

Katie Johnson: Good morning, and welcome to Apple a Day, Lake Region Healthcare's health and wellness segment, where we feature news and information you can use to live a healthier life. I'm Katie Johnson, your host. My guest today is Dr. Joe Dinsmore, one of the newest on the medical staff at Lake Region Healthcare, here to introduce himself to the community. Let us welcome him to the Lake Region Healthcare family. Good morning, Dr. Dinsmore.

Dr. Joe Dinsmore: Good morning, Katie. Thank you so much for having me here today.

Katie Johnson: Thanks for being with us, and again, welcome to Lake Region Healthcare, and welcome back home, from what I understand. Tell us about yourself, growing up, and how you've gotten to where you are today.

Dr. Joe Dinsmore: Yes, Fergus Falls is actually home for me. I grew up here. Actually, both my wife and I grew up in Fergus Falls and have been around to a number of different places over the past number of years, and found myself coming back home again. Had a really good experience, of course, growing up here, and knew lots of great things about Lake Region Hospital. I was excited when the opportunity came up here, towards the end of my residency training, and realized that I was going to be able to come back home.

Katie Johnson: What did your education and residency training look like?

Dr. Joe Dinsmore: My education, it started with ... my undergraduate education was at Concordia College in Moorhead, so pretty close to home. Then I didn't go too much further away for medical school at the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks, and then did my clinical training in Fargo. Then after that, I went to residency in Hartford, Connecticut, actually, through the University of Connecticut. Our main training site there was Hartford Hospital, which is a large urban community hospital. That's where I received my emergency medicine training at. That brought me here full circle back home now to return and be an emergency room physician here at Lake Region Hospital.

Katie Johnson: I imagine that your emergency room experiences in a large urban hospital are going to be somewhat different than what you might experience at Lake Region Healthcare. What do you think that you'll draw from, or what will that advantage of that experience be, coming to a community the size of Fergus Falls?

Dr. Joe Dinsmore: I think one of the big things about training in a busy emergency department like that is just getting used to the fast paced and being able to develop an efficiency, and probably most importantly, being exposed to a very broad array of pathology. But certainly, I think most emergency departments end up seeing a pretty broad array of pathology, regardless of their location. Certainly, certain things are going to be different. We're maybe not going to see as much of the same type of trauma that you would see in an urban emergency department, but a lot of the same medical emergencies are going to arise. I think that the training, no matter where

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you receive it, but particularly if you train in a very busy training site, is going to prepare you to work in, especially, in a community like Fergus Falls.

Katie Johnson: Absolutely. I read in your bio, too, that you have some military experience in the U.S. Army as a medic. Tell us a little bit more about how you've served and how that has prepared you for this role.

Dr. Joe Dinsmore: Yeah, I would actually say my experience as a medic was probably what steered me down the path towards a career in medicine and becoming a physician. I always had somewhat of an interest in medicine, but really right out of high school, I decided that I wanted to join the Army National Guard and knew that I wanted to do that as a medic. I did my basic training down in Fort Sill, Oklahoma, and then subsequently became a medic at Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

Really, actually, immediately after returning from that medic training, our unit, which was based out of Fergus Falls in Moorhead, was deployed over to Iraq. We actually trained up down in Mississippi first, and a little bit in Louisiana, as well. Then we were overseas for what ended up being an extended tour of duty. Normally, you do about 12 months over there, but because of the time frame, this was 2006, 2007, they had what was called the surge. They extended us for four months, so we spent about 16 months on the ground over in the Fallujah area of Iraq. I was a medic with an infantry company over there, and basically provided medical care, both to the soldiers that were with our unit, but also the Iraqi soldiers and civilians that were in need of care.

I think that ended up providing me with a framework, a sense of confidence, I guess, and perhaps also an ability to just function under pressure, that compelled me to want to go into emergency medicine.

Katie Johnson: I can imagine that was life-changing experience in a lot of ways. How do you think you got from there, to your training, to thinking about Fergus Falls as, not just your hometown, but the place where you really wanted to practice medicine? What prompted you to choose Lake Region as your next landing place?

