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## There is so much we have come through together.

When the COVID pandemic began, NH+C swiftly responded: We shut down many services, and built an entire respiratory care system – including our first stand-alone respiratory clinic – and adapted our spaces, staff, and supplies to care safely for all patients, whatever their need.



Steve Underdahl

It has been a heroic response by our talented, dedicated team. Thank you for your many messages of support to them. They deserve it.

Over the summer we carefully resumed services, with precautions in place to care for all patients safely and comfortably, in the best setting for each patient. Patients tell us they feel reassured by our precautions. They trust coming to the clinics and hospital.

In the coming months, as illnesses rise and fall – COVID, influenza – we will adjust as needed to keep our patients and staff safe.

Your safety is always our top priority. We'll continue to adapt as our community faces the future together. We will continue to be a source of accurate, credible medical information. We will continue to move forward, carefully and responsibly, to provide the best health care possible however circumstances may change.

I encourage you to take care of yourself...and others. We're here when you need us.

Thank you for trusting us with your care.

Steve Underdahl  
CEO and President  
Northfield Hospital + Clinics

### NH+C PRECAUTIONS KEEP PATIENTS AND STAFF SAFE

- **Screening:** All patients, staff and visitors are screened before entering, including temperatures
- **Masks:** Everyone is required to wear a mask (if you don't have one, we'll provide one)
- **Distance:** Check-in lines and lobby chairs are 6 feet apart; we limit the number of people in waiting rooms
- **Restrictions:** Patients may have one visitor; children may have two parents (or legal guardians). This may be tightened up if there's an increase in COVID cases in the community
- **Separate respiratory care:** Patients with respiratory symptoms receive care in dedicated spaces separate from non-respiratory patients – in clinics, hospital, and Emergency Department – with strict safety measures and PPE protocols
- **Cleaning:** Strict protocols for cleaning, disinfecting, airing and monitoring all spaces
- **PPE:** Staff wear personal protective equipment (PPE) in clinic and non-clinical settings (we're smiling under our masks)

#### > VIDEO VISITS ARE AVAILABLE

You can have live, face-to-face appointments with a NH+C health care provider through your phone, computer or tablet. Video Visits have the privacy and immediacy of a clinic visit, in the comfort and safety of your own home. Call your clinic and we can help you decide if a Video Visit is a good choice for the care you need.



## Jack Tuma stays close to home...twice

**Jack needed two rounds of IV antibiotics: one before the pandemic, and one after it started. He trusted NH+C for both.**

The pain in Jack's back was so strong he went to the Emergency Department at Northfield Hospital. There, Dr. Alice Suchomel diagnosed a rare infection in his lower spine, and asked where Jack wanted to be treated. He chose Mayo Clinic. "They whisked me off in an ambulance to Rochester," Jack says. Doctors there prescribed a six-week course of antibiotics, to be given by IV each day. Jack chose NH+C's Cancer Care & Infusion Center for his treatment.

Jack got better for a few weeks . . . and then the pain returned. Jack went to his family doctor, Dr. Greg Randall in NH+C's Lonsdale Clinic. An MRI confirmed that the infection had gone deeper into his spine. "Dr. Randall said, 'You get to Rochester right now,'" Jack recalls. He had emergency surgery at Mayo; afterwards, Jack needed another six weeks of IV antibiotics.

"Mayo wanted me to have the infusions in Rochester and I said, 'No, that's not happening at all. Northfield can do it.'"

This time, Northfield Hospital had precautions in place against COVID-19. Jack was grateful for the extra care. "I appreciated that they took my temperature each time because that reassured me I was all right. I actually looked forward to it," Jack says. The screening questions, hand sanitizer, face masks – "It

"I felt plenty safe being there."

**Jack Tuma, Lonsdale**

all reassured me that everything was okay.

"I don't know why people would be scared to go to the hospital. It's one of the safest places to be right now," Jack says. "I felt plenty safe being there."

Jack has high praise for the Cancer Care & Infusion Center staff, too. "They give real good care and are real friendly and quick. I couldn't have asked for better."

Jack likes having excellent, easy care so close to his Lonsdale farm. "It's a day and night difference between Mayo and Northfield Hospital," he says. "In Northfield, you just pull up to the door and go in and get what you need. It's so much easier than going to Rochester."

