

## [Woman makes garment to provide dignity at doctor's office](#)

By Denise Baran-Unland For the Herald-News November 29, 2011 12:00PM



Shari Sak Hujda, of Frankfort, wears the Medical Dignity Garment. The shirt, created by Mary Hogan, has breakaway sleeves and flaps that open on the chest to keep the patient fully dressed.  
*Submitted photo*

Many of us know the occasional inconvenience of removing a bulky sweater for a blood pressure reading or the embarrassment of shivering in a paper shirt for a routine examination.

For those individuals requiring regular chemotherapy, kidney dialysis, pain management or other treatments that require access to their bodies, Mary Hogan's patented Medical Dignity Garment can help keep them warm, relaxed and unexposed.

And it's all due to Sarah Sauer, 17, formerly of Minooka and now of Indiana. Ten years ago, Sarah was battling a malignant brain tumor for her 50 percent chance at life. Her fight to live tore at Hogan's heart.

"She was so tired of wearing pajamas. She wanted to feel normal again," Hogan said. "When you're sitting in a common treatment area, you can feel very exposed. So I kept searching for ways to help."

One day, Sarah's mother, Cindy Sauer, shared with Hogan Sarah's preference for button-down shirts. That gave Hogan, an interior designer, some ideas, which she sketched and created into patterns, then handed to a seamstress to fabricate prototypes.

The result was a classic white button-down shirt that would fit men, women and children, even toddlers. Tear-away panels on both sides of the front and sleeves, which open and close with soft Velcro, allow access for ports and shunts. The flaps can fold, roll or lay out of the way so caregivers have clear access and the patient can maintain control, which is hard to do in a hospital gown.

"Sarah wanted no part of gowns," Cindy said, "and even a 7-year-old wants her modesty and respect. She didn't want people constantly poking and prodding her. This shirt was different. You just popped open a pouch to access the port, then closed it up."

Maintenance for the Medical Dignity Garment is easy: machine wash in cold water and tumble-dry. A little peroxide quickly and easily removes lingering blood stains. It's basic, but stylish, white design is easily jazzed up with accessories.

"If you want more color, you can embroider it. Kids can paint on it," Hogan said. "Some men like wearing a tie with it. Women will sometimes add scarves, belts and jewelry."

Hogan has marketed the Medical Dignity Garment at trade shows, specialty stores and hospital gift shops, but individuals can order by phone or online. Eventually, Hogan would like to add more styles and include a line of very colorful garments for children.

"So often, I hear people say they wish they could help someone going through cancer treatments," Hogan said. "A gift that helps maintain dignity and warmth would mean a lot to people."

To place an order or for more information call 815-941-4894 or visit [www.medicaldignity.com](http://www.medicaldignity.com).

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