Dr. Joe Dinsmore: I think part of what compelled me to come back is, having grown up here, I knew how good of a hospital system Lake Region is. Lake Region, I think, it offers some unique things that you don't see as much of anymore in the healthcare world. It's a smaller, more independent hospital system that ... With a lot of these other larger hospital systems that are out there, it's just something that's different. It's something that you don't see as much of, and I think it allows both for the patient and the physician to have, perhaps, somewhat more of an intimate environment to receive their healthcare. I think that really appealed to me, in addition to the fact that I still have a lot of family that lives here in Fergus.

Having grown up here myself, I knew this would be a good place for my daughter. I have a two-year-old daughter that I think will really have a good experience growing up in this community, as well.

Katie Johnson: That's great. When you think about providing emergency medical care, what are the principles to you that define excellence in emergency medical care?

Dr. Joe Dinsmore: I think one of the biggest things in emergency medicine is really having a collaborative approach to provide the best care. Emergency medicine really is a team-based, all of medicine is, but emergency medicine is really a team-based practice, in the sense that we really depend on the nurses, the other ancillary staff, such as respiratory therapists, and lab workers, radiology staff, so on, and so forth, that can all come together, in addition to being able to collaborate with consulting services who are going to be admitting or consulting on the patient or following up with the patient on an out-patient basis, if they are deemed safe for discharge. Having that collaborative approach, I think, is really the most important thing for making sure that the patient gets good care.

Katie Johnson: One of the questions we hear a lot is, how do we communicate to our patients when it's the right time to go to the emergency room, versus maybe the walk-in clinic in our situation, or waiting to see your primary care doctor? When is it urgent versus emergent?

Dr. Joe Dinsmore: That's always a really tough question to define. It's hard to provide a concise list of what symptoms warrant coming to the emergency department. What you end up finding is that sometimes patients will come in with what seems to be a very benign, or not necessarily an intense symptom, that does turn out to be more life-threatening. On the reverse side of things, sometimes patients can even have what they perceive as a severe symptom that turns out to be more benign. It's hard to define exactly what symptoms should prompt you to go to the ER.

Certainly there are symptoms that I think should always be taken seriously, such as chest pain, difficulty breathing, certainly abdominal pain, if it's different from what you've experienced in the past, severe or sudden onset headaches, particularly for patients who don't normally experience headaches, blood in your stool, blood in your vomit, high fevers that are not going away. That's a very short list that is by no means inclusive, but those are things that should compel you to at least think about it. If the symptom is new and is different from anything that you've experienced before, and it's concerning to you, I think erring on the side of being checked out is certainly better safe than sorry.

Katie Johnson: I think that's great advice. What about when you're not working, when you're not practicing medicine? You mentioned you have a family. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

Dr. Joe Dinsmore: In my spare time, we do certainly like to spend some time out on the lake. My wife's parents have a lake cabin out on West Battle Lake, and my dad and stepmom have a cabin out on Clitherall Lake, so we certainly like to spend time out on the lakes. Personally, I like to run. I'm not nearly as fast as I was years back-

Katie Johnson: [crosstalk 00:08:57]

Dr. Joe Dinsmore: But there still is the cross-country runner inside of me, so I like to do that. Then obviously, spending time with my two-year-old daughter and wife, Christie, both are pretty important aspects of my life that, whenever I'm outside of the hospital, that's first and foremost.

Katie Johnson: It certainly sounds like you're in a great place, both for your expertise, and for your hobbies, and interests, and your family. We're so glad to have you on board at Lake Region Healthcare. Any last things you'd like to share with our listeners this morning?

Dr. Joe Dinsmore: Yeah, I'm just so grateful to have the opportunity to be able to return to Fergus Falls and really serve and provide medical care to the community that, quite frankly, raised me, and to be allowed the opportunity to practice medicine in a hospital that has taken care of me, as well, is something that I'm honored to do.

Katie Johnson: Thank you so much for your time this morning, and again welcome to Lake Region Healthcare. Dr. Joe Dinsmore, new emergency medicine physician at Lake Region Healthcare, joining the team here in August.

Dr. Dinsmore and Katie Johnson this morning on Apple a Day, reminding you that there is so much to do here. Stay healthy for it. Have a great day.