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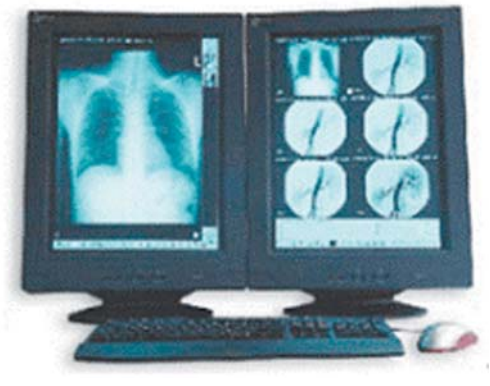
First Quarter 2009

ACCREDITATION ASSOCIATION for AMBULATORY HEALTH CARE

New Picture Archiving and Communications System at Holzer Clinic



A new filmless digital radiology system at Holzer Clinic makes it easier and faster for patients and physicians to obtain test results from diagnostic imaging including ultrasound, X-rays, CT-scans, MRI, and nuclear medicine procedures.

The Picture Archiving and Communications System (PACS) at Holzer Clinic allows storing of test results on digital media rather than film. Patients are able to view their results from an array of radiology procedures on a small CD instead of bulky sheets of film – and the patient's doctor can view their results almost instantly on their computer screen. This means faster service and greater convenience for patients when they need various types of diagnostic tests.

Holzer Clinic provides the PACS digital radiology system, throughout southern Ohio and western West Virginia. The all-digital format represents a huge leap in technology, as all of the procedures which had been stored on film will now be performed digitally. Patients will also benefit from new equipment that allows radiologists to better enhance views of diagnostic tests. The system enables radiologists to zoom in or out as necessary to get the best view of X-rays or other diagnostic imagry.

If it is difficult to see a particular image, the radiologist can shade sections of the image to produce better contrast and visibility. This allows physicians to better diagnose various medical conditions and pinpoint the best treatment for each patient.

The PACS system enables physicians to access their patient's test results immediately from anywhere in the area – or anywhere in the world – through the Internet.

In fact, physicians can retrieve images on any computer with web access – as long as the physician has an authorized login name and password. This makes it easier for the doctors to retrieve the patient's test results at night or on the weekend – and means a faster turn-around time and earlier diagnosis for the patient, especially those with emergency cases.

In addition, two physicians who are conferring about a patient's results, for example a cardiologist and a radiologist, can both look at a patient's image at the same time on different computer screens – while discussing the results over the telephone. Or the physicians can leave notations of their findings and the patient's clinical history on the computerized file for other consulting physicians who will view the image later.

PACS is a much more efficient way to perform all types of radiology cases, And it makes the images much more clear and readily available to be viewed by the patient's own physician.

With digital radiology, there's no longer a need to wait for film to be developed. The image is available almost instantaneously. A radiologist can enhance and manipulate images for clarity, so that there is less need to put patients through the inconvenience of re-takes.

To schedule a digital diagnostic test with Holzer Clinic– or for information on the various types of filmless, digital diagnostic tests, such as ultrasound, X-rays, CT-scans, MRI, and nuclear medicine procedures – contact the clinic at 1-800-713-8007.

Obama-Biden Transition Project Discussion on Healthcare with Holzer Clinic

The Obama-Biden Transition Project held a series of discussions nationwide to help ensure that the American people are in fact getting the health care they deserve. Holzer Clinic hosted this area's Health Care Community Discussion. The clinic's Dr. Nicholas Economides moderated the forum, which drew participants from Gallia, Meigs and Jackson counties.

"We're trying to do the right thing here," Holzer Clinic President Dr. Wayne Munro said as a group of physicians, administrators and citizens began formulating suggestions for the repair of America's health system. The main objectives of the discussions are to improve the quality of health care and cut costs, expand coverage and access, and increase the emphasis on primary care and prevention.

The major problems with our health care system are:

- Health care costs are too high
- Many Americans have NO health insurance
- Our nation's investment in prevention and public health is inadequate

To face these challenges, President Obama has many aspirations for his health care plan. First and foremost, he wishes to modernize the system to improve the quality of health care given and to reduce the costs. Dr. Economides noted that, "The notion is to make medical information electronic, so that with the touch of a button, doctors may access a patient's medical history. This would allow that doctor to know immediately when a patient was last seen, and so on. Basically the patient's entire medical history would be available immediately, which would prevent many errors in health care."

