

NEWS RELEASE

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BOTHWELL REGIONAL HEALTH CENTER TO INSTALL NEW OPEN MRI WITH GREATER CAPABILITIES

Bothwell Regional Health Center will begin installation of new open magnetic resonance imaging equipment in mid-February. The new MRI will give the health center and referring physicians greater capabilities in detecting and diagnosing disease.

The existing open MRI, which is the only open MRI in multi-county area, was installed in the Bothwell Diagnostic Center-Winchester when it opened in 2005. The size – or strength – of the magnet in that equipment is 0.3T. The strength of the magnet in the new open MRI will be 1.0T, which is one of the strongest available in an open MRI.

“This new MRI will be about three times stronger than the existing one, so it will enable us to do much more detailed studies in less than half the time,” said Bothwell’s Radiology Director J.D. Lewis. “An MRI typically takes about an hour to perform. With the new equipment, tests will take about 30 minutes, so patients will be able to complete their tests more quickly. Theoretically, we could handle twice the volume of people, which provides physicians with patient test results more quickly than in the past.”

Another benefit is that the patient-positioning table on the new MRI moves laterally, in addition to back and forth, so technologists will be able to position the area to be studied directly under the center of the magnet. Doing this yields clearer images for better diagnosis and treatment.

Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) is a test that uses a magnetic field and pulses of radio wave energy to make pictures of organs and structures inside the body. In many cases, it gives different information about structures in the body than can be seen with an X-ray, ultrasound or computed tomography (CT) scans.

Bothwell’s new MRI will allow it to perform detailed studies of the brain, abdomen, vascular and neurological systems, which it wasn’t able to do before in an open MRI. The new MRI will deliver images with more clarity for better detection and diagnosis. It also will allow the health center to perform new tests such as magnetic resonance angiograms for cardiovascular studies.

“This will be another component in enhancing our cardiovascular capabilities,” Lewis said.

Completion of installation of the new equipment at the diagnostic center is expected in late April.

“One of the reasons this equipment takes so long to install is that we have to totally replace the radio-frequency shielding in the room where the MRI is located,” Lewis said. “The room has copper and steel shielding that protects against other radio waves, such as television or cell phone signals, from interfering with the MRI’s functioning.”

The health center also will install a protective fence outside the building near where the MRI is located to warn visitors that the diagnostic equipment’s magnet can interfere with pacemakers.

During the installation, MRIs in Sedalia will be done in the closed unit at the main hospital at 601 East 14th. The health center is increasing the hours of operation and staff of the MRI at the hospital to handle additional patient volumes as needed.

“We apologize for the downtime while the new equipment is installed because we know that some people prefer not to have their MRI done in a closed unit, or they prefer to go to the Diagnostic Center rather than the hospital,” Lewis said. “But we know in the long run the greater capabilities we’ll have with this new equipment will allow the health center and its physicians to provide additional benefits to our patients more quickly.”

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Bothwell Regional Health Center is a 180-bed regional health center serving west-central Missouri with state-of-the-art technology and comprehensive health and wellness services including surgical, cancer, orthopaedic, endovascular/cardiac, women's health, and therapy services. Bothwell also operates Bothwell Health Center-Truman Lake in Warsaw, Bothwell Sleep Centers in Sedalia and Warsaw, Cole Camp Clinic, and Bothwell Diagnostic Center-Winchester, Bothwell Home Health & Hospice, and Bothwell Medical Equipment Services in Sedalia. More information on Bothwell Regional Health Center and its services is available on its website at www.brhc.org.