduce daily stress on the jaw.

Natasha earned her doctorate of physical therapy from the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, and her bachelor of science in exercise science from Minnesota State University, Mankato. Prior to joining the Mankato Clinic, Natasha worked at Optivus Physical Therapy in North Mankato.

Originally from Waterville, Natasha lives in North Mankato with her husband and daughter.

To learn more about Mankato Clinic Physical Therapy at Main Street, visit www.mankatoclinic.com/physical-therapy or call 507-389-8760.



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*Licensed Acupuncturist
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Special Interests:

Chronic Pain, Infertility, TMJ,
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Christian Jovanovic,
DACM, L.Ac.

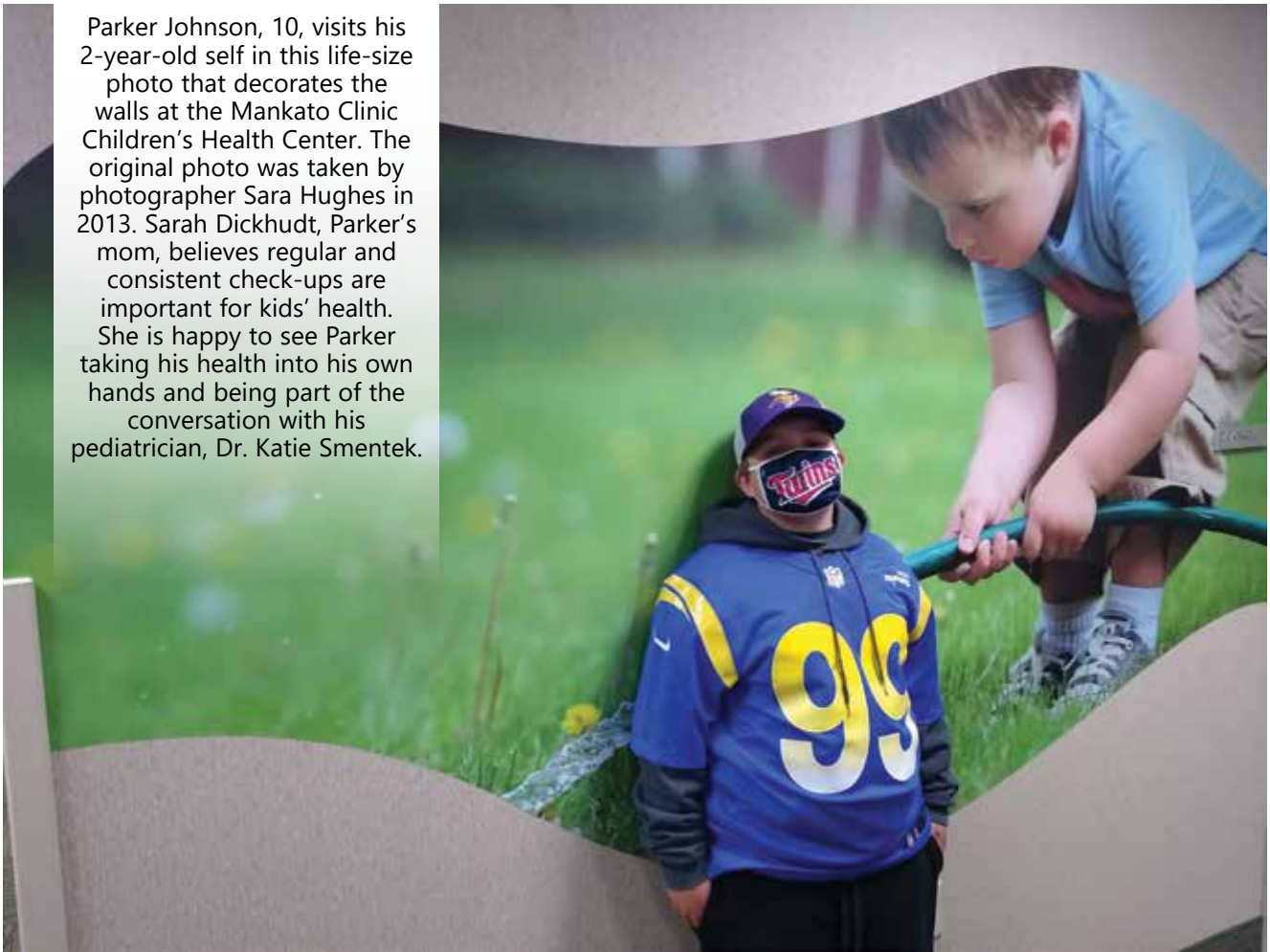
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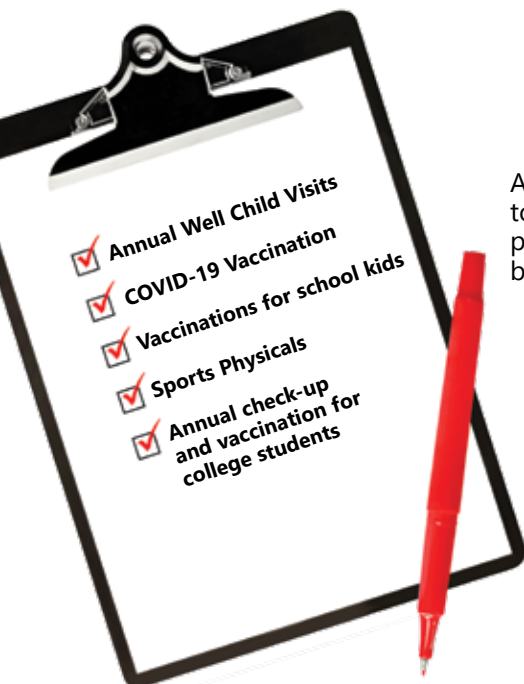
Dermatology, Chronic Pain,
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We are an LGBTQ friendly environment