President Obama's second objective is to make health care available to all Americans through the use of programs such as sliding scale fee schedules, and increasing involvement with employer contributed services. Finally, Obama wants to administer programs that would improve preventive action and public health.

The community discussion allowed opposing viewpoints and ideals to be shared in an effort to bring resolution to the overall problem. While some of the blame for the crisis was put at the feet of insurance companies, participants weren't for increased regulation of those firms as a solution to the crisis. Physicians are already probing the insurance issue with an eye toward tracking where dollars are spent, a move Dr. Lawrence Yodlowski of Holzer Clinic said patients should take upon themselves.

"If you pay a dollar into an insurance company, you need to know where it's going," Yodlowski said.

State Rep. Clyde Evans of Rio Grande argued against any legislative action placing too much of the cost of employee coverage on the employer. Increased costs for higher coverage rates can erode Ohio's and America's competitive edge in the world market against countries with socialized medicine, he added.

Mark Harvey of Holzer Clinic stated, "We are all paying for health care. The question that we really need to concern ourselves with, is 'are we distributing our health care necessarily.' Why do we pay as much as we do, and do we get the results that we pay for?"

Holzer Clinic continues to improve health care and cut health costs to make health care more affordable.

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Holzer Clinic Receives Accreditation

ACCREDITATION ASSOCIATION for AMBULATORY HEALTH CARE

Holzer Clinic has achieved accreditation by the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC). Accreditation distinguishes this multi-specialty health care facility from many other outpatient facilities for its excellence in providing a safe work environment and the highest quality of care to patients. Status as an accredited organization means Holzer Clinic has met nationally recognized standards for the provision of quality health care set by the Accreditation Association.

"We believe our patients deserve the best," stated T. Wayne Munro, MD, President of Holzer Clinic. "When you see our certificate of accreditation, you will know that the AAAHC, an independent, not-for-profit organization, has closely examined our facility and procedures. It means that we, as an organization, care enough about our patients to strive to meet the highest possible health care standards."

Holzer Clinic is a multiple discipline health care system of over 130 Board Certified Physicians providing care in more than thirty areas of expertise. With nine locations throughout southeastern Ohio and western West Virginia, Holzer Clinic provides "Medical Excellence, coupled with Local Caring."

Talk to your Doctor

Good Communication Saves Time and Money

By Stephen E. Popper, D.O., Ph.D., M.P.H.

With health care costs continuing to rise, insurance more difficult to get, and the fact that how you take care of your health NOW impacts how you will enjoy retirement, it is vital that when you see your doctor (or any health care provider), your communication is efficient, effective and exact. Communication should occur anytime you talk to your provider. This includes the initial history of the problem you present to your doctor, any change in your symptoms over time, side effects of medication and any other information you feel is important. It has also been shown that people who communicate well with their provider are more likely to be compliant with their treatment and are more satisfied with their care.

Communication is a very important process in our lives. Miscommunication can cause lost time, lost effort, lost money, and lost opportunities. In order to communicate there are three things that are required: 1) transmission of a signal (which in our case is speaking words); 2) reception of that signal (which in our case is having sound waves (words) picked up by the ear and ultimately transformed into an electrical signal at the auditory nerve); and finally 3) translation or conversion of that electrical signal (which in our case is done by the brain to the message initially transmitted). This is a relatively simple process when described with words but is very complex when actually doing it.

When you add in other factors of the human condition such as secondary gain, stress, and personality, even if the above three processes occur, communication still may not take place. You, as the patient, must make sure the doctor understands you. The same is true from the doctor's point of view. It is well-known that receiving unwelcomed or distressing information (e.g., such as a diagnosis of cancer) may result in you, the patient, not remembering anything said after that point in time. Doctors know this and should follow-up appropriately.

