

Katie Johnson: Good morning and welcome to Apple a Day, Lake Region Healthcare's health and wellness show, where we feature news and information you can use to live a healthier life. I am Katie Johnson, your host and my guest today is Dr. Matthew Lee. He's a radiologist and he is the newest member of the Lake Region Healthcare family.

Good morning, Dr. Lee.

Dr. Matthew Lee: Morning.

Katie Johnson: Thank you for joining us. I'm excited to welcome you to Lake Region Healthcare and introduce you to our listeners this morning. Our listeners might know that we recently wished farewell to Dr. James Matter, a long time radiologist here. He retired at the end of March and was the longest standing member of our medical staff, which is incredible. He started here in July of 1974, so he had a long run at Lake Region Healthcare. He served on our board of trustees. He and his wife, Linda, were very active. Linda served on the foundation board, very philanthropical to Lake Region Healthcare too. Instrumental in the cancer center and had a really big heart for Lake Region Healthcare. I just wanted to give that nod to Dr. Matter before we started too and let our listeners know about that transition that made the space for you to join us. You certainly have big shoes to fill.

Dr. Matthew Lee: That's fair.

Katie Johnson: But I have no doubt that you are up to that task. I, like I said, I'm excited to introduce you to our listeners today. Let's just start by letting them get to know you a little bit. What's your background coming up to joining us here?

Dr. Matthew Lee: Well, I'm from the area. I grew up in West Fargo, North Dakota, graduated from the high school there. After completing medical school at UND, I trained out in Washington State. My first job was actually Bemidji, Minnesota. We were there for about nine years and at that point, my family and I were looking for a change, so we ended up moving down to Iowa. We've been down in Iowa for about a year, exploring the Mississippi down there.

Katie Johnson: Oh, nice.

Dr. Matthew Lee: When this opportunity arose, it was too good to pass. We found we really missed the lakes and I still have family in the area and we're excited about coming back.

Katie Johnson: That is great. When you talk about your educational background, when I read over your bio, you had an interesting path leading up to choosing medicine. How did you land on medicine? How did you get there?

Dr. Matthew Lee: I tell my kids to never say no to anything, so I was the indecisive child and not in a bad way. I guess I liked everything. I didn't know what I wanted to do. It wasn't until after I had graduated from Concordia that I decided that I wanted to pursue medicine.

My initial training was through the Army. They have a language institute in California, so I got training in the Russian language and was working at something called The Voice Intercept and then got additional training as an interpreter and got some training actually as an interrogator. Then when that ended, or I guess I continued to do that through college and decided to go to medical school after I graduated. Spent some time at NDSU doing some pre-med stuff and then went to UND.

Katie Johnson: Great. What was it about medicine and/or radiology in particular that you found interesting and chose to pursue that path?

Dr. Matthew Lee: Well, I was looking at a lot of different areas. I think that the thing that was appealing with medicine is, I guess I felt like at the time medicine had intrinsic value that a lot of other professions didn't have. The neat thing about it is regardless of your motives to go into it, you can do a lot of good. The other thing is that will touch all of us at some point in our lives. I think that was the big draw. I knew no matter what, we will all have our encounters with healthcare and it was exciting to be a part of that.

Katie Johnson: For sure. You mentioned coming back home was a big draw. I'm curious, more specifically, as you researched Lake Region Healthcare and the medical group here and the facility itself, what was it about Lake Region Healthcare that made you say, "Yes, this is a good fit for me."

Dr. Matthew Lee: Well, my family and I, we prefer to be in a smaller community. The Fargo I grew up in no longer exists, so the Fargo that's there now is quite a bit bigger. Lake Region being a local organization, that was very important to me. I think the size allows for a lot of things that larger organizations don't, so they can be more nimble. I think you get to know your co-workers a lot better. I think that the feel of it was important and then, obviously, the drawback to the region.

Katie Johnson: Definitely. When I think of a radiology, X-rays are the first thing that comes to my mind, but I know that you do a lot more than read X-rays. Can you expand on the variety of things that are involved in being a radiologist and your role?

Dr. Matthew Lee: We are the imagers of healthcare, so anything that involves taking pictures we generally have a hand in or some experience with, so CT scans, MRIs, ultrasounds, X-rays, like you said, mammograms, PET-CTs, anything that generates a picture a lot of times we will have some experience with. We also will do procedures, minor surgeries, and those would be used in conjunction with imaging. If you do an ultrasound-guided biopsy or we can use the CT scan to put tubes in or collect materials from biopsies.