"There's a lot of procedures that Mayo wants me to come to Rochester for, and I just say, 'Northfield can do it.'"



# LeAnna and Thomas Robak experienced a first with their third baby

## LeAnna and Thomas wanted natural childbirth again.

Joseph, now 6, and Lydia, 4, were both born in a big Texas hospital via unmedicated childbirth attended by doulas, delivered by an obstetrician.

This time the details were different: a smaller hospital, with the option for delivery by midwife . . . and a birthing chair.

"Everything at the Birth Center lined up with what we wanted for natural birth with minimal interventions," LeAnna says. "That seemed like their goal, too. I felt like I was well cared for without having to spell out what I wanted."

When LeAnna arrived in labor, "they looked at Thomas and me and said, 'You guys have got this, just let us know what you need,'" she recalls. "They made sure we knew the support was there."

One option new to the couple: a birthing chair.

Certified nurse midwife Jessica Bohren, APRN, CNM offered the chair as LeAnna squatted through contractions.

"That position was the most comfortable for me, but I was getting tired," LeAnna says. "I wasn't sure about the birthing chair at first, but it really worked

to reserve my strength through those really intense contractions."

The chair was low enough to let LeAnna crouch, with nurse Angie Miner, RN behind LeAnna to support her back (and massage it). "When I was tired, having that chair and that support while keeping that same squatting position was really nice," LeAnna says. "And being able to deliver Camille on the chair was great."

Working with a midwife was new for LeAnna and Thomas, too. "Jessica coached me through with a balance of breathing and pushing. She did a really good job of helping me focus and get through that pain," LeAnna says. "The timing worked out well for Jessica to deliver the baby. We were very appreciative for her support."

LeAnna and Thomas considered two hospitals equal distance from their Farmington home: Ridges in

**"We both liked Northfield Hospital's support for natural birth, plus the safety of being in a hospital. It has the comfort of a birthing center, without the risk."**

Burnsville, and the Birth Center at Northfield Hospital. LeAnna liked the convenience of prenatal appointments at NH+C's Farmington Clinic, close to home.

"We both liked Northfield Hospital's support for natural birth, plus the safety of being in a hospital, if anything goes wrong," LeAnna says. "It has the comfort of a birthing center, without the risk."

"It felt comforting to have a birth plan that says what we want under ideal circumstances – and knowing there's a professional team with alternatives available if circumstances change," Thomas says.

"It's good to have the flexibility that if things go wrong, you can trust your providers and know they've got the resources you need – and not let it stress you out," LeAnna adds.

Their advice for first-time parents? "Every hospital is different. You have to choose what fits best with what you want for your delivery and birth experience.

"For us, the Birth Center definitely fit very well," LeAnna says. "I'm very happy with our decision."



*LeAnna Robak, Farmington*



# Birth Center expands

## More room, more babies, more options.

We're excited to unveil our expanded Birth Center! With fresh new spaces – and more birth options – to welcome even more babies in our nurturing, family-centered environment.

The multi-phase project includes new labor and delivery rooms plus new patient rooms, our first-ever water birth suite, and a triage room (Fall 2020); a dedicated operating room for cesarean sections, and a new nursery (Winter 2020-21); and a larger, comfortable waiting room, plus remodeling of current patient rooms (Spring 2021).

We're committed to continuing the top-quality, personal care we give to every family who has their baby here.

**Learn more:**  
<http://bit.ly/nhc-birth-center-expansion>



We designed the space with feedback from new moms, including thoughtful touches:

- soaking tubs for hydrotherapy
- huge windows with calming nature views
- baby bath sinks
- private fridge for your own food and beverages
- room-darkening blinds
- variety of seating: rocker, recliner, couch
- more seating for family and friends

All our labor and delivery rooms include a full range of natural birth aids:

- squat bar
- birthing chair
- peanut ball
- beanbag chair
- birth/labor sling
- birthing ball
- yoga blocks
- aromatherapy

The Birth Center welcomed 538 babies in 2019. Our expansion makes room for 750 babies a year.

The Birth Center welcomed 538 babies in 2019. Our expansion makes room for 750 babies a year.



## > Every room, every baby:

The Birth Center is committed to continuing the top-quality, personal care we give to every family who has their baby here.