Parker Johnson, 10, visits his 2-year-old self in this life-size photo that decorates the walls at the Mankato Clinic Children's Health Center. The original photo was taken by photographer Sara Hughes in 2013. Sarah Dickhudt, Parker's mom, believes regular and consistent check-ups are important for kids' health. She is happy to see Parker taking his health into his own hands and being part of the conversation with his pediatrician, Dr. Katie Smentek.



Here's your Get-Ready-for-School Checklist



As we gear up for a school year that's going to feel a little more normal, it's time to get your children and teenagers in for well-child visits, vaccinations and sports physicals. Young adults going to college should also take care of a few details before they head to campus.



Annual Well Child Visits

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends will-child visits every year for children age 3 to young adults age 21.

When your child is younger, parents will have lots of questions as every stage of life raises questions and sometimes concerns. Your child's healthcare provider is an excellent resource. They can assess and discuss your child's physical, mental and emotional health. They make sure kiddos are growing and meeting milestones.

Older children and teenagers may prefer to ask their own questions and visit with their provider for some time on their own. The more you can encourage your children to take an active role in their care, the better.



COVID-19 Vaccination

Mankato Clinic providers recommend that children age 12 and older get the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccination, which is a two-dose series spaced three weeks apart. Two weeks after the second dose, your child is considered fully vaccinated. There is a 5-week lag time to become fully protected so it's best to get the series started as soon as possible.

The Pfizer vaccine is widely available in Minnesota. Your local pharmacy is your best shot! In fact, walk-ins are welcome at most pharmacies. You may also visit www.mankatoclinic.com/vaccine-information.

"The vaccine is the safest and best way to get our kids back to doing the things they love to do. Vaccination will allow our kids to stay in school, play sports, play band, sing in choir and hang out with their friends," said Dr. Kelly Bryan, Mankato Clinic pediatrician.

It's been very challenging for families when children are exposed at school or day care to the virus and have to quarantine at home for up to 14 days. Once children are fully vaccinated, they will not need to quarantine and miss school, sports and normal activities.

"The Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine is safe and effective. Clinically tested in individuals age 12 and older, these vaccines have undergone and continue to undergo the most intensive safety monitoring in U.S. history," Dr. Bryan said. "The vaccines teach our body to recognize the virus and make antibodies to fight the virus. They do not alter our DNA in any way."

The most common side effects were pain at the injection site, fatigue, headache, chills, muscle pain, fever and joint pain consistent with reactions in older teens and adults. There were no serious medical issues related to the Pfizer vaccine.

"The side effects are really just normal responses of the immune system to the vaccine," Dr. Bryan said. Your teenagers may need other vaccinations as well. Other vaccinations can be done during the COVID-19 series.



Vaccinations for school kids

During your child's school years, there are several visits that include immunizations. Your child's healthcare provider can help you get your child caught up on recommended vaccinations to ensure a safe return to school for everyone.

Kindergarten: If your child is entering kindergarten this year, he or she will need a well-child visit and several vaccinations. This is an important visit to make sure your child is ready for school. Kindergarten usually need boosters for Hepatitis B, DTaP (diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus), Polio, Varicella (chicken pox), and Measles, Mumps, Rubella.

Fourth Grade: The fourth grade check-up may include a vaccine if your child is not up-to-date on immunizations.

Seventh Grade: At the seventh grade check-up, the well-child visit includes multiple immunizations including the Tdap (diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus) vaccine. They will also need the meningococcal vaccine which protects them from meningitis caused by several groups of the meningococcal bacteria.

The seventh grade check-up is a good time to begin the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination. This vaccination protects children against cancers that can affect them later in life. The vaccine works best when given to children between age 9 and 14 so it's usually given at age 11-12.

"We know many adolescents and teens are not protected. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, HPV vaccinations are down by 20% compared to 2019," Dr. Bryan said.

For copies of your child's immunization records, contact your clinic or call the Minnesota Immunization Information Connection at 651-201-3980.

To view the recommended immunization schedule, check out: Are your kids ready? What Minnesota Immunization Law Requires at www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/basics/readykidswhento.pdf.

To make an appointment for an annual well child check-up or a sports physical, call your primary care provider.