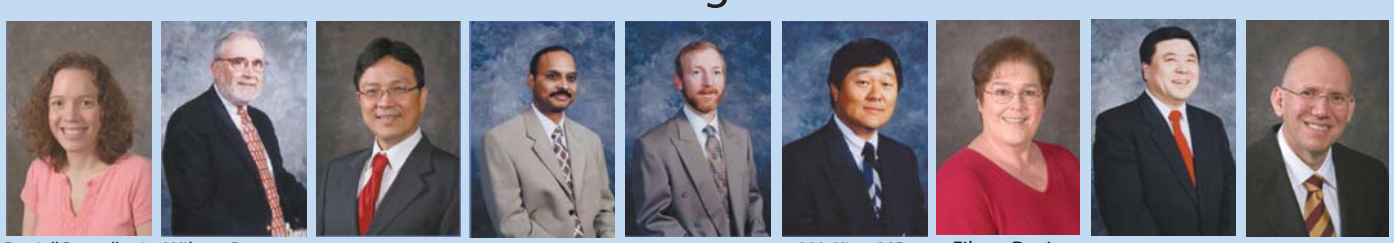
You can help the communication process by being prepared and doing a little planning. Think about what you expect from your visit, what you need to tell your provider about the history of your problem, symptoms, medications and anything else that might make things go smoother. Write down what your expectations are to make it easier to remember what you need to talk about. You also need to have consideration for your provider. Don't go into a 15 minute appointment for a sore throat/cough and at the end bring up another topic that would typically need 15-30 minutes to deal with – make another appointment.

As part of the communication process, it is okay to ask your doctor to explain why you have certain symptoms, or why he or she wants to do something. It is also okay for your provider to say "I don't know." Medicine is both an art and a science. This explains why an MRI can be read as normal yet the surgeon still wants to do some type of exploratory procedure to find out why symptoms persist; e.g., arthroscopy of a shoulder or knee. If your provider is not willing to explain things, you may want to find one who is.

Remember, communication is a two-way street – both sides need to meet half-way, not head-on.

Caring for your future

Southeast Ohio's Largest Pediatric Practice



DaniellCappalletti, MD | Wilson Bowers, MD | Joseph Li, MD | PradeepKandulla, MD | Jon Sullivan, MD | I.H. Kim, MD | Eilene Davis, CNP | K.K. Lee, MD | RichardMendieta, MD

MoniqueSherrill, MD | Alyson Wills, MD | VictoriaHolzapfel, CNP | TravisNeely,MD | Mark Lepi, MD | JaredSheets,MD | Van Adams, MD

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Community Connection

First Quarter 2009

Holzer Clinic's New CEO, G. Patrick Connors

G. Patrick Connors

The Holzer Clinic Board of Directors announced that G. Patrick Connors will assume the position of Chief Executive Officer, succeeding Robert Daniel who is retiring after a distinguished and impressive 38-year career with the organization. Connors, a 14-year employee at Holzer Clinic, has served as Associate Administrator in charge of clinic operations since 1995. His appointment as CEO was effective February 1, 2009.

"Mr. Connors has a keen understanding and awareness of the overall state of health care and what it will take for Holzer Clinic to remain competitive while providing low-cost comprehensive care to our patients. His leadership skills and commitment to the organization are evident to all who have had the privilege to work with him," said T. Wayne Munro, MD, President of Holzer Clinic. As Associate Administrator for Operations, Mr. Connors has been actively involved in the oversight of the Holzer Cardiovascular Institute and the Holzer Center for Cancer Care joint ventures. He has been instrumental in the development and expansion of Holzer Clinic's ambulatory surgery center, advanced laboratory, and digital diagnostic testing services.

"I am continually impressed with the caliber of our physicians and staff, and look forward to working with our physician leadership in facing these upcoming challenges while continuing to increase the quality of care for our patients," said Connors.

Connecting physicians and patients

The iHealthRecord is an interactive online personal health record that allows you to take control of your health, as well as the health of an elderly patient, your children and other loved ones.

An iHealthRecord ensures that your health information is safe and accessible from anywhere and at anytime, especially helpful during an emergency. You can create and access the iHealthRecord from the Holzer Clinic Web site.

Coming in for an office visit is not always convenient and has a real cost to you. In addition to the inconvenience, co-payments, gas and parking, lost wages, child care and other costs for office visits add up.

Holzer Clinic is sensitive to these costs and understands your time is valuable. While some healthcare issues require an office visit, such as new symptoms, there are many occasions when you can receive just as much, or more, individualized information - without a face-to-face meeting. I-Health allows the patient to communicate with their physician via e-mail in a secure environment.