## NEW! WATER BIRTH SUITE

Water birth is a popular alternative for women who prefer natural childbirth. Laboring in warm water can feel calming, relieve pain, and reduce the risk of tearing during birth.

Our Water Birth Suite features an Active Birth Pool – a large, luxurious birthing tub that gives freedom of movement to let mom get into positions that feel comfortable throughout her labor.

The tub is accessible from three sides, so it's easy to monitor and support mom while in labor. Multi-level ledges let mom rest, and shift into different positions – with room for her support person to be on the edge of the tub alongside her. Multi-colored LED lighting adds to the calm setting.

When baby arrives, there is a gentle transition onto mom's chest for bonding. Our Water Birth Suite features everything needed

to labor and deliver in warm, soothing water...plus all the resources of a standard labor and delivery room, if needed.

Interested in a water birth? Talk with your health-care provider during your pregnancy.





# Hannah Simmons finds calm amid COVID precautions

**Hannah chose NH+C's Birth Center for its calm approach to childbirth. Then things got complicated.**

Hannah and her husband Marty had special plans for the birth of their third child, their last. Their two sons would help welcome the baby, and a



photographer would capture the moment their family was complete.

Hannah was anxious after the complicated birth of their son, born in 2017 with a congenital heart defect that required surgery when he was 2 days old. (He's a healthy toddler now.) Hannah relied on her trusted obstetrician Nicole Dohm-Palmer, MD to ease her fears. "She was so calm, and so cognizant of my anxiety during my pregnancy," Hannah recalls. "She took as much time as I needed to talk through my questions and feelings."

Then COVID-19 arrived.

"Things changed very quickly in the last few weeks of my pregnancy," Hannah says. "When COVID-19 changed hospital protocols and added all of these precautions, I was sad for not being able to have our boys come meet their new sibling. But disappointment can coexist with gratitude for the precautions to keep you and your baby safe. And I thought, 'OK, if a pandemic is the worst that can happen, we can deal with this.'"

Pandemic, it turns out, was not the biggest challenge.

Hannah's labor started out well. But after five hours of labor and two hours of pushing, the baby wasn't coming. Dr. Dohm-Palmer recommended a cesarean section. "She held

"They went out of their way to share with us the joy of bringing a baby into the world."

*Hannah Simmons, Farmington*



my hand as she said, 'Hannah, I know this isn't what you were hoping for, but I think it's what we need to do to get your baby out safely,'" Hannah recalls. "She was so compassionate, and I trusted her implicitly."

Baby Blake was born healthy, but Hannah's uterus was spontaneously injured. Hannah was in surgery for five hours; she lost her right ovary and fallopian tube, and over half her blood. She required a transfusion and significant repair to her uterus. Dr. Dohm-Palmer and OB/GYN Deb Suppes, MD performed the surgery.

Hannah spent four more days in the Birth Center recovering. The nurses, especially Cory Griemann, RN "took such incredible care of me," Hannah says. "Cory was so kind and comforting. She was willing to sit and listen to anything I needed to talk about – what I had gone through, how anxious I was going home, and how I would recover without the support we'd normally have from family and friends" who had to stay separate to prevent the spread of COVID-19. "I was a little scared leaving because we felt so safe there. I felt so protected and cared-for and not rushed in any way to be discharged. The whole staff, they're just really wonderful people."

Dr. Dohm-Palmer sent Blake a baby hat that she knit herself. "That human-to-human gesture is so invaluable, especially in this time when we're so disconnected from our loved ones. Our medical

providers are our most trusted professionals, and people we're still able to see when needed," Hannah says.

Hannah knows other expectant moms are anxious about COVID-19. As a quality improvement specialist for the Child and Family Health Division at the Minnesota Department of Health, Hannah is part of the public health teams involved in Minnesota's COVID-19 response. "The headlines are scary," she says. "I worry that women are considering home births because they're afraid that they won't have a support person, or their baby won't be able to stay with them. That's not the case."

Precautions at the Birth Center reassured her: A single support person, no visitors, health screenings, hand hygiene, staff vigilance. At the same time, "they went out of their way to share with us the joy of bringing a baby into the world," Hannah says. "The smiles and positive energy they brought to the atmosphere were what helped us feel normal the most."