To meet Mankato Clinic's pediatric providers, visit www.mankatoclinic.com/pediatricians-and-providers.

Family Medicine providers care for people of all ages from babies to older adults. To meet our family medicine providers, visit www.mankatoclinic.com/family-medicine. Mankato Clinic has five convenient locations for family medicine: Main Street and Wickersham Health Campus in Mankato, North Mankato Family Medicine, Daniels Health Center in St. Peter and Mapleton Family Medicine. Appointments are available in all locations by calling 507-625-1811.



Sports Physicals

At the sports physical, your healthcare provider will review your student's medical history, current health and check your teen's height, weight, blood pressure, pulse, heart, lungs, muscles and bones.

"We want to help your teen play safely and prevent injury," Dr. Kendra Finn, Mankato Clinic Family Medicine said.



East West Jug Game – Photo by Sara Hughes
From seventh-12th grade, sports physicals are required every three years in Minnesota for all athletes playing school sports. Most athletes get their sports physical in seventh grade and again in 10th grade. The sports physical form is available from your high school or the Mankato Clinic website. Summer is the best time for sports physicals especially if your athlete is playing a fall sport.



Annual check-up and vaccination for college students

The race to get vaccinated is real. Our goal is to stop the spread before the virus mutates into new strains that break through our current vaccines. Young adults can help us win the race against COVID by getting vaccinated as soon as possible. When young adults step up and get vaccinated, they help keep the vaccines effective for everybody – grandparents, family, coworkers, roommates and friends.

Medical experts estimate at least 70-85% of Americans need to be immunized to get life back to normal. Vaccination is the key to opening up our world for concerts, sporting events, festivals and travel. By getting vaccinated, we can do all those things we canceled last year!

Before students head to college, medical experts and universities encourage vaccination so campuses can fully open and stay open.

"We know that COVID-19 thrives on college campuses. To keep COVID-19 from spreading, we are urging college students to get vaccinated. Vaccination will

allow our young adults to have a traditional campus experience," said Dr. Colin Weerts, Mankato Clinic Family Medicine. "Young adults age 18-25 are still at risk for severe COVID-19 infection."

Other vaccinations are also recommended for college students, especially if they will be living in residence halls. Summer is a good time to check in with your healthcare provider and make sure your college kids are up to date on all of their vaccines.

Typically, these vaccinations are recommended for college:

- **Measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR)** – Make sure your student has received 2 doses of this vaccine in childhood.
- **Meningococcal** – This vaccine protects young adults from meningitis, also known as meningococcal disease. Data shows college students are at a higher risk for meningitis due to group settings such as residence halls. Campus outbreaks have been reported and the illness can be life threatening. There are two types of Meningococcal vaccines. Preteens and teens often get the MenACWY vaccine at age 11 and 12 with a booster shot at age 16. The MenB vaccine is recommended before entering college.
- **Human papillomavirus (HPV)** – HPV is a common sexually transmitted infection that can lead to cancer later in life. Young people age 15 to 26 can receive this vaccine in a three-dose series if they didn't receive it as pre-teens.



Brittany Duncan,
APRN, CNP, WHNP
Mankato Clinic
Obstetrics and Gynecology

A lot of young women are concerned that the COVID vaccine will make them infertile. This is just not true. Social media posts have falsely claimed that the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines will trigger the body to attack a placenta protein called Syncytin-1 and cause infertility. While the Syncytin-1 protein and the spike protein found on the COVID virus broadly share some features, they are really quite different. There is no scientific or clinical evidence that the mRNA vaccines will train the female body to attack the placenta protein and mistake it for the coronavirus protein. We do not see infertility with the flu vaccine and that is targeting a viral protein in a similar way. I encourage women to discuss any concerns about the COVID-19 vaccine with their healthcare provider. We are happy to answer your questions.

Erin's Kitchen: Salmon is quick and nutritious

By Erin Gonzalez, MS, RD, LD

Salmon is one of our favorite go-to dinners for busy weeknight suppers! A friend of mine, who grew up in Alaska and whose family are salmon fishers, gave me the best tip for cooking salmon. Just add steak seasoning! We have never looked back or searched for another recipe! Whether you are cooking this in the summer on your grill or inside as a fast, easy one sheet pan meal in your oven, cleanup is a breeze.



Erin Gonzalez, MS, RD, LD, leads the Mankato Clinic Nutrition Education Center. Erin's home runs on easy and nutritious meals and snacks that her kids and husband love.

Recipe:

Salmon filet (size depends on your family)
Steak seasoning
Olive oil
Lemon slices (optional)

Instructions:

Coat the flesh side of the salmon with oil and season evenly with steak seasoning.

Grill the salmon skin side down over direct high heat with the lid closed, for about 12-15 minutes. The salmon will be medium-rare when an instant read thermometer inserted into the thickest portion reads 120 F. The flesh of the salmon will turn a lighter pink color and should flake apart easily.

On the Side: Add your favorite starch such as potatoes or whole-grain rice along with a vegetable and you have a complete, balanced meal. Our family loves to add baby potatoes and steamed green beans!

