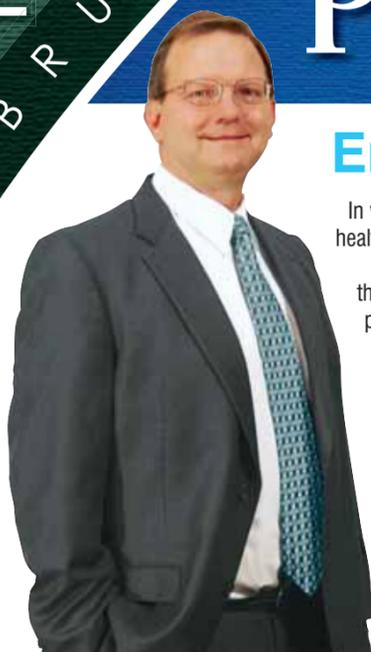


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FEBRUARY

# Your Partner in Health

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## Encouraging an active role in heart health

In viewing ourselves as a *partner* in the health of our community, we encourage people to take an active role in their own health and the health of others. And we take our roll as educators in this process very seriously.

Heart disease is a major health problem in the United States, affecting more than four and a half million Americans. It is the leading cause of hospitalization in people older than 65. February is American Heart Month and Port Huron Hospital is proud to partner with the community in raising awareness about heart health.

One of our primary goals is to help people adopt healthy lifestyles so they may avoid heart disease. Equally important, however, is to help those people who do have heart disease or who have loved ones with heart disease live with the reality of the disease. That's why we have made a commitment to educate as many individuals as we can about how important it is to call 9-1-1 when anyone is experiencing the symptoms of a heart attack. Steve Chandler credits quick actions by those around him when he had a heart attack for his being alive today. I hope you'll take the time to read his story here.

Port Huron Hospital offers regular CPR classes throughout the year. Some are educational only, others are for accreditation. 55 Plus is conducting an educational session for seniors this Tuesday, Valentine's Day. It's an ideal opportunity to learn what to do when faced with some very real life and death situations.

Valentine's Day is the perfect time to recognize those you love...it's also a good time to think about your heart and keeping it healthy.

— Thomas DeFauw, President and Chief Executive Officer

## WHEN IT COMES TO YOUR HEART, STAY ALIVE – DON'T DRIVE!



Working everyday in Cardiovascular Services at Port Huron Hospital, where staff do many heart procedures, it is second nature for them to encourage people to adopt behaviors that will keep their heart healthy. The advice they give is familiar to everyone: "Watch your weight, get moving, don't smoke, eat wisely and manage stress."

"It's all good advice and we hope we'll have an impact on those people we talk with," says Pattie Munoz, RN, manager of Cardiovascular and Electrophysiology Labs at Port Huron Hospital. "But there is another piece of advice we feel even more strongly about, and that is to never ignore symptoms and warning signs that you might be having a heart attack. And if you or someone you are with might be having a heart attack, call 9-1-1 to take you to the emergency room for evaluation and treatment."

"I can't stress this enough," she says. "Don't try to drive yourself to the hospital and don't ask someone else to drive you. Call an ambulance."

After his own experience this past December, 59-year-old Port Huron resident Steve Chandler wholeheartedly agrees with this advice. Steve was playing tennis with friends on a Wednesday night. After playing for a while he noticed some pain in his left shoulder, but played through a couple more points. When he

Steve coded twice in the ambulance and again after arriving at the Port Huron Hospital Emergency Center. He wasn't aware of anything until he woke up in the Emergency Center and Dr. Paul Jerry said hello. Within minutes he was being prepared for a heart catheterization and doctors inserted a stent.

"The procedure used to open Steve's artery is a balloon angioplasty," says Pattie. "It is a non-surgical procedure done in the hospital's cardiac cath lab. A catheter is inserted into an artery and a balloon at the end is inflated to help widen the artery. A mesh structure called a stent is inserted, and expanded, to help prevent the artery from narrowing."

Steve immediately felt better and was home by the following Saturday. But he feels strongly that if it wasn't for the fast reactions of everyone around him, he probably wouldn't be alive today. "It was less than an hour from the time the ambulance arrived until I was in the cath lab."

"Steve's experience illustrates why it is so important not to drive yourself to the hospital," says Pattie. "Trained EMS staff begin treatment when they arrive, saving valuable time, not only by getting you to the ER quickly, but also by communicating with staff in the Emergency Center on the way."

EMTs transmit EKG readings to the medical professionals in the ER, who start diagnostic and treatment preparation while you are on your way to the hospital. The cardiologist is notified, along with the Cath Lab team, who perform the procedure to open the blocked artery.

"Minutes matter," says Pattie. "Don't wait more than five minutes to call 9-1-1 when you start having chest pain."

