

hometown health

A newsletter from Luther Midelfort

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When he's not listening to students, chancellor listens to his heart

The chancellor at the University of Wisconsin-Stout doesn't smoke, exercises regularly and eats healthy. So when the 66-year-old Menomonie resident didn't feel like himself after workouts, he knew something was wrong.

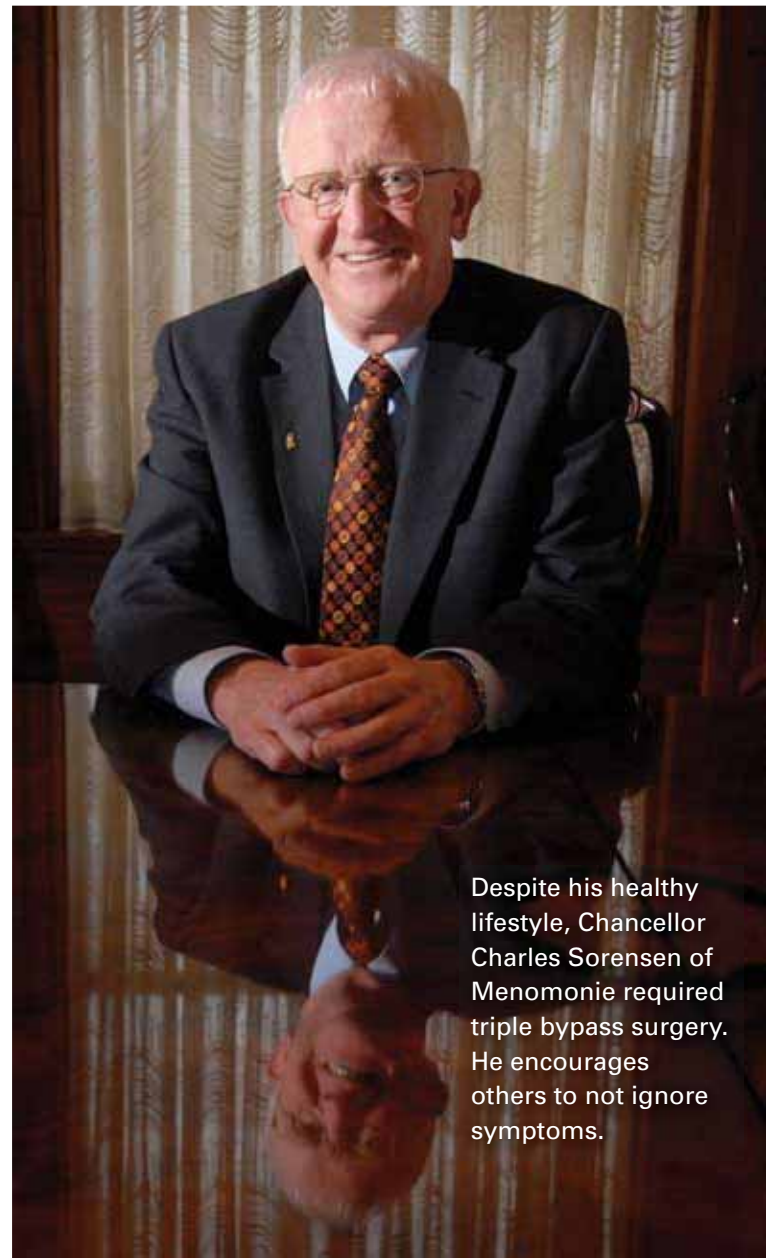
Chancellor Charles Sorensen, who bikes 75 to 80 miles per week in the summer, began to feel pressure in the middle of his chest after rides.

"It would go away when I'd quit, or days when I rode lightly it didn't even come," Chancellor Sorensen says.

Erring on the side of caution, Chancellor Sorensen scheduled an appointment with his physician, Steve Brown, M.D., an internist at Red Cedar Medical Center - Mayo Health System in Menomonie. Dr. Brown ordered a stress test, an examination recording the heart's electrical activity during exercise.

The results yielded an irregularity, and Dr. Brown sent Chancellor Sorensen to Luther Midelfort in Eau Claire for an angiogram — an X-ray procedure used to evaluate blood flow and look for blockages. The test revealed that one of his arteries was 99 percent blocked and two others 85 percent blocked. He had severe coronary artery disease and needed triple bypass surgery.

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Despite his healthy lifestyle, Chancellor Charles Sorensen of Menomonie required triple bypass surgery. He encourages others to not ignore symptoms.

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Thomas Carmody, M.D., a cardiovascular surgeon at Luther Midelfort, says the procedure he performed on Chancellor Sorensen is more technically known as coronary artery bypass grafting. He explained that the surgery reroutes blood around blocked arteries, similar to a car approaching road construction.

“The blood can go down the vessel it was born with and wait to get through the blockage, or it can take the expressway that I create during surgery and go around the blockage like a detour,” Dr. Carmody says.



“Luther Midelfort performs about 450 of these (off-pump) surgeries annually.”