Bonus Tip: If this is your family's first time trying salmon, consider also adding fruit and bread to ensure everyone has a variety of food they can fill up on. Be sure to round out the meal with known foods so they don't feel so overwhelmed by the meal. Keep in mind, your child may not try the salmon the first time it is offered and that is OK! Keep offering and get them involved in the meal preparation. Let them sprinkle on the seasoning or cut the lemon slices. Research tells us the number of exposures to change a child's preferences to a new food increases with age. One study found infants only need one exposure to increase liking and consumption of a new food, while others demonstrated that 2 year olds required between 5 and 10 exposures, 8 to 15 exposures are needed for 3-4 year olds, and up to 20 exposures for 7-9 and 10-12 year olds.

Health benefits: The American Heart Association recommends consuming 8 ounces or two servings of omega-3 rich fish a week. Salmon is high in heart healthy omega-3 fatty acids which is a powerhouse for decreasing inflammation in the body associated with chronic diseases such as heart disease and diabetes.

Randy Hermanson got his life back when he got his pain under control

By Marie Wood



Mankato Clinic
Pain Management Center

Treatments at the Mankato Clinic Pain Management Center allow Randy Hermanson to stay mobile and enjoy the scenery.



Randy Hermanson (right), sees Michael Muchiri, APRN, CNP, at the Pain Management Center every month to review medication usage, schedule injections and make sure the treatment plan is working well.

Randy Hermanson of North Mankato worked for roughly 15 years in factories where he made elevator parts and brake parts for heavy equipment. His back pain was so severe that there were days when he was almost in tears at the end of the day.

"That was before I realized how tender my situation was," Randy said.

Randy, who is now 60 years old, has endured six back surgeries and lived with pain for the better part of 40 years. Life got so much better when he began treatment at the Mankato Clinic Pain Management Center.

"I don't know what would have happened to me if I wouldn't have found the Pain Management Center. Dr. Ifechi has given me my life back. I can't imagine what I'd be doing today if it weren't for him," Randy said. "I can spend quality time with my granddaughters. If they're playing dolls or trucks, I can do that.

I can play with them. It's so much more than I ever dreamed it could be."

Randy has two children and two grandchildren, age 2 and 4. When he visits his grandchildren, he takes them to the playground and watches them on the swing set and merry-go-round. Something Randy never thought was possible.

About eight years ago, Randy's primary care provider at Mankato Clinic-North Mankato Family Medicine referred him to the Pain Management Center. Ifechi Anyadioha, MD, gives Randy epidural steroid injections to treat his low and mid-back pain. Occasionally Randy gets injections in the sacroiliac joint. This joint absorbs shock between the upper body and the pelvis and legs. The injections are usually performed every 3-6 months as they do not treat pain permanently.

"Dr. Ifechi is so precise. I'm listening now when he is talking to the nurses.

It's almost like they're landing a plane. He's kind of a kidding fellow. He knows I have a sense of humor. He does that to ease my comfort level and my anxiety when I'm getting these shots," Randy said.

To identify the root of the patient's pain, Dr. Ifechi uses a detailed history and physical exam, as well as diagnostic studies like CT Scans, X-rays, MRIs, EMG (electromyography) and other studies.

"This is a very important aspect of chronic pain management because providing effective relief is highly dependent on correctly identifying the origin or pain generator," Dr. Ifechi explained.

Randy's treatment plan includes a combination of injections and oral medications. This treatment plan allows Randy to stay mobile. Prior to these treatments, Randy couldn't move without excruciating pain. With this plan in place, the pain is

tolerable as long as he doesn't overdo it and follows restrictions.

Between injections, Randy sees Michael Muchiri, APRN, CNP, every month to ensure he is using his medication properly, to schedule his next injection, and receive other treatments if needed.

"Pain management often requires more than medication management. Most patients benefit from a multidisciplinary treatment approach which includes cognitive behavioral therapy and interdisciplinary rehabilitation such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, chronic pain coping therapy, non-opioid therapy and implantable therapies as preferred first-line treatment for chronic pain treatment. Depending on the patient's response to the treatment plan, we do recommend surgical consult with spine surgeon and or neurosurgery," Michael explained.

Patients on pain medication are required to see Michael every month.

"I think that proves that they are very intent on taking care of you instead of here you go and out the door with you," Randy said. "They're not just doctors. That's a support team. I couldn't do this without them."

Relief & hope

Randy's back surgeries began in 1989 with his final surgery in 2019. In his early surgeries, it was his understanding that he had ruptured and herniated discs. He thought it would be no big deal and he'd be back to playing softball – his favorite sport in the world - but that wasn't to be.

In many of the surgeries, bone spurs and calcification or hardening of the discs were present. In 2019, his neurosurgeon diagnosed him with diffuse idiopathic skeletal hypertosis (DISH). DISH, sometimes called Forestier disease, is a type of arthritis that affects tendons and ligaments around the spine. The bands of tissue become hardened or calcified and form bone spurs. In addition, Randy has nerve damage from his spinal issues.

