

Katie Johnson: Good morning and welcome to Apple a Day, Lake Region Healthcare's Health and Wellness program where we feature news and information you can use to live a healthier life.

Katie Johnson: I am Katie Johnson, your host, and my guest today is Sarah Brunn. She is the emergency medicine and rehab director at Lake Region Healthcare's emergency department and she's here to talk with us about summer safety and national trauma awareness month. Good morning Sarah.

Sarah Brunn: Good morning.

Katie Johnson: Well, it's you know Memorial Day and summer kicking into full gear here, I'm glad that you brought this topic to our attention with it being National Trauma Awareness Month, there's a theme called Safety at Any Speed. We decided there's so much content here, we're going to break this up into two programs. This first week, let's start with a little bit of background information both about you and about Lake Region Healthcare's emergency department.

Katie Johnson: First, tell me about you and what your role is here.

Sarah Brunn: Sure. I'm married, I've been married to my husband Jeremy of the last 18 years and I am a momma to one grown up daughter and to four boys ages 4 through 12, so we have a really busy house. Then also this past year I became a grandma, which is very exciting.

Katie Johnson: Oh wow, very.

Sarah Brunn: Honestly, that's my favorite role is momma and grandma to our sweet boys and our sweet granddaughter. Then, at Lake Region, I'm the emergency department and cardiac rehab nursing director and as part of that role, I also manage our trauma program for Lake Region Healthcare.

Katie Johnson: Tell me a little bit more about Lake Region Healthcare's emergency services.

Sarah Brunn: Our emergency department serves a lot of people, we see about 11,000 patients every year. We're obviously ... most emergency departments open 24/7, we have physicians in house 24 hours a day. We have five physicians that are part of Lake Region Medical Group that serve our emergency department and more and more of those physicians as we've increased our number of doctors, are emergency medicine trained, which is a great asset to our department and to our community. They have really strong background in emergency medicine.

Sarah Brunn: We have 20 RN's in our department that are specially trained for taking care of emergency patients. We take care of patients from birth through the end of life, we need to know a lot about a lot of things in our department so they have a lot

of training and then we also have CNA, [inaudible 00:02:29] clerks and emergency department techs, so we have great staff.

Katie Johnson: I can testify to that, they are a very special group of people. Let's talk about trauma specifically, as you said, you see a little bit of everything but since it's Trauma Awareness Month, what specifically are some of the trauma qualification of Lake Region Healthcare's emergency department?

Sarah Brunn: In Minnesota, there are different levels of trauma designation and Lake Region Healthcare is designated as a level three trauma facility, which is the highest designation that a hospital our size can have. We work very hard to maintain that designation through Minnesota Department of Health.

Sarah Brunn: Level three trauma designation requires enhanced training for both your physicians and surgeons and your RN's in the department, so they've all had extra trauma training in addition to their schooling background and they have to maintain that education.

Sarah Brunn: We have special policies and procedures in place to make sure that trauma care is done in a timely, efficient manner. When we know that a trauma is coming into our department, we mobilize a whole team of people that are there specially to take care of trauma patients. That team is part of our designation and that trauma team includes the ER physician, our general surgeon, RN's like I said that are trained in trauma care, our radiology staff, our lab staff, the house supervisor, our chaplain comes for trauma codes as well to help with emotional care of the family or the patient. Then also our operating room crew if it's necessary for that patient.

Katie Johnson: I'm curious, how much time and extra training and effort does it take to maintain that designation?

Sarah Brunn: A lot.

Katie Johnson: A lot, yeah, it sounds like it.

Sarah Brunn: Yeah, so it's pretty labor intensive work but it is also really good work. Really, the focus of our trauma program is performance improvement, we just always are striving to do better for every patient that comes in our door.

Sarah Brunn: Our trauma designation requires that we meet with physicians to review the care of all of our significant trauma patients and we do that quarterly and then the result of those meetings spurs projects that we work on to just continually improve.

Sarah Brunn: Beth [Craft 00:04:54] is our emergency response coordinator here at Lake Region and she puts a lot to time and effort into those especially performance improvement activities.

Katie Johnson: What a great asset for our community. Let's talk about National Trauma Awareness Month specifically, what it's about, what this year's theme is and how we can maybe apply that to our daily lives.

Sarah Brunn: Yeah. In 1988, President Ronald Reagan in congress designated May as National Trauma Awareness Month. The American Trauma Society, which is a group of generally surgeons in conjunction with many organizations throughout the country use those time to provide education within local communities on injury prevention.

Sarah Brunn: Every year there's a new theme and those themes are used really for trauma prevention activities. We would prefer that you not have to utilize our services honestly, we want to make sure that you stay healthy and safe so we really push hard for trauma prevention.

Sarah Brunn: This year, the theme is Safety at Any Speed, with the focus on personal recreational vehicle safety, including jet skis, golf carts, dirt bikes, ATVs, snow mobiles in the winter.

Katie Johnson: This is, I think, just one of several trauma prevention programs we are involved with. I know that you work with the Otter Tail County Safe Communities Coalition and we've just had a poster contest for example, that's also aimed at prevention.

Sarah Brunn: Yeah, absolutely. We do ... another part of our trauma program is working on that trauma prevention activities. We have a couple of programs that we work with. Otter Tail Safe Communities Coalition is a community partnership that works primarily at the four E's, is what we call it. Education, engineering, emergency care and enforcement and the goal of that coalition is to reduce death and serious injuries from accidents on our road.

Sarah Brunn: Our coalition activities include reviewing every serious injury or death from a motor vehicle accident in Otter Tail County and then we focus our efforts as a coalition on the results of those reviews. If we do a review and we see that the person wasn't wearing a helmet or didn't have a seatbelt on and that maybe could have prevented some of their injuries, then we focus on education. If we review an accident and we find that really lighting or signage was an issue, then we work with the county to make sure that appropriate signage is up or rumble strips on the road or improve the lighting in a certain area or traffic signs, that type of thing. It really is pretty comprehensive, our efforts as a coalition.

Sarah Brunn: We partner in many events throughout the year, including efforts within the schools, like impact speakers. Somebody who has been intimately effected by trauma, we also sponsor mock crashes, events at the college level, such as a distracted driving fair that we've done at the community college here in Fergus Falls the last two years and then the Lake Region Sponsor Seatbelt Contest in the elementary schools.

Katie Johnson: Right. The Safety at Any Speed theme is what I'd like to kind of carry into our talk next week. We'll talk specifically about some of the tips for safe ATV, motor cycle, dirt bike riding but as a preview to that, is there anything that's most common that you see in the summer, or anything that really rises to the top that before we close today, you'd say you want to ... people to think about as they head into memorial day weekend.

Sarah Brunn: I honestly would say, wear your helmet. Whether you're on a four wheeler or you're on a bike or you're on a motorcycle, head injuries are huge and they kill you. If you wear a helmet, that really can prevent those serious injuries in such a wide variety of things that the we do in the summer. Wear a helmet, encourage your kids to wear a helmet.

Katie Johnson: Great advice. Sarah Brunn, our emergency medicine and rehab director at Lake Region Healthcare's emergency department, my guest today on Apple a Day, Sarah's going to come back next week and talk more about trauma prevention, specifically as we head into summer coming off of the Memorial Day holiday so stay tuned next week for more specific tips on safety but until then, have a safe Memorial Day weekend and wear your helmet.

Katie Johnson: Thanks for joining me Sarah.

Sarah Brunn: Thanks for having me.

Katie Johnson: Sarah Brunn and Katie Johnson on Apple a Day reminding you there is so much to do here, stay healthy for it. Have a great day.