Her biggest reassurance? Having hospital-level care when she and her baby needed it.

"Northfield Hospital doesn't treat birth like a medical emergency, but like a natural part of what your body is meant to do," Hannah says. "But if a medical emergency happens, they're ready."



# Stephanie McCarren walks away from joint pain

**Stephanie's smile comes easy now, thanks to new joints in her legs.**

She was severely injured in a 1973 car accident that crushed her legs. Later, she developed severe arthritis from her injuries. For years, she pushed through the pain.

"I thought the more I walked and the more I moved, the better it would get," she recalls. "I thought I could overcome it."

While walking for exercise one day, "someone stopped and asked if I needed help," Stephanie says. "I thought, 'How bad do I look?'"

When she walked into Dr. Clinton Muench's office for the first time, "I was literally hunched over" with pain. Dr. Muench eventually replaced both of Stephanie's hips, and both knees.



**Clinton Muench, MD**

Because the bones in her right leg healed crooked from the car accident, Dr. Muench used 3D printing to create an exact replica of Stephanie's knee to guide attachment of the new joint to her specific bone structure. That was the easiest of Stephanie's joint surgeries, with the best recovery.

"When I walk now, my gait is perfect. I have no pain," Stephanie says. "I still can't believe it."

Throughout her experience with hospital staff and the ortho team – especially Deb McGuire Lang, PA-C – "I felt safe and comfortable, and felt like I could just get 'er done," Stephanie recalls. "You expect great expertise, and above and beyond that, they care for me like a person."



**Deb McGuire Lang, PA-C**

Dr. Muench "honestly cared about my overall health and wellness. Nobody had ever done that for me before. I was extremely overweight, and he listened and cared and did everything he possibly could to get me going in the right direction," she says.

"I feel like Dr. Muench gave me a second chance at life, because my life is so different now than it was before."

Her advice for others living with pain? "You really need to pay attention to yourself and your pain and take better care of yourself," Stephanie says. "I was never a priority for myself, and I think a lot of women are like that. When you have a job to do, a family to raise, you just keep doing what you have to do, and you suffer through it. Instead, women should take the best care of themselves that they can right now."

"I'm the happiest I've ever been, and I know it's because of my health."

**Stephanie McCarren, Owatonna**





# Urgent? We're ready.

## Scott Sevcik had a thorny problem. A trip to the clinic solved it.

Scott was clearing brush out of the tree line at his Northfield home. A thorn bush tore through his leather glove and into his hand. His wife Lisa removed what she could with tweezers. After a long night of pain and swelling in his hand, Scott had a hard time opening his fingers. He decided he needed medical help.

Scott didn't want his usual clinic. "They wouldn't have the equipment to handle it, and I didn't want to make multiple trips," he explains. "I wanted to go to NH+C. My wife and daughters all go to the clinic there, so I wanted to try that."

Scott called the Northfield Clinic at 7:30 am and got an 8:00 appointment. "That was awesome," he says.

Clinic staff met him at the door. "There were a few people there and they asked me to do social distancing," Scott says. "They helped me tie my face mask. That was so nice."

Like all patients, Scott was screened as he entered the clinic, including his temperature. "I'm all in favor of temp checks and masks," he says. "Those are

**"Don't be afraid to make the call. The clinic is open."**

**Scott Sevcik, Northfield**

important precautions. It was reassuring, not scary."

Dr. David McIntyre found pieces of the thorn lodged in Scott's hand. He numbed it and removed the debris. Scott left the clinic with antibiotics and instructions on how to care for his hand at home. "The service was top-notch," Scott says.

"I wasn't sure they'd take me because of COVID," he adds. "I was hesitant, but I called because my hand really hurt. I was so glad they're taking patients."

Scott's advice? "Don't be afraid to make the call. The clinic is open."



**"I got great care every step of the way."**

**Steve Berg, Lakeville**

## Steve Berg had a bad feeling. Turns out it was his gallbladder.

His abdominal pain started after supper and continued through the night. "It felt like someone punched me very hard in the stomach," Steve says. The next morning, he waited for Urgent Care in Lakeville to open. Within minutes, Steve was on his way to the Emergency Department at Northfield Hospital for an ultrasound.