"When you're in pain constantly, it affects everything. You don't want to do much. You feel you can't do much," Randy said.

Now that his pain is under control, he can live his life, go fishing on occasion and spend time with his family. Sometimes, he'll head to the ballpark to watch the guys play softball. Or take in a Twins game at Big Dog in North Mankato while he has a soda and appetizer.

Randy's advice to others living in pain is don't give up and think there's nothing that can be done for the pain.

"Talk with your primary care provider. They don't know what we're living until we let them know. Dr. Andrew Miller's been very supportive," Randy said. "Get a doctor you can relay things to. Communicating is so key in this because pain is so misunderstood. Pain management is real. It's serious."

Expert Advice



Ifechi Anyadioha,
MD

Pain Management Center

Each patient is unique and physicians must keep that in mind in order to provide effective treatment. What works for one patient may not work for another patient even if the pain is from the same origin. With each patient, I begin with a very thorough history, physical exam and diagnostic imaging studies. This helps me identify where the pain is coming from. Then I recommend a treatment plan based on many factors including age, condition, medical history and previous treatments. We usually begin with non-invasive treatments such as physical therapy, activity modification and some non-opioid medications. If these treatments do not relieve pain, we may consider injection treatments.

In addition to injections, we also perform some surgeries where we implant nerve stimulators, spinal cord stimulators and pain pumps to control pain in the limbs, neck and back or to relieve abdominal and pelvic pain and headaches. These treatments can be quite effective and they will improve the quality of life for carefully selected patients.

Some types of chronic pain are time-sensitive. The earlier patients are treated, the better. Chronic pain that is not well managed and addressed in a timely fashion can progress to become permanent, hard to control and quite disabling. So early treatment is key.

Mankato Clinic Pain Management Center
Madison East Center, Mankato
507-625-7246

www.mankatoclinic.com/pain-management-center

If you are living in pain, see your primary care provider for a referral to the Pain Management Center.



As owner of Joe's Lawn Care, Tree and Snow Removal in Windom, Joe Harvey has a physically demanding job. Joe has stopped taking opioids for his pain and finds relief from the Pain Management Center.

DRUG FREE: Joe Harvey finds relief from Mankato Clinic Pain Management Center

When Joe Harvey was released from prison four years ago, he didn't have a hammer or screwdriver to his name. His landscaping business in Windom was defunct. In four years, he rebuilt his business which includes a shop, two skid loaders, two trailers, tools, power equipment and several employees.

"Clean and sober living and living for the Lord had done that for me. All the glory goes to the Lord," Joe said. "Ever since I came home from prison, I've said 'God, you're the driver of my bus. As long as you

are behind the wheel and I'm a passenger, everything goes really smooth.'"

Joe's journey through addiction began with opioid pain killers and led to methamphetamine and a 15-month stay in prison. He calls it the same old story that's so common in drug addiction.

While Joe may be done with pain killers, pain isn't done with Joe. As owner of Joe's Lawn Care, Tree and Snow Removal in Windom, he has a physically demanding job. Many days, he's up on a lift 45 feet in the

air trimming trees with a chainsaw. He also chops down trees, hauls away the logs and cuts them for firewood. Then there's the landscaping work, snow removal and more.

Joe receives steroid injections and other treatments from the Mankato Clinic Pain Management Center. Treatments depend on what's hurting. "I've worn out my body with lots of hard work over the years," he said.

Joe received lumbar epidural steroid injections for leg pain this spring.

"In this procedure, steroid is injected into the spine to reduce the inflammation surrounding the nerves. When the inflammation is reduced, the shooting pain down the leg will get better," Dr. Ifechi Anyadioha, MD, of the Mankato Clinic Pain Management Center, explained.

"I feel like a new man. I literally feel like I'm 35 years old again. I'm 63," Joe said. "I wouldn't be able to do what I do if it wasn't for those guys, not even close."

Dr. Ifechi also administers radiofrequency ablation to relieve Joe's low back pain. This procedure intercepts nerve transmission from the facet joints to the spinal cord and brain. Facet joints are the connections between the bones of the spine.

Joe's journey to better health also includes losing weight. Joe has lost 30 pounds with 20 pounds to go. Losing weight can go a long way in relieving pain and Joe is already feeling the benefits.

Recovery

A self-proclaimed adrenalin junkie with an addictive personality, Joe raced cars, boats and motorcycles. Looking back, it's no surprise that he became addicted to opioids and meth. In 1996, he was shot in the lower right leg in a freak accident that shattered his tibia and fibia above the ankle. It took three years to be able to walk on that leg and nine surgeries.

To relieve his foot pain, Dr. Ifechi treats Joe with a procedure called lumbar sympathetic nerve blocks. The block reduces the activity of sensitized nerves from an injury.

In the past, Joe was prescribed opioids for the pain – oxycodone and fentanyl. Designed for short-term use, Joe used them long term. His body built up a tolerance and he needed more to kill the pain.