The iHealthRecord is easy to create. You can rest assured that your record is completely confidential.* Only you decide who views your record including which physicians - and only you can change it. iHealthRecord not only stores personal health information, it puts you in control of your health!

iHealthRecord™
In Partnership with America's Physicians

*The privacy of your iHealthRecord will be overseen by the iHealth Alliance, a not-for-profit advisory Board whose mission it is to protect the privacy of physicians and patients. You can rest assured that America's healthcare leadership is protecting your privacy.

What do golfers, swimmers, and pitchers have in common with your work?

One of the most common types of injuries seen in the typical Occupational Medicine practice is that of the orthopedic strain or sprain. Most people associate orthopedic injuries with sports related activities. It turns out that most labor occurring in the work environment is more like a sport related activity than it first seems evident. This is true for several reasons, but not the least of which is that your work generally requires a worker who is reasonably fit, and ready to provide a solid days worth of energy, which makes the work a lot like a distance event requiring stamina. Occasionally some repetitive activity is required, which makes it similar to the types of workouts in which baseball players or golfers participate. More often than not, a special skill is required, which is why your work requires a unique worker, and why you have chosen the best to help your company. Orthopedics has a lot to do with how your work is achieved, but when workers over do it, the injuries can be the same as those of the sportsmen.

A common type of strain or sprain seen in an occupational medicine practice is that of medial epicondylitis, which is more commonly known as Golfer's Elbow. This condition commonly arises when the worker is required to perform repetitive activities such as rivet gun use, holding a steady router, quickly replacing tires, or pipe fitting activities to name just a few. The condition is brought on when a repetitive use of the major flexors of the forearm and wrist require heavy griping, all while the wrist is taken through a twisting motion. This motion can be seen on most Saturdays of the late spring, summer, and fall, which is why it is commonly called the golfers, or pitchers elbow.

The enthusiastic athletic swimmer requires a repetitive motion of bringing the arm above the head and then quickly down past the body until it arrives beside the hips to propel his or her body through the water with the arms. This condition is well known in the aquatic sportsmen as 'swimmers shoulder'. If the muscle is rubbed often enough, it can begin to fray in the same manor as that of the pitcher, or golfer, and can result in tendonitis, or even rupture, which is sometimes called a Rotator Cuff Tear, or SLAP lesion. When the condition is caught early enough, the same type of treatment as the pitcher or golfer is instituted. Rest, ice to the affected area, and an anti-inflammatory, or some physical therapy following a glucocorticoid injection for the more difficult cases helps.

By thinking of your work force like a sports team, you may find that some prevention goes a long way toward controlling the losses the team may suffer; lost work time, lost wages, or lost costs for treating illnesses. By instituting a period of acclimation for new workers, following a sound physical exam before work begins, and offering early consultation when an illness or injury begins to flare up, your work force can expect a steady stream of wins in the income column, and that is just good sportsmanship.

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ACCREDITATION ASSOCIATION for AMBULATORY HEALTH CARE

HOLZER CLINIC ATHENS

New State-of-the-Art Medical Facility

"Holzer Clinic began a major commitment to the Athens Community in 2002 and we have every plan to continue to offer state of the art medical care to this area for decades to come. I believe this new facility demonstrates that very clearly."" said Dr. Christopher T. Meyer, Medical Director at Holzer Clinic Athens.

In addition to providing the highest quality health care in more than twenty five areas of expertise, Holzer Clinic Athens is proud to provide the latest technology in digital diagnostic testing. Holzer Clinic is the only health care facility in the region to offer ultra-high resolution magnetic resonance imagery with 3.0T MRI assisting radiologists and physicians in the earlier detection and diagnosis of a variety of medical conditions; crisp, detailed 64 Slice CT scanning that provides superior quality, whole body thin slice imagery at the lowest radiation dose possible; and the new I-U 22 Ultrasound featuring 4D technology that allows physicians and patients to view the fetus or internal organs as if they were being held in your hands.

Holzer Clinic Athens will also feature a state-of-the-art Ambulatory Surgery Center equipped with the latest advances in surgical care and staffed by a highly skilled team of board certified physicians. The Ambulatory Surgery Center is designed with patient convenience in mind. Our new, modern facility provides the latest in minimally invasive procedures, resulting in shorter stays and less pain after surgery. Our continuity of care approach gives patients the benefit of being cared for by the same staff throughout their entire visit.