The ultrasound showed that Steve's gallbladder was enlarged, and blocked by a stone that had built up over time. Steve had a shorter bout of pain a few weeks before, and thought it was food poisoning. "When it came back this time, it was more painful," he says. Really painful. Steve needed surgery.

"I was sure ready to get it out," he says. "When they said, 'We think this should come out,' I said, 'Yes please, as soon as possible.'"

Surgeon Jose Fulco, MD removed Steve's gallbladder that evening via laparoscopic surgery. "He explained what to expect," Steve recalls. "He was calm and reassuring, and that gave me confidence."

Dr. Fulco has been doing laparoscopic gallbladder surgery for nearly 30 years. "I am still amazed at how well most patients recover from this minimalistic intervention" with less pain, lower complications, and quicker return to normal activities, Dr. Fulco says.

Steve had minimal pain after surgery. He stayed overnight in the hospital, then was back home the next day.

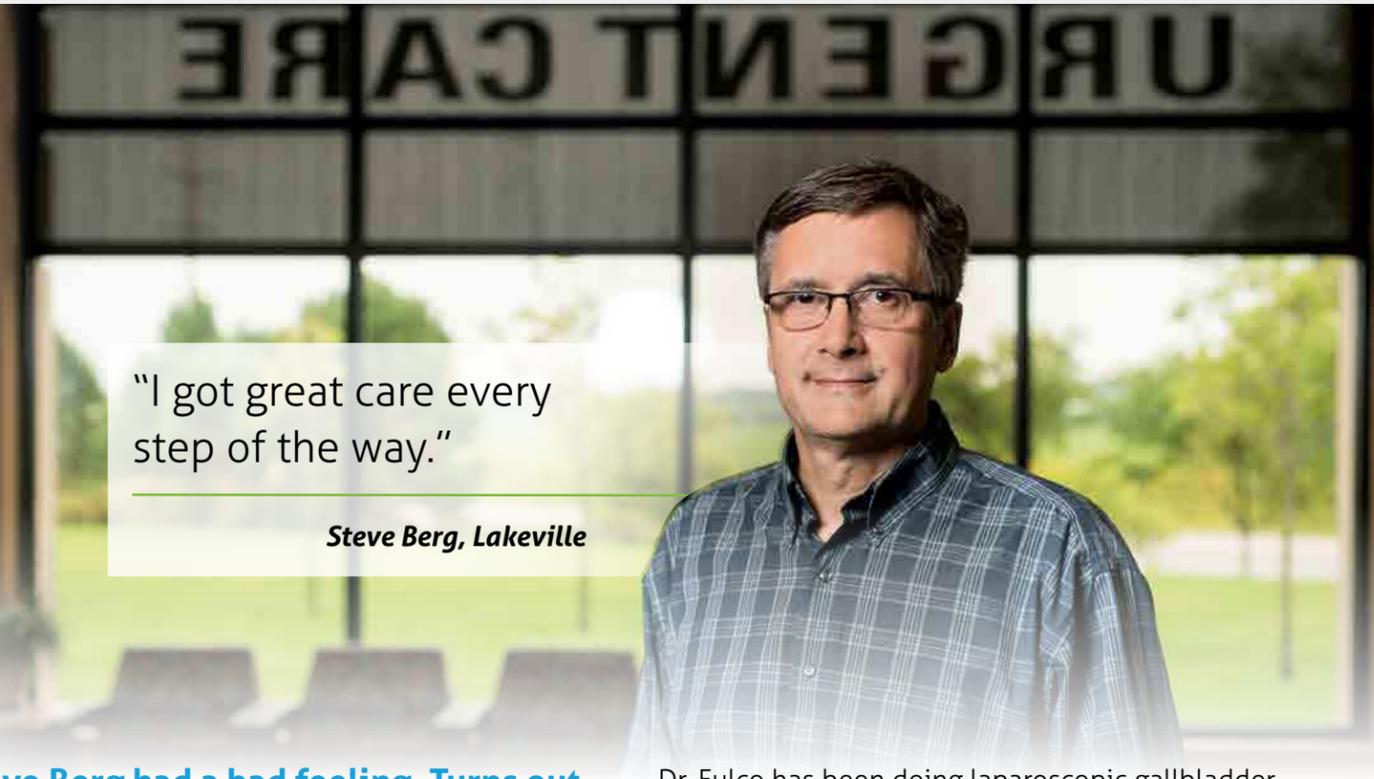
"I got great care every step of the way," Steve says – from Urgent Care and the Emergency Department to Dr. Fulco and the surgical team, and the excellent Medical/Surgical staff.