"You always had anxiety because you were always worried that you'd have enough to control the pain until the next script could be filled. Then the withdrawal. If you would run out a little early, it was unbelievable. Terrible shakes and snakes crawling through the veins," Joe said.

Then somebody suggested he try methamphetamine and Joe was hooked. Next came trouble with the law. He completed a boot camp program in prison which included chemical dependency treatment and early release. While in prison, he also got close to the Lord.

Today he is a member of Narcotics Anonymous and Alcoholics Anonymous and sponsors others who are recovering. Joe celebrated five years of sobriety on January 16, 2021.

"Every moment I open my eyes, I just say Hallelujah," Joe said. "Clean and sober living is the only kind of living."

Relieve Pain & Renew Hope

Minnesota has seen a sharp increase in drug overdose deaths. Early data from the Minnesota Department of Health shows a 59% increase in opioid deaths from 2019 to 2020.

The Pain Management Center offers alternatives to opioids for pain relief. Michael Muchiri, APRN, CNP, and Dr. Ifechi Anyadioha treat the whole person, not just the pain. A treatment plan may include injections, implantable therapies, occupational therapy, physical therapy, mental health services and non-opioid medications. With access to specialists and therapists within the Mankato Clinic, patients can receive the treatment they need, close to home.

If you are in pain, your primary care provider can refer you to the Mankato Clinic Pain Management Center.



The Mankato Clinic Foundation

In the last 10 years, the Mankato Clinic Foundation has provided more than \$1.8 million in scholarships and grants in the communities we serve. The Foundation awards grants to organizations which strive to improve health and wellness in our region.

In quarter 2 of 2021, the Mankato Clinic Foundation awarded nearly \$40,000 in grants which include:

- Mankato North Mankato Youth Football for helmets (\$6,000 annually for 5 years)
- WellShare International – Community Health Worker Pilot (\$32,831)
- Greater Mankato Area United Way – Project Community Connects (\$1,000)

Mankato Clinic physicians and staff provide the majority of the funding as a way to give back to the community. Grants are awarded on a quarterly basis.

Visit www.mankatoclinic.com/mankato-clinic-foundation to learn more. The next grant application deadline is September 1.



Dr. Katie Smentek and Marcia Bahr of the Mankato Clinic Foundation were proud to present a grant of \$30,000 for new helmets to Neil Kaus of Mankato North Mankato Youth Football League.

OUR COMMUNITY: Mankato Clinic Foundation joins OFC to support youth football

From the East-West jug game to the Minnesota State University Mavericks and Minnesota Vikings training camp, football has deep roots in Mankato. Youth football is going strong with more than 700 kids playing in the Mankato North Mankato Youth Football league.

To ensure the safest playing experience, the Mankato Clinic Foundation has partnered with The Orthopaedic & Fracture Clinic (OFC). The Mankato Clinic Foundation is donating \$30,000 – \$6,000 per year over five years – to purchase new helmets every year.

"We're proud to support a safe experience for our young football players and to protect their brains from both the short and long-term

effects of concussions," said Dr. Katie Smentek, Mankato Clinic pediatrician and Mankato Clinic Foundation board member. "We're also happy once again, to be partnering with OFC to promote safe youth sports."

The Mankato Clinic Foundation and OFC are longtime partners in bringing the ImPACT Concussion Program to our community. ImPACT software is one tool that athletic trainers use to identify injury, track recovery and ensure our youth athletes return as safely as they can to school and sports.

OFC will provide on-field athletic trainers and sports medicine to the league as well as a donation of \$60,000 – \$12,000 a year for five

years – to provide new uniforms for all players.

"We are excited and grateful for this partnership with OFC and the Mankato Clinic Foundation to better serve the youth in our community. This is all about the kids," said Neil Kaus, Mankato North Mankato Youth Football League director.

The Mankato North Mankato Youth Football League will begin its 43rd year of competition and will expand to provide flag football for kindergarten-second grade and tackle football for third-sixth grade. The league takes a positive learning approach and promotes sportsmanship, hard work and determination.



Sagan Dobie, PA-C, demonstrated a routine physical exam with Scrubs Camper Daniel Lozano.

Greetings from Mankato Scrubs Camp



Sagan Dobie,
PA-C, Mankato Clinic,
North Mankato Family
Medicine

Do you know why doctors ask you to say AHHH when they look into your mouth? Sagan Dobie, PA-C, explained to Scrubs Campers that when you say AHHH, it raises the back of the throat so the doctor can see your tonsils, palate and other parts of the mouth and throat.

Scrubs Camp is a 2-day camp held in June for regional high school students interested in healthcare careers. Students explore healthcare careers with hands-on activities led by professionals in the field like Sagan who taught *Family Practice from Head to Toe*. To help campers see what it's like to be a physician assistant at

Mankato Clinic, Sagan called for volunteers to demonstrate a routine physical exam. Students also tried out medical tools such as reflex hammers and otoscopes.

