

Saint Anthony's Wound Center excels

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ALTON – Non-healing wounds can directly affect your quality of life. If you are dealing with this chronic issue, OSF Saint Anthony's Center for Wound Healing and Hyperbaric Medicine may be just what you need to get your life back.

Non-healing wounds can result from a whole host of reasons. Some of the more common causes include: diabetes, cancer, circulatory issues, radiation therapy, autoimmune diseases and trauma, according to Jessica Huch, RN, Clinical Coordinator of Wound Care.

“A lot of patients come to the center for venous stasis, diabetic and pressure ulcers,” said Huch.

Located on the campus of OSF Saint Clare's Hospital at 915 East Fifth Street in Alton, the Wound Center provides a wide array of therapies specifically designed to help promote the healing process.

Bev Tieman, of Cottage Hills, credits John Lindsay, D.P.M., board-certified Podiatrist with Saint Anthony's Physician Group, and the Wound Center with saving her toes.

"I'm diabetic and I had abscess sores on the toes of both feet. Dr. Lindsay started working with me at the Wound Center," Tieman said. "It was excellent. I thought for sure I would lose all or some of my toes but the doctor and the nurses saved them."

One of the treatments used on Tieman was the hyperbaric oxygen therapy chamber. The pressurized chamber provides a 100 percent oxygen environment – increasing the amount of oxygen at the wound site and aiding in the healing and growing of new tissue.

"I'm claustrophobic, so the thought of climbing into the chamber scared me a little. But they had everything arranged for me. It was very comfortable. I could watch TV or listen to music," Tieman said. "I went everyday for a little over a month and didn't have any problems.

"The staff was right there for whatever I needed. I was very pleased."

In addition to hyperbaric oxygen therapy, the Wound Center also provides wound debridement, wound vacuum therapy and compression therapy.

The Wound Center takes a multidisciplinary team approach to wound abatement. Each patient receives an individualized treatment plan that includes wound care management and appropriate adjunctive therapies like dietary, pain management and occupational /physical therapy.

The treatment team reviews each patient's unique needs and provides wound care products, assistive devices and a detailed set of instructions that includes a plan for ongoing follow-up. Education is provided to both patient and caregivers. This includes training the patient on wound care at home and lifestyle adjustments to facilitate the healing process.

"If you have a chronic wound, get to your doctor for an evaluation," Huch said. "Amputations can possibly be avoided if we see a patient early enough to provide proper care. We have seen some remarkable results over the years."

Opened in 2004, OSF Saint Anthony's Center for Wound Healing was the first comprehensive wound care program in the area, and continues to set the standard for wound healing.

Patients can be referred by a physician, home health care or through self referral. For more information, call 618-463-5300.