There was a time when he probably would have taken his time and had his wife drive him to the hospital, says Steve. He sees things differently now.

What would his advice be to others? "If you have any of the symptoms of a heart attack, don't be complacent. Get it checked. And call 9-1-1 so you have someone who can help you on the way to the hospital. I know I wouldn't have made it otherwise."

Steve is already back on the tennis court and challenging those friends who acted so quickly back in December.

### Heart attack warning signs from the American Heart Association

Some heart attacks are sudden and intense — where no one doubts what's happening. But most heart attacks start slowly, with mild pain or discomfort. Often people affected aren't sure what's wrong and wait too long before getting help. Here are signs that can mean a heart attack is happening:

- Chest discomfort. Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, or that goes away and comes back. It can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain.
- Discomfort in other areas of the upper body. Symptoms can include pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.
- Shortness of breath with or without chest discomfort.
- Other signs may include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness.

As with men, women's most common heart attack symptom is chest pain or discomfort. But women are somewhat more likely than men to experience some of the other common symptoms, particularly shortness of breath, nausea, vomiting, and back or jaw pain.

**Advocate for your health. Learn the signs. If you question it, call an ambulance. Minutes matter! Fast action can save lives — maybe your own. Stay alive, don't drive. Call 9-1-1.**



Port Huron resident Steve Chandler

finally said he needed to sit down, he was experiencing chest pains. He happened to be playing with several physicians, who immediately called for an ambulance. First responders from the Port Huron Fire Department were there within a couple of minutes, he remembers. And Tri-Hospital EMS arrived a few minutes after that.

"I thought I was doing really good and that I could still function," says Steve, who owns Dive Inn Watersports in Port Huron. "I was able to stand up and lie down on the gurney myself. But I don't remember much after that."

## Port Huron Hospital and American Heart Month

Heart disease kills an estimated 630,000 Americans each year. It's the leading cause of death for both men and women. To prevent heart disease and increase awareness of its affects, Port Huron Hospital is proudly participating in American Heart Month.

### Programs

Although several special events have already taken place, you can still take advantage of an Adult & Child CPR Course for Seniors to be held from 9 a.m. to noon on Tuesday, February 14, at the Port Huron Hospital Jefferson Building. Offered by 55 Plus, the course includes basic adult, child and infant CPR and basic airway techniques. Cost of the course is \$5. Call HealthAccess to register, 800.228.1484.

55 Plus also offers one-on-one smoking cessation counseling, "No Butts About It." Call 55 Plus at 810.989.3121 to arrange a free appointment.

Online - [www.porthuronhospital.org](http://www.porthuronhospital.org)



Port Huron Hospital's award winning website has a number of different tools to keep you informed about heart disease and your health. Visitors may sign up for email newsletters

on a variety of topics including men's, women's, and children's health as well as specific information on diabetes, heart, breast and prostate.

You can find out about heart disease by going to the hospital's website and clicking on the Health Information button at the top right of the homepage. To find out your risk of heart disease, take advantage of a heart risk assessment on the website.

The **Women's Heart HealthCheck** is designed for women age 18 years and older living in the communities served by Port Huron Hospital. Developed using research from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, the Women's Heart HealthCheck can help you to identify specific health risks and tell you how to make choices for a healthier life. You'll receive your individual results within minutes of completing the assessment. This tool is not a substitute for an exam by your doctor. It only gives you ideas about how to lower your risk of becoming sick or injured in the future. Ask your doctor to help you understand your results and to provide follow-up services as necessary. If you need a doctor, visit the **Find a Doctor** area of the website for information on physicians who practice at Port Huron Hospital



Port Huron Hospital is on facebook. Facebook is an ideal way to stay up to date on what is happening at Port Huron Hospital...news about services, programs, classes, screenings, health information, e-newsletters. To follow us on facebook go to the hospital's website, [porthuronhospital.org](http://porthuronhospital.org) and click on the facebook link located to the bottom right of the homepage or search Port Huron Hospital, Port Huron, Michigan on facebook.

### Today's Health television programs

Learn about **Cardiac Electrophysiology Services** with Cardiac Electrophysiologist Ajay Krishen, MD, is running on local cable channels this week and **Treatment and Prevention of Congestive Heart Failure** with Cardiologist Bashar Samman, MD, will begin airing on cable channels locally on February 24.

Other programs about cardiovascular disease such as **Peripheral Vascular Disease Symptoms and Treatment** with Cardiologist Elias Skaff, MD, and **Preventing a Heart Attack** with Cardiologist B. Ramesh Reddy, MD, may be seen at the hospital's website and on YouTube.



1221 Pine Grove Avenue  
Port Huron, Michigan 48060

1.800.228.1484

[www.porthuronhospital.org](http://www.porthuronhospital.org)