"We hosted 60 students at camp this year at Minnesota State University, Mankato and South Central College. These students had the opportunity to participate in 8 sessions each day of camp. The sessions were opportunities for them to explore the world of working in healthcare," said Gwenn Wolters, regional career and college readiness coordinator, South Central Service Cooperative.

"There are more opportunities in



Scrubs Camper Sumeya Usman talks with Sagan Dobie, PA-C, about medical school to become a physician and graduate school to become a physician assistant.

the healthcare field that I wasn't aware of. There's more to health care than being a nurse or doctor," said Daniel Lozano, a Scrubs Camper.

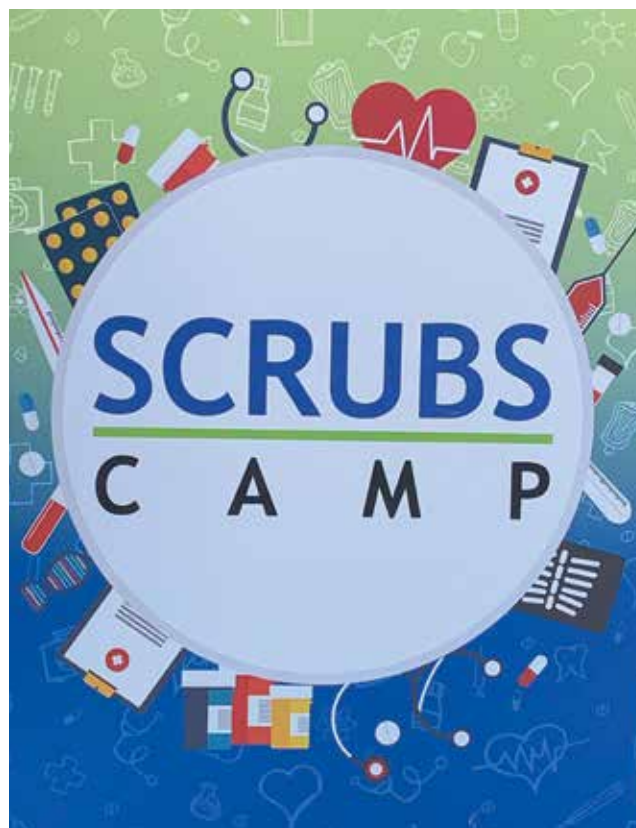
Sessions included speech and language pathology, nursing, dental, dietitian, audiology, medical assisting, culinary in healthcare and medical lab technology.

Abby Moses went to camp because she's thinking of a career in nursing, but she acknowledged she could change her mind. "I came here to learn more about different positions."

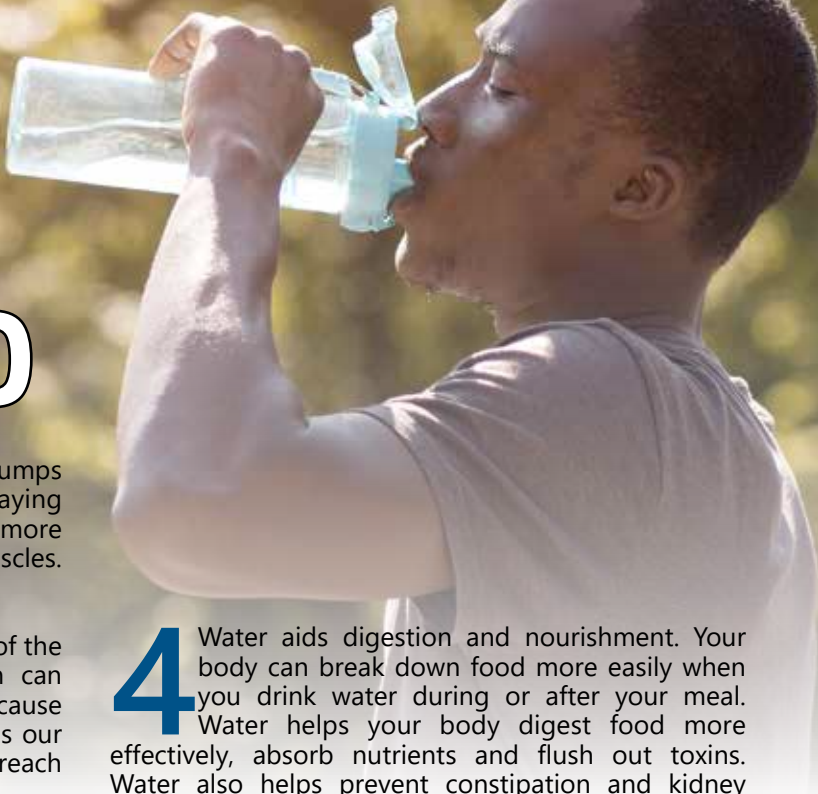
At the end of each session, Sagan connected with students one-on-one and answered questions about education, training, specialties and so much more. When asked what her favorite part of being a PA is, she said she loves getting to know her patients.

Mankato Clinic is committed to our healthcare work force as longtime partners, planners and presenters of Scrubs Camp. The Mankato Clinic Foundation has also funded camp scholarships.

