TAKE time FOR A TIME OUT

1. Correct patient.
2. Correct procedure.
3. Correct site.
4. Every time.

That's the message HUP Perioperative nursing spread last month during National Time Out Day, reminding the hospital staff of the vital importance of performing a "Time Out" before each and every procedure. This interactive assessment assures that all team members participating in a procedure — whether it's in the OR, on a patient unit, or in an ambulatory service — have verified that all patient information is relevant and accurate.

"We have to ensure that a patient is safe before doing any procedure," said Deborah Driscoll, MD, chair of OB/GYN.

Like a referee calling a time out in a game, the designated nurse on the procedure team initiates the process, and everyone must listen. "We need a hard stop, where all activity ceases and all participants agree," said Marie Zubko, BSN, a nurse manager on Perioperative Services. "If something is not right, it's fixed, and then the team does another time out before proceeding."

Zubko said that time outs also focus on nonpatient elements of a procedure. "Do we have the correct x-ray? Is it posted correctly [ie, properly oriented]? Do we have all the right equipment?"

Members of Perioperative nursing handed out information on National Time Out Day to help increase awareness of the extensive measures HUP is taking to ensure patient safety. They also asked people to sign a board declaring 'I commit to support time out for every patient, every time' and handed out buttons that say Ask Me about Time Out. "We want to empower patients as well," Zubko said.

Disseminating the time out message did not end with the one-day event. Nursing will go from unit to unit, educating staff and emphasizing the initiative's importance. Part of the internal 'road show' will include showing a video that Perioperative Nursing Unit Council created detailing exactly what must take place during a time out.

"Patient safety is our highest priority," said Victoria Rich, PhD, chief nurse executive — UPMC. "We are committed to performing a time out before each and every procedure we perform."

To view the video and learn more about TIME OUT, go to the HUP Nursing Intranet and click on Time Out Video under What's Hot.
Margaret Sabatini went to Dermatology’s free annual skin cancer screening in May...and it probably saved her life. “They found melanoma on my shoulder, two little spots that looked like a snowman,” she said. “If they hadn’t caught it, who knows what would have happened?”

Melanoma, when diagnosed and treated early, has a 99 percent five-year survival rate. When undetected and allowed to spread, the survival rate plummets to barely one in five. The good news is that most melanomas are recognizable well before they reach the dangerous level.

“Margaret’s experience at the skin cancer screening emphasizes the importance of seeing a dermatologist regularly for full-body skin exams,” said Penn dermatologist Adam Rubin, MD.

Indeed, of the nearly 300 people who attended the screening, “40 percent had abnormal findings and presumptive skin cancers.”

Rubin also stressed the importance of frequent self-exams to detect early changes in your skin. Although melanoma most frequently appears on the upper back, torso, lower legs, head and neck, “you need to examine your entire body, including the soles of your feet, your back, between your toes and even your nails,” he said.

What should you look for when doing a self-exam? The American Academy of Dermatology recommends the ABCDE rule:

- **A**symmetry: one half of a mole does not match the other.
- **B**order irregularity: Edges are ragged, notched, or blurred.
- **C**olor: The pigmentation is not uniform. Different shades of tan, brown, or black are often present.
- **D**iameter: Melanomas are usually greater than 6 mm when diagnosed but they can be smaller.
- **E**volving: A mole or skin lesion looks different from the rest or is changing in size, shape or color.

Although Sabatini has a history of melanoma in her family — her mother had it — she never suspected it might happen to her. “Even if I had seen the spots, I wouldn’t have known it was melanoma,” she said. “This is a wake-up call.”

---

**Heartfelt Thanks**

“My son suffered a concussion while playing ice-hockey at the UPenn rink. I attended him on the ice. However, the major point to be made is that he was treated expeditiously and professionally by first the EMS team, which was on the scene, and then by [the Emergency Medicine] department: Drs. Anderson, Gardner and the nursing staff. … Over my long career, I have seen many emergencies. This was handled the best.”

---

**A Life-Saving TRADITION**

Are You Sun Savvy?

Follow these basic guidelines to enjoy the summer sun while protecting your skin:

- Use a broad-spectrum sunscreen that protects against UVA and UVB rays with an SPF (sun protection factor) of at least 30.
- Apply sunscreen 20 minutes before going outside in the morning and re-apply every two hours or as needed after swimming or when sweating. Make sure your kids are well protected too!
- Avoid the sun during the middle of the day (between 10 am and 4 pm). If your shadow is shorter than you are, seek shade.
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat, protective clothing, and sunglasses when out in the sun.
- Don’t lie face up in the sun for hours…ever!