- Katie Johnson: Given that, what is it that you would say is your favorite aspect of radiology among all of those diverse things?
- Dr. Matthew Lee: The diversity itself.
- Katie Johnson: Oh, okay.
- Dr. Matthew Lee: I have been in a general practice and I think that's the best thing for me. I love being able to look at a CT scan and evaluate the lungs and then do a biopsy and then try to help a pediatrician with a child. I think it's incredibly challenging, but it's motivating and it's very rewarding.
- Katie Johnson: Sure. I can see where that would be the case. You talk about it being motivating and rewarding. What is your philosophy of care when it comes to providing high quality care? What is it that makes it rewarding to you?
- Dr. Matthew Lee: This is in conjunction with my decision to go into medicine in general. I think acknowledging that each patient is different and I think the care should be centered around that. I think we as providers, you don't need to be flexible with that and just acknowledge that all of us is different. My philosophy would be remembering that this should be a patient-centered process.
- Katie Johnson: Very much in line with the philosophy in general at Lake Region Healthcare. You are joining Lake Region Healthcare at a really unique time in history. We can't deny that. I'd like to get your perspectives on seeking care at this time. COVID-19 has caused us, along with other medical facilities, to scale back significantly on the procedures that we do and the patients that we were seeing for that time when we knew that we needed to preserve and conserve PPE and learn more about how this virus was spreading.
- But now that we're moving into that next phase of living with or living in a COVID world, I'm guessing there are a lot of people that are overdue for a mammogram, for example, that would fall into your realm or maybe have been putting off an elective surgery or procedure or an injection, maybe haven't taken action on something that's suspicious, a lump or a pain that they've had. What's your advice to these people that are considering whether and when to address those things?
- Dr. Matthew Lee: This is a very difficult question. I think the most important thing is to continue communicating with us as providers. The answer to your question depends upon the day really. We know so little about this virus as far as where it's headed and where we are right now and it's impossible to predict where we're going to be next week or six months from now. I think a lot of it will depend upon the actual situation and the condition that's occurring at that time.
- There are things that we need to take care of now. If we're communicating well, we can do that at the time. As we know more and we get a grip on all of this,

the hope is that we'll move back to normalcy, but it's impossible to know when that will be.

Katie Johnson: Absolutely. But I think you hit it well when you said, "Communication is the key," and we've been saying that all along is, "Please don't hesitate to call us. Call and talk to your nurse. Talk to your provider about what's going on so that we can give you the best advice on whether it makes sense to wait this out or whether it needs to be addressed right away."

Dr. Matthew Lee: Telephones are safe.

Katie Johnson: Exactly.

Dr. Matthew Lee: You cannot spread COVID through the telephone lines.

Katie Johnson: Exactly. Thank goodness, right?

Dr. Matthew Lee: Right.

Katie Johnson: Right. How about when you're not working? Tell us about what you like to do in your free time and with your family.

Dr. Matthew Lee: Well, we're an active family, so we love being outside. We love the lakes. So that's one of the biggest things we missed and we didn't realize how much we missed it-

Katie Johnson: Sure.

Dr. Matthew Lee: ... until it wasn't there. I have a son who plays hockey and so that takes up a lot of our time in the winter. Another son that loves to swim and so the lakes will be great for him.

Katie Johnson: Great.

Dr. Matthew Lee: So, bike rides and walks, jogging. We all love to read, movies, the standard-

Katie Johnson: Great.

Dr. Matthew Lee: ... answer.

Katie Johnson: Great. Great. A favorite book, favorite movie?

Dr. Matthew Lee: Oh, boy. Well, one of the most impactful books, I guess for me, was after I graduated from high school, so *Catcher in the Rye*. That was confusing and challenging, but that was probably the most impactful for me personally. One of my sons is loving the *Percy Jackson* series now.

- Katie Johnson: That is a good one. I remember when my son was completely enamored with that series. That's a good one. Anything else that you would like us to know about you, your practice at Lake Region Healthcare and joining the radiology team here?
- Dr. Matthew Lee: I think just that I and my family, we're excited to be here and I can't wait to get started.
- Katie Johnson: Well, we are so happy to welcome you and your family to Fergus Falls and to Lake Region Healthcare. We really look forward to having you on the team here. Dr. Matthew Lee, radiologist joining Lake Region Healthcare and the radiology department here, my guest today on Apple a Day.
- Dr. Matthew Lee: Thank you.
- Katie Johnson: Thank you so much for your time.
- Dr. Matthew Lee: Yes, thanks.
- Katie Johnson: Dr. Matthew Lee and Katie Johnson on Apple a Day, today reminding you there is so much to do here, stay healthy for it. Have a great day.