"This is truly an exciting time for Holzer Clinic and for the Athens community. It is our sincere hope and desire to continue to grow our investment in this community through providing top notch medical care, developing community partnerships, and through collaborations." stated Steven R. Davies, Holzer Clinic Athens Director of Operations.

Holzer Clinic's new Athens Campus provides comprehensive medical care including Family Practice, Pediatrics, Internal Medicine, Allergy/Asthma, Cardiology, Rheumatology, General Surgery, Gastroenterology, OB/GYN, Occupational Medicine, Ear/Nose/Throat, Ophthalmology, Plastic Surgery, Dermatology, Podiatry, Audiology/Hearing Aids, Chiropractic, Sleep Medicine, Physical Therapy and Urgent Care services.

The new facility will feature special touches including specialty beverages and menu items provided by Donkey Coffee and Espresso at their on-site café, Hockhocking Adena Bikeway trail access, a roof top garden and environmentally friendly solar panels.

Cardiac Care in Southeast Ohio

GALLIPOLIS – The year 2008 was an exciting time for the Holzer Cardiovascular Institute (HCI) as the facility continued expansion of the services it offers for residents of the Mid-Ohio Valley.

Dr. Choudhary Rayani, MD, who specializes in cardiac electrophysiology at HCI, said institute physicians began performing the following procedures in '08: electrophysiology studies (EPS), implantable cardioverter defibrillators (ICD), cardiac resynchronization therapy (CRT) and catheter ablation.

Dr. Rayani said being able to provide these procedures at HCI is significant because it means local cardiac patients no longer have to travel elsewhere to receive specialized treatment.

"We are bringing in services that were not available previously," he said. "People had to go mostly to Columbus or Cleveland. Now we can do them here."

Electrophysiology studies are performed on patients who have been diagnosed with a heart rhythm problem or who have symptoms that might suggest there is a heart rhythm issue. Doctors use one or more electrode catheters to monitor and/or stimulate heart rhythms to determine the problem. EPS is generally the first step toward determining what course of treatment should follow next.

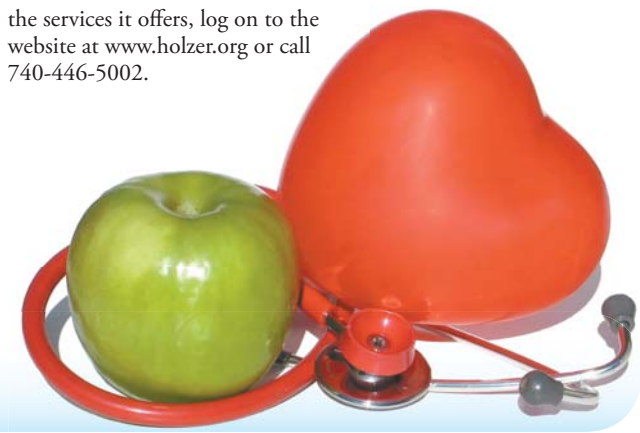
Implantable cardioverter defibrillators are small generators that are used to help regulate the heart's rhythm. The ICD monitors heart activity and is designed to provide therapy when it detects any type of rhythm disorder. ICDs are implanted in the upper chest and are connected to the heart with small wires called leads.

Cardiac resynchronization therapy helps a weakened heart pump more blood with each beat to help more blood and oxygen get to the rest of the body. Increased blood and oxygen flow decreases heart-failure symptoms. Doctors place either a biventricular pacemaker or a biventricular implantable cardioverter defibrillator in the patient's chest to help synchronize the right and left ventricles of the heart.

Catheter ablation is a procedure designed to eliminate an arrhythmia, a heart rhythm problem that can make the heart beat too fast. The problem is often caused by cells in the heart that fail to work properly. The catheter ablation uses an electrode catheter to locate and destroy the problem cells.

Dr. Rayani performed the first two catheter ablations in HCI history on Dec. 18, 2008.

The Holzer Cardiovascular Institute was established in 2002 as a joint venture between Holzer Medical Center and Holzer Clinic. It is located on the HMC-Gallipolis campus at 100 Jackson Pike. For more information about HCI and the services it offers, log on to the website at www.holzer.org or call 740-446-5002.



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