Dr. Thomas Carmody,
Cardiovascular surgeon

The surgery is performed “off-pump,” meaning that doctors don’t use a heart-lung machine and don’t stop the heart while they’re working. Dr. Carmody says the method has numerous benefits to patients, including a decreased risk of stroke, a lessened chance of neurologic or kidney issues and a quicker recovery.

Luther Midelfort performs about 450 of these surgeries annually, Dr. Carmody says.

John Rozich, M.D., a cardiologist at Luther Midelfort, says Chancellor Sorensen’s situation offers lessons to others.

“No. 1 is pay attention to your body, and if you start to feel things that are unfamiliar to you, have them evaluated. Don’t put it off,” Dr. Rozich says.

Chancellor Sorensen agrees.

“I had a very minor symptom, but I had it investigated. I was pretty healthy — I thought.”

“Cardiac-related symptoms can involve your stomach, your jaw or your shoulder.”

Dr. John Rozich,
Cardiologist



Dr. Rozich also notes that people don’t have to have pain to have heart disease, using Chancellor Sorensen as an example, and said not all symptoms are the same. “Cardiac-related symptoms can involve your stomach, your jaw or your shoulder,” he says.

Now that he’s undergone surgery, Dr. Rozich says Chancellor Sorensen’s prognosis is good — “as normal as any other 66-year-old man or better, because he now knows about his condition and is doing more to take care of himself.”

Chancellor Sorensen says he feels thankful he listened to his body and heeded its warning. He’s also

Heart attack symptoms:

Know what signals a medical emergency

Heart attack symptoms vary widely. The symptoms you experience may be different from those experienced by a relative or neighbor. One thing applies to everyone, though: **If you suspect you’re having a heart attack, call 911 immediately.**

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Typical heart attack symptoms

Chest discomfort or pain — This discomfort or pain can feel like a tight ache, pressure, fullness or squeezing in the center of your chest lasting more than a few minutes. This discomfort may come and go.

Upper body pain — Pain or discomfort may spread beyond your chest to your shoulders, arms, back, neck, teeth or jaw.

Stomach pain — Pain may extend downward into your abdominal area and may feel like heartburn.

grateful to Luther Midelfort, Red Cedar Medical Center and the host of healthcare workers who were involved in his care. “From the diagnosis of having the heart disease to admissions to care during my stay to follow-up was absolutely exceptional,” he says. “I can’t overemphasize how fortunate we are to have great medical care in this area. Luther Midelfort is a tremendous facility.”

i For more information on the Cardiac Center at Luther Midelfort, call 715-838-6320.

The Cardiac Center at Luther Midelfort

When it comes to heart care, look to the area’s leader, Luther Midelfort. Our Cardiac Center has been providing advanced heart services to the area, including the only open-heart surgery program, since 1993. Luther Midelfort’s caring and highly trained healthcare team addresses the wide spectrum of heart care:

- **Cardiovascular surgery:** Using off-pump bypass surgery and other minimally invasive procedures, our surgeons offer the most advanced care available to patients.
- **Pacemakers and internal defibrillators:** Luther Midelfort cardiologists are the only ones in the area who place defibrillators.
- **Catheterization lab:** Balloon angioplasty cuts the risk of dying from a heart attack by 40 percent if done within 90 minutes of arriving at the hospital. Luther Midelfort has the only established program in the area

that brings patients the best heart care in less than 90 minutes.

- **Electrophysiology:** Heart rhythm problems affect millions of people. In 2006, Luther Midelfort became the only area facility to offer procedures to correct these arrhythmias.
- **Prevention:** Clinics for congestive heart failure, vascular, lipid and cardiac rehabilitation help patients address and prevent heart disease.
- **Diagnostic:** From our accredited echocardiography lab to the latest imaging technique called coronary CTA, Luther Midelfort puts state-of-the-art technology to work for the benefit of our patients.
- **Outreach:** Cardiologists and others from our healthcare team provide care at regional sites, so our patients don’t have to travel.

i For more information or to schedule an appointment with a member of our cardiac team, call 715-838-6320.

Shortness of breath — You may pant for breath or try to take in deep breaths.

Anxiety — You may feel a sense of doom or feel as if you’re having a panic attack for no apparent reason.

Lightheadedness — You may feel dizzy or feel like you might pass out.

Sweating — You may suddenly break into a sweat with cold, clammy skin.

Nausea and vomiting — You may feel sick to your stomach or vomit.

Common heart attack symptoms in women

Women may have all, none, many or a few of the typical heart attack symptoms. For women, as for men, the most common symptom of a heart attack is some type of pain, pressure or discomfort in the chest. But women are more likely than are men to also have symptoms unrelated to chest pain, such as:

- Neck, jaw, shoulder, upper back or abdominal discomfort
- Shortness of breath
- Nausea or vomiting
- Abdominal pain or “heartburn”
- Sweating
- Lightheadedness or dizziness
- Unusual or unexplained fatigue