**"I can't say enough good things about this hospital," Steve posted on Facebook from his hospital bed.**

"Everyone that has been caring for me has been very nice, friendly, and helpful! I sure can't say that about some of my healthcare experiences elsewhere."

Steve's advice? "Listen to what your body is telling you and don't delay, because you never know what's going on."

Because a gut feeling deserves attention.





# A guide to caring for your health in the era of COVID

## Your health needs don't stop because of COVID-19. NH+C doesn't stop, either.

With systemwide precautions in all our locations – plus Video Visits – we can care for you safely. Call your clinic to discuss your health concerns. We'll review your condition, and determine the best option for you. If your best option for care is an in-person visit, it is safe to come to the clinic or hospital. With separate spaces for non-COVID patients in the clinics, Emergency Department and hospital, we care for you safely and comfortably.

### Pregnancy and birth

#### Prenatal care

The Women's Health Center has condensed all prenatal care into fewer appointments, so moms get all the care they need with fewer visits to the clinic. Of course, we'll see an expectant mom at any point if she or her provider has concerns. After the first clinic appointment (around 8-10 weeks), expectant mothers have a regular schedule of in-clinic prenatal appointments at 16, 20, 28, 32 and 36 weeks...then weekly until the baby is born.

#### Birth

We're committed to giving you the safest, most comfortable birth experience possible. We take extensive precautions in our Birth Center to protect you and your baby, with the full resources of a hospital and doctors and care team as needed.

Learn more about Pregnancy and COVID-19 and the Birth Center: [bit.ly/nhc-pregnancyandcovid-19](https://bit.ly/nhc-pregnancyandcovid-19)

### Pediatrics

Our pediatricians encourage parents to call your clinic with any health-related problems, including:

- Fever or other symptoms of illness
- Breathing problems
- Any acute injury
- Mental health or behavioral problems
- Rash

Our staff can help determine the best option to care for your child, whether by Video Visit or in the clinic.

#### > A word about immunizations

It's especially important to stay on schedule with your child's immunizations to prevent against measles, mumps, rubella and other serious illnesses. We can immunize your child as quickly and safely as possible.

### Chronic conditions

It takes consistent care to manage conditions like diabetes, high blood pressure or heart disease. Stay in touch with your provider via clinic appointments or Video Visits. Your provider will work with you to determine the best options for your care.

### Sudden events like heart attack or stroke

In urgent and emergency situations, come to the Emergency Department. For life-threatening emergencies, call 911.

The Emergency Department has dedicated spaces for COVID-19 care. Patients who need other kinds of care stay in a separate space. This way, we treat all patients in the safest, most effective setting possible.

Come to the Emergency Department or call 911 for:

- Chest pain or trouble breathing
- Pain in the arm or jaw
- Fainting/change in mental state
- Serious burns
- Concussion/confusion
- Broken bones and dislocated joints
- Deep wounds
- High fever with headache and stiff neck
- Severe allergic reactions
- Weakness/numbness on one side
- Slurred speech
- Coughing or throwing up blood
- Head or eye injury
- Seizures
- Severe cuts that may require stitches
- Suicidal thoughts
- Poisoning or overdose of drug or alcohol

### Concerns for older adults

Older adults can have multiple health problems or complex conditions. Consistent, coordinated care helps manage overall health. Because adults over 65 are at higher risk of complications from COVID-19, we opt for Video Visits when possible – and take extra precautions for clinic visits and in-person care. Call your clinic with any health concerns to review your condition and determine your best option.

### Acute illness or injury

Healthy people of all ages can suddenly experience a condition that needs urgent attention: asthma attack, strep throat, urinary tract infection, appendicitis, kidney stones or gallstones. Injuries – cuts, burns, sprains, broken bones, animal bites – need immediate attention, too.