To learn more about Scrubs Camp, visit Minnesota State HealthForce Center of Excellence at healthforceminnesota.org.



TOP 5 REASONS TO drink H2O



1 Water is good for your heart. Your heart pumps about 2,000 gallons of blood daily. Staying hydrated helps your heart pump blood more easily through the blood vessels to the muscles. In turn, your muscles work more efficiently too.

2 Improve mood and memory. About 75% of the brain is water. Even slight dehydration can lower your concentration, brain function, cause fatigue and affect your mood. Water fuels our brain. If you're losing focus and feeling crabby, reach for some water.

3 Water cushions your joints. Water lubricates and cushions our joints and protects our spinal cord and other sensitive tissues. Think of water as a shock absorber for your body. When your joints feel good, you can move with more ease and less discomfort.

4 Water aids digestion and nourishment. Your body can break down food more easily when you drink water during or after your meal. Water helps your body digest food more effectively, absorb nutrients and flush out toxins. Water also helps prevent constipation and kidney stones.

5 Water regulates body temperature. Our sweat helps cool our bodies when it's hot or we exert ourselves through exercise, sports, work and play. It's important to replenish by drinking extra water when it's hot, you are active or both!

Expert Advice Mankato Clinic Diabetes Care Center



Hope Hartig,
APRN, CNP, CDCES

Did you know drinking an adequate amount of water daily can help you lower your risk for type 2 diabetes? Studies show that drinking water may help control blood sugar and insulin levels. And when water is your drink of choice, you avoid soda, sports drinks and other beverages high in sugar. Limiting sugary drinks also supports healthy lifestyles which play a key role in preventing type 2 diabetes.



Abby Tibodeau,
RD, LD, CDCES

Water is an essential nutrient. Keep a water bottle with you and refill it throughout the day. On hot days, try freezing water bottles to bring along so you have cold water all day. Many people also enjoy a wedge of lime or lemon in their water. Choosing water when eating out is a good life hack that saves you money!

Calendar of Events

Mankato Clinic Foundation Golf Tournament

Monday, August 16, 10:30 a.m.,
Mankato Golf Club, Mankato

The Mankato Clinic Foundation Golf Tournament is back at the Mankato Golf Club. Registration and lunch begins at 10:30 a.m. with a shotgun start at noon. Visit www.mankatoclinic.com/mankato-clinic-foundation-golf-tournament-2021 to register to golf or become a sponsor. Cost is \$140 per golfer, \$560 per foursome. Cost includes 18 holes, cart, lunch and dinner. Proceeds benefit the Mankato Clinic Foundation and the health and well-being of our community. Space is limited.



BLOOM Event by Greater Mankato Mom

Thursday, August 26, 6-8:30 p.m.,
Snell Motors, Mankato

BLOOM is an event for new and expecting moms. Mankato Clinic providers will host Baby Talks – casual conversations with a small group of other moms like you. Let's talk about feeding, safe sleeping, mom's health and tummy time for baby. Child passenger safety technicians will be on hand to answer your questions about car seats. Plus swag, treats and an expo of products and resources that make life better for new moms. For tickets, visit www.greatermankatomom.com.



Mental Health First Aid

Thursday, September 16, 7:45 a.m.-5 p.m.;
Thursday, November 18, 7:45 a.m.-8 p.m.,

Mankato Clinic Conference Room, Madison East Center, Mankato
Mental Health First Aid is an 8-hour training which teaches you how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental illnesses and substance use disorders. Mary Beth Trembley, RNC, teaches the course. To learn more and register for an upcoming session, visit www.mankatoclinic.com/mental-health-first-aid. CDC guidelines for masking and social distancing will be followed.



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Together we thrive.

COVID-19 safety measures are taken at all Mankato Clinic locations including wearing masks and social distancing.



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on Lookout Drive



“

In 2018 I thought I was facing a total knee replacement. I was hesitant about the surgery as I witness what both of my parents went through with their replacement surgeries. At that time one of my doctors brought up regenerative medicine (stem cell transplant). I had never heard of this type of procedure and it sounded too good to be true. I contacted Bluetail for a second opinion. They requested my prior images and medical history to see if they could help me. After reviewing my file, they determined that I was a candidate. This turned out to be one of the best decisions I have ever made. The procedure was outpatient and only took 2 hours. I liked it because they were using my own stem cells and I was avoiding the knife. The pain relief was quick and the downtime was only a couple of days. Today, almost 3 years later, all I have needed was a booster shot and my knees are better than they have been in 25 years. They are not perfect but I am doing things I wasn't able to do before with very little to no pain. The best feeling is still having my own knee. Once you give them up you don't get them back. I figured for the seemingly low cost, it was worth exploring. I knew I could still get my knees replaced at a later date if this procedure didn't work. Another advantage is that technology keeps getting better every year.

– Bill Marks, 69, Farmer from Amboy, MN

Doctor-to-Doctor Consultations Welcome



Dr. David Crane, MD
Leader in
Regenerative Medicine



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& neighbors about
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