Call your clinic (or come to the Emergency Department after clinic hours) if you have:

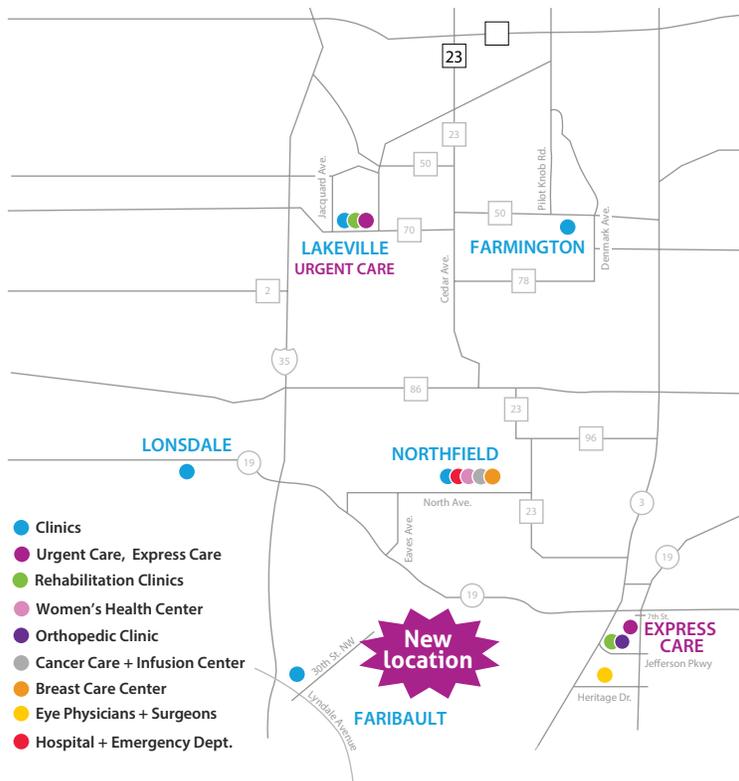
- Abdominal pain
- Vomiting or persistent diarrhea
- Dehydration
- Cuts that may require stitches
- Sore throat
- Painful urination
- Wheezing or shortness of breath
- Sprains and strains
- Eye redness, discharge or itchiness
- Ear pain

### Cancer, including surgery and chemotherapy

The Cancer Care & Infusion Center (CCIC) provides chemotherapy and supportive therapies with extra precautions to protect cancer patients, whose weakened immune system puts them at higher risk for complications from COVID-19 and influenza. We coordinate care between oncology specialists and your primary care provider to manage your overall health. Our Cancer Care Navigator provides extra support and coordination to keep your treatment on track with as little disruption or additional risk as possible.

2000 North Avenue  
Northfield, MN 55057

## Clinics, Hospital + Specialty Care close to you



### Hospital + Emergency

#### Northfield Hospital + Emergency

2000 North Avenue, Tel: 507-646-1000

### Clinics + Urgent Care

#### Faribault Clinic

1980 30th St. NW (at Lyndale Ave.), Tel: 507-334-1601

#### Farmington Clinic

4645 Knutsen Drive, Tel: 651-460-2300

#### Lakeville Clinic + URGENT CARE

9974 – 214th Street W, Tel: 952-469-0500

#### Lonsdale Clinic

103 15th Avenue SE, Tel: 507-744-3245

#### Northfield Clinic

2000 North Avenue, Tel: 507-646-1494

#### Express Care Clinic – Northfield

*(temporarily closed)*

706 Division Street, Tel: 507-646-6700

### Specialty Care

#### Breast Care Center – Northfield

2000 North Avenue, Tel: 507-646-1143

#### Cancer Care & Infusion Center – Northfield

2000 North Avenue, Tel: 507-646-6979

#### Endoscopy – Northfield

2000 North Avenue, Tel: 507-646-1201

#### Northfield Eye Physicians + Surgeons

2019 Jefferson Road, Tel: 507-645-9202

#### Orthopedics Clinic – Northfield

1381 Jefferson Road, Tel: 507-646-8900

#### Rehabilitation Clinics

Northfield: 1381 Jefferson Road  
Tel: 507-646-8800

Lakeville: 9913 – 214th Street West  
Tel: 952-985-2020

#### Sleep Center – Northfield

2000 North Avenue, Tel: 507-646-1099

#### Women's Health Center – Northfield

2000 North Avenue, Tel: 507-646-1478

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WE'